

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEES ON TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY

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HELD AT: 250 Broadway
Committee Room, 14th Floor

B E F O R E:

JAMES VACCA
FERNANDO CABRERA
Chairpersons

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Letitia James
Mark Weprin
Peter Koo
Daniel R. Garodnick
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David Greenfield
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Craig Stewart
Senior Corporate Management Officer
MTA New York City Transit

Robert Marino
New York City Transit

Mark Bienstock
Program Officer, Systems and Security, Capital Program
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Executive Director
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General Manager
Mobile Commons

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2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Good morning,
3 good morning everyone, I'm Councilman James Vacca
4 and I'm Chair of the Committee on Transportation,
5 and I'm joined today by my colleague, Council
6 Member Fernando Cabrera, who is Chair of the
7 Committee on Technology, and members of both
8 committees will soon be joining us. It's a joint
9 hearing and today's topic is the Impact of Modern
10 Technology on our City's Buses and Subways.

11 Before I start, I want to welcome
12 Jonathan Masserano, who recently joined the
13 Transportation Committee as a policy analyst and
14 wish him all the best.

15 This is the second in a series of
16 hearings before these two committees regarding
17 technology and transportation. We discussed
18 technology and the taxi and livery industries last
19 month, and we are here this morning to discuss
20 technology and mass transit.

21 New York goes to great lengths to
22 tout itself as tech-friendly, looking to attract
23 the most pioneering businesses and universities in
24 an attempt to rival Silicon Valley as a hub of new
25 innovation. Well today, we want to make sure our

1
2 mass transit system is keeping up. Other cities
3 across the country and around the world are
4 investing in making their trains and buses more
5 modern and cutting-edge, so it is vitally
6 important in the age of smartphones, tablets, and
7 Twitter that New York does not get left behind.

8 You know, our subway system, the
9 largest and most complex in the world, was a
10 technological and engineering marvel when it was
11 built in the early 20th century, but since then
12 technology has reshaped the way New Yorkers
13 interact with their transportation system. I
14 remember when air conditioned trains were the next
15 big thing, and then we saw the MetroCard replace
16 the token, making fare paying more convenient and
17 flexible. The average New Yorker might not notice
18 just how much technological advancement is
19 happening around them until they realize that they
20 can text their bus to find out how far away from
21 them the bus is. That technology has already
22 rolled out on Staten Island and certain bus lines
23 in Brooklyn and I hope to hear today that it will
24 expand citywide in the coming weeks and months.

25 Imagine that when this technology

1
2 rolls out across the city you'll be able to have
3 your coffee, read your paper, text your bus, and
4 go down to the bus stop to meet the bus instead of
5 standing on line waiting for the bus. That's a
6 big quality of life improvement.

7 These days, those us like myself
8 who spend much of our time underground on lines
9 like the four, five, and six probably cannot even
10 imagine life without next train countdown clocks,
11 and that's before particular technology has even
12 reached every station. But of course, there's
13 always more to be done. That happened to me this
14 morning, to be honest, I was waiting for the six
15 at Middletown Road train station and the clock
16 says the next--I just missed it, and then I was
17 told by the clock ten minutes. But ten minutes
18 goes very fast in the morning, you know? It
19 didn't seem like ten minutes but I think it was.
20 But, still, I appreciated knowing that because of
21 my tardiness I had to wait for the next train for
22 ten minutes.

23 Today we expect an update on many
24 promising technologies that the MTA has previously
25 announced: A GPS-based system to inform riders

1
2 when their next bus will come; wireless
3 connectivity in underground stations; and even a
4 new, smarter fare card. The questions in each
5 case are simple: Are they working; how long until
6 they are fully operational; what more can we do.
7 And we might even be able to gain some insight
8 into projects and technologies we've not
9 previously heard about.

10 I want to thank the MTA, TWU, and
11 everyone else for being here with us today. I
12 think we're in for an interesting hearing, and I
13 know we have good questions as well.

14 With that, let me introduce the
15 other members of the Transportation who have
16 joined me. I have not been joined by any other
17 members, so, you see, now? This meeting will go
18 quicker than you think. But I do now want to
19 introduce the chairman of our Technology
20 Committee, my colleague and co-chair, Council
21 Member Fernando Cabrera.

22 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Thank you so
23 much, Co-Chair Vacca. Good morning and welcome to
24 this joint oversight hearing on the Impact of
25 Modern Technology on the City's Buses and Subways.

1
2 New York City has been a leader
3 innovatively using technology to assist citizens
4 in disseminating information. Towards that end,
5 the MTA is investing in numerous upgrades to buses
6 and subways to stay at the forefront of public
7 transportation technology. The MTA is using GPS,
8 text messaging, traffic signal technology,
9 countdown clocks, and smartcard technology to make
10 New York City's public transportation system more
11 efficient while providing useful information to
12 riders.

13 Additionally, the MTA has
14 recognized straphangers' growing use of technology
15 by adding wireless Internet to some subway
16 stations and opening its data to the public for
17 programmers to use for websites, feed readers, or
18 application. Providing this data to the public
19 improves the rider experience with little or no
20 cost to the MTA. Many of these efforts are pilot
21 programs and the Committees on Transportations and
22 Technology are interested in learning the progress
23 of these projects and how they will be expanded in
24 the months and the years ahead.

25 The Committee also look forward to

1 hearing from the MTA and others about how
2 technology is reshaping and improving New York
3 City transit system.
4

5 And let me recognize Council Member
6 Tish James, she has joined us. And also let me
7 recognize the Committee of Technology staff,
8 counsel David Seitzer and policy analyst Crystal
9 Gold-Pond and John Russell also is our finance
10 analyst.

11 Thank you so much.

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you,
13 Council Member Cabrera. We will now call our
14 first panel, Craig Stewart of MTA Transit; Craig
15 Cipriano, New York City Transit; and Mark
16 Bienstock, New York City Transit. Welcome, and
17 please identify yourself as you lead off the
18 testimony.

19 [Pause]

20 CRAIG STEWART: Hello? Okay. My
21 name is Craig Stewart, good morning, Chairpersons
22 Vacca and Cabrera, and good morning to the members
23 of the Transportation and Technology Committees.
24 I am Craig Stewart, the Senior Corporate
25 Management Officer, New York City Transit. I am

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2 joined here today by Mark Bienstock to my left, he
3 is the Program Officer, Systems and Security
4 program--Capital Program Management, and Craig
5 Cipriano, Vice President of Business Strategies,
6 Buses to my right. New York City Transit
7 President Tom Prendergast asked us to represent
8 him today in addressing the topic of--designated
9 by your committees, the Impact of Modern
10 Technology on the City's Buses and Trains.

11 New York City Transit has fully
12 committed itself to the pursuit of new technology
13 to enhance the experience of our customers in
14 using the system and increase our efficiency in
15 managing and delivering bus and subway services.
16 Today, I will discuss those new technology
17 initiatives underway at New York City Transit
18 which focus on enhancing the experience of our
19 train and bus customers.

20 Before getting started on
21 specifics, however, I'd like to review some of the
22 challenges New York City Transit faces in pursuing
23 new technology initiatives. For starters, new
24 technology is inherently risky, but public
25 agencies such as ours are inherently risk-averse.

1
2 Therefore, the combination of public agency--
3 public transit agency and new technology is
4 anything but an easy mix. This morning, I am
5 happy to report that we are moving forward with
6 several new technology ventures in spite of the
7 enormous challenges they present.

8 Other hurdles that impede new
9 technology ventures at our agency are age,
10 vastness, and sheer complexity of New York City
11 transit system that make for a uniquely difficult
12 operating environment. The single best example
13 is, of course, our system which is not a
14 homogeneous system. The system is literally
15 pieced together with components of different
16 railroads built at different times with varying
17 station architectural and engineering
18 characteristics. Thus, we can rarely use off-the-
19 shelf applications, and most technology
20 applications must be customized.

21 Even in our efforts to customize
22 systems, we face tremendous technological
23 challenges. Systems must be designed to withstand
24 brutal environmental conditions, to meet exacting
25 standards from location to location, and to

1
2 interconnect diverse system components.

3 Finally, we face difficulties in
4 identifying qualified vendors as the number of
5 vendors with the capability to design for our
6 complex transit operating environment is very
7 limited. There is a lack of competition in most
8 of the instances that keep the prices high, and
9 there is a particularly low supply of U.S.
10 vendors.

11 To help tackle these impediments we
12 face, both culturally and logistically, in
13 pursuing new technology ventures, President Tom
14 Prendergast has given my office executive
15 oversight in facilitating new technology projects.
16 We currently have several projects underway at
17 various stages of development which are designed
18 to enhance the traveling experience of our
19 customers.

20 MTA Bus Customer Information
21 System, commonly referred to as MTA Bus Time, is
22 one such project. It communicates bus location
23 information to customers through a range of
24 digital and mobile interfaces. The system
25 integrates location and login information with

1
2 schedules and map files to output real-time next
3 bus information to our customers who will obtain
4 this information through their cell phones, their
5 smartphones, their PCs, and digital displays.

6 From a desktop, smartphone, or a
7 cell phone, customers can enter the bus route,
8 intersection, or bus stop code. The map will show
9 customers where buses are along the route and how
10 many stops away the next bus is. Customers can
11 also text a bus stop code or intersection to
12 511123 and they'll receive a text back stating how
13 many stops away the next bus is. The bus codes
14 can be found online at www.mta.info/bustime or at
15 bus stops on the posted Guide-A-Ride schedules.
16 In addition, customers can scan a Quick Response,
17 or QR, code available at bus stops on the Guide-A-
18 Ride. If customers have a smartphone with a QR
19 reader, they can just scan it and get the same
20 information.

21 Bus Time was initially deployed on
22 the B63 in Brooklyn in February 2011, and in
23 January 2012 we extended it to all routes in
24 Staten Island, and later this year to the B61 and
25 SBS M34 routes. We are scheduled to fully deploy

1
2 Bus Time in the Bronx by the end of this month and
3 to have it in all remaining boroughs by the end of
4 2013. It is worth noting that customer feedback
5 on MTA Bus Time initiative has been overwhelmingly
6 positive.

7 On the subway side, we began
8 providing customers with next train arrival
9 information via what we are commonly called our
10 countdown clocks in 2010, and that effort
11 continues today. On the A Division, the number
12 lines--numbered lines, the delivery of the next
13 train arrival information is nearly complete at
14 all 156 stations, with the exception of three
15 stations: Fulton on the 2-3, Fulton Street on the
16 4-5, and Cortlandt on the 1, all of which are
17 currently in construction or pending construction.
18 The effort to accomplish this work required
19 significant investment over the past decade to
20 modernize the signal system, develop the rail
21 control center, office systems, build the data
22 transport systems, and construct the necessary
23 infrastructure at each station to deliver this
24 information.

25 With respect to the B Division, the

1 lettered lines, New York City Transit has
2 completed work at 24 stations on the Canarsie L
3 line. This system was commissioned in 2007 as a
4 standalone system that interfaces with the
5 Canarsie Communications Based Train Control, CBTC,
6 system for train prediction information. The B
7 Division has presented unique challenges due to
8 its size and complexity when compared to the A
9 Division. The B Division is twice as big as the A
10 Division, having 288 stations versus 166 stations-
11 -56 stations on the A Division, 141 route miles
12 versus 66 route miles on the A Division, and 317
13 peak trains versus 203 peak trains on the A
14 Division. Furthermore, the B Division does not
15 have the Automatic Train Supervision, or ATS,
16 system, which provided the common platform that
17 greatly facilitated the installation of the Next
18 Train Arrival Information on the A Division.
19 Finally, most of the B Division is comprised of
20 territory with four track and many interlock--
21 interconnecting lines along its route, making it
22 impractical to replicate the approach used on the
23 A Division.
24

25 We have undertaken a few pilots in

1
2 an effort to identify an interim measure for
3 providing service information to B Division
4 customers, including most recently the use of
5 electronic signage; however, these efforts have
6 fallen short in yielding the level and type of
7 information we are seeking to provide our
8 customers. Our ultimate goal is, of course, to
9 develop similar capabilities for the B Division as
10 exist currently in the A Division. However, it
11 will take substantial investment to fully deploy
12 the projected improvements in capability. To ease
13 the delay, we are working on strategies to deploy
14 functionality so that passengers benefit can be
15 delivered as soon as possible. This phased
16 deployment will result in improvements that may
17 not necessarily be across all areas. In order to
18 begin providing benefits as quickly as possible,
19 we have established an initial goal of providing
20 the current B Division next train arrival
21 information to customers by capturing dispatch and
22 schedule information electronically.

23 New York City Transit will soon
24 start design work under several projects to begin
25 capturing train information across the B Division.

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2 Collecting train location information is a
3 prerequisite step to providing real-time train
4 arrival information and may take several years to
5 accomplish. This design effort will also help us
6 to determine the most viable option for
7 implementation.

8 New York City Transit has also
9 established another goal in providing all B
10 Division stations with reliable public address
11 capability in order to better communicate
12 information to our customers. Several projects
13 are already in the design phase to expand the
14 public address system at the B Division passenger
15 stations. Public address, PA, functionality will
16 be provided at 87 stations on the B Division that
17 do not currently have public address functionality
18 at all. We are planning to advertise and award
19 that contract early next year. Tied to the new
20 Public Address/Customer Information Screens, the
21 PACIS, system that was placed into service in 2011
22 for the A Division, these stations will allow
23 operations staff capability to make audio
24 announcements and display virtual messages
25 centrally from the Rail Control Center.

1
2 Announcements from the B Division stations are
3 currently made from various field sites.

4 Additional capital investments are necessary to
5 upgrade and replace the infrastructure for the PA
6 systems at these stations and subsequently provide
7 an interface into the central PA system at the
8 Rail Control Center.

9 Another one of our customer service
10 initiatives is the Station Advisory Information
11 Display, the SAID sign, which is designed to
12 provide enhanced subway train status in real-time
13 to New York City Transit customers. This project
14 utilizes the latest wireless communications
15 technology to display the current New York City
16 Transit Train Service Status on 52 electronic
17 displays in 26 stations. Currently, passengers
18 entering the station--the subway system are not
19 aware of the current train service status;
20 currently, they are uncertain as to whether they
21 can complete their subway trip as intended. The
22 SAID sign provides updates of the status of all
23 New York City Transit subway lines to customers
24 prior to entering the station's fare array, this
25 allows our customers an opportunity to alter their

1 trip in the event that service is disrupted.
2 Design completion for this station--for this
3 project is scheduled for November 2012,
4 construction will be performed by in-house Capital
5 Construction in coordination with other projects
6 starting early next year.
7

8 Yet another high technology service
9 initiative underway is the On The Go! Travel
10 Station, OTG, an interactive customer information
11 kiosk. It is a touch screen device with digital
12 application and messages in real-time. On The Go!
13 has two key functions which are to provide a wide
14 variety of assistance to our customers and to
15 provide critically needed non-fare revenue via
16 digital advertising. The kiosks improve customer
17 communications and perceptions as our customers
18 are able to customize and navigate trips in
19 stations and terminals. The kiosks are also
20 beneficial because they replace paper signage.
21 OTG is a 46-inch 1080p touch screen with a
22 computerized operating system. Currently, our
23 information is displayed on the top of the screen
24 and advertising is displayed on the bottom. An
25 application bar separates our information from

1
2 advertising. OTG creates a flexible system with
3 the ability to adapt to future innovations and
4 technology. Some of the digital applications
5 available to customers are travel itinerary
6 planning; variety of maps, such as buses, subways,
7 neighborhood maps; dining and shopping guides; and
8 service--subway service status. The default
9 screen can display a variety of options including
10 real-time arrival of trains, service status,
11 elevators and escalator outages, real-time bus
12 information, and live assistance.

13 The first phase of the On the Go!
14 pilot, launched in September 2011, included five
15 units deployed at Bowling Green, Atlantic Avenue-
16 Pacific Street, Jackson Heights-Roosevelt Avenue,
17 Penn Station, Long Island Railroad, and Grand
18 Central Terminal, Metro North Railroad. On The
19 Go! has been well received by our customers and
20 received a 2012 award from Intelligent
21 Transportation Society of New York for Best
22 Advanced Traveler Information System. We are
23 currently undertaking a second phase of the pilot
24 extension for which we are negotiating public-
25 private partnerships. Beginning in January, we

1
2 plan to install between 100 and 150 kiosks in some
3 of our busiest stations. The advertising firms
4 who agree to take part in the program will pay to
5 purchase the kiosks and recoup their investment
6 through advertising revenue generated by the
7 device over the next 12 months.

8 Another recently launched
9 initiative are our new Help Points, which are
10 user-friendly, ADA-compliant devices to be located
11 in stations, replacing the current analog-based
12 Customer Assistance Intercom and existing customer
13 talkback device. For the first time, customers on
14 the platform level will have immediate access to
15 the station booth and personnel at the Rail
16 Control Center. The Help Point is designed to be
17 an easily recognizable communications tool for
18 customers who need to either report an emergency
19 or ask for travel assistance.

20 Since April 2011, a pilot has been
21 underway at the 23rd Street station on the number
22 six and Brooklyn Bridge four, five, six stations
23 on the Lexington Avenue line. The pilot has
24 allowed us to determine not only the usefulness of
25 the units to our customers, but also to evaluate

1
2 which method of installation, wireless or hard-
3 wired, is best. To date, both systems have
4 performed reliably. Moving forward, our plan is
5 to install approximately six to ten new Help Point
6 devices along subway platforms and in paid and
7 unpaid control areas and mezzanines within every
8 station. Beginning next year, we will be moving
9 to install Help Point units in another 80
10 stations.

11 The Help Point devices are highly
12 visible with a bright blue beacon light that
13 pulses when it is in use. This feature is
14 designed to alert first responders in the case of
15 an injured or sick customer at a specific
16 location. The control panel includes a red
17 emergency button and a green information button,
18 along with a speaker and microphone. Emergency
19 calls are routed to the Rail Control Center, while
20 routine inquiries concerning fare payment, station
21 access, or trip planning are sent to station
22 agents. This new system is also being equipped
23 with an induction loop capability which allows
24 hearing impaired customers with tele-coil equipped
25 hearing aids to communicate with enhanced clarity

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2 with our customer service agent and the Rail
3 Control Center supervisor.

4 It is worth noting that the new
5 Help Point devices are vandal-resistant and also
6 self-diagnostic so that the supervisory personnel
7 will not have to check each unit several times a
8 day as is currently done with our Customer
9 Assistance Intercom devices. Finally, the Help
10 Point units will be able to accommodate the future
11 addition of video cameras so that New York City
12 Transit personnel can observe customers while
13 interacting with them.

14 The use of modern technology to
15 enhance the experience of subway customers is also
16 very much evident in the new Subway Car Program
17 under which our newest train cars have computer-
18 regulated climate control, automated voice
19 announcements digital mastered for improved audio
20 clarity, electronic strip maps highlighting
21 station stops on lines, electronic message signs
22 displaying station stops and special messages.
23 The new cars also feature the ability to
24 communicate directly to train crews via electronic
25 intercom in the case of an emergency.

1
2 Another enhancement to our
3 customer's travel experience can be found in one
4 of MTA Chairman Lhota's strategic initiatives, MTA
5 Tap & Ride, which responds to the need to replace
6 our outdated MetroCard system and holds the
7 promise to bring the latest fare collection
8 technology to the MTA to make fare payment more
9 convenient for our customers while helping to
10 reduce cost of doing business at the same time.

11 The new Fare Payment System project was originally
12 based at MTA headquarters has recently been moved
13 to New York City Transit. Consequently, a group
14 has recently been set up at New York City Transit
15 to manage the development and implementation of
16 New York City Transit's fare payment system of the
17 future. The overall strategic approach remains
18 contactless technology and account-based, open
19 standards architecture where possible. However,
20 given the changing payments landscape, and recent
21 developments in transit fare payment technology,
22 we are currently resetting and refining the
23 project's milestones and capital funding needs.

24 The Tap & Ride initiative seeks to
25 take advantage of new developments in open payment

1
2 technology, allowing the MTA to simplify the fare
3 payment process for customers by deploying systems
4 that accept devices like chip-enabled cards and
5 smartphones customers already have in their
6 possession. The use of advanced communications
7 technologies, such as 4G wireless and fiber optic
8 networks, are being explored to support the fare
9 payment initiative which is intended to help speed
10 up the entry and boarding on MTA services. By
11 designing a system based on open standards for
12 contactless payments and proven processes utilized
13 by the payments industry around the world today,
14 the MTA hopes to cost effectively accommodate
15 future fare policy and operational needs, making
16 it easily adaptable to a variety of merging
17 technologies. Moreover, as other public transit
18 agencies in the tri-state region adopt similar
19 open payments systems, intermodal travel will
20 become seamless and increase mobility in the
21 region--a critical factor in the vitality of the
22 region's economy. New York City Transit's efforts
23 will fit into the larger MTA agency-wide
24 initiative to coordinate, where possible, share
25 systems and services, on all of the MTA's various

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2 fare and toll payment systems.

3 Next, I'd like to provide you with
4 a status update on a major new technology project
5 undertaken by New York City Transit in which the
6 Council has expressed great interest: The Transit
7 Wireless Project. In 2007, New York City Transit
8 entered a license agreement with Transit Wireless,
9 LLC. Transit Wireless, which was recently amended
10 to--this past July--I'm sorry, was recently
11 amended this past July. Under this agreement, New
12 York City Transit has licensed to Transit Wireless
13 the exclusive right to place a network of
14 transmitters and receives FCC licensed frequency,
15 WiFi, and WiFi Max in the 277 underground New York
16 City Transit subway stations, but not in the
17 tunnels between stations. Transit Wireless
18 completed a six-station initial build component in
19 2011 which provided AT&T and T-Mobile service at
20 locations in varying complexity. Transit Wireless
21 commenced the first phase, 30 stations, of the
22 seven-phase full build for the additional 271
23 stations in August 2012. It has 24 months from
24 the date to complete Phase 1 and 71 months to
25 complete all seven phases.

1
2 Finally, I'd like to discuss the
3 MTA's Open Data Policy and its role in the
4 development of marketplace data applications that
5 benefit our customers. Since May 2010, the MTA
6 has continued to prepare and publish data to both
7 increase organizational transparency and
8 facilitate development of third-party applications
9 that benefit the riding public. To date, this
10 initiative has resulted in unprecedented access to
11 MTA reports and finances, and more than 120 mobile
12 apps for nearly every mobile device type--all at
13 no cost to the MTA. It has also allowed us to
14 produce our own software technologies that assist
15 customers, including MTA Bus Time, The Weekender
16 web and phone app, and our new On The Go! customer
17 information kiosks. Going forward, our online
18 Developer Resource Center will continue to expand
19 the data available to the software developers,
20 including real-time service data for subway lines
21 as it becomes available. Importantly, when
22 considering new data sets for public release, we
23 will continue to consult with MTA Office of
24 Security to ensure that doing so never compromises
25 the safety of the riding public.

1
2 As you can see, we have made
3 tremendous strides in incorporating modern
4 technology into New York City's transit system in
5 ways that directly benefit our customers. We have
6 quite a distance to go to the modernization of our
7 operations, but we are certainly on our way.
8 Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our
9 efforts. We are now happy to respond to any
10 questions you may have.

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you so
12 much, that was very informative. I do want to
13 recognize my colleagues who have joined us:
14 Council Member Mark Weprin to my right; Council
15 Member Peter Koo next to him; Council Member Dan
16 Garodnick; to my left, Council Member Vincent
17 Ignizio; Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez.

18 Let me lead off with a couple of
19 questions. You talked about--on page two, you
20 talked about the Bus Time program in Brooklyn and
21 Staten Island and you also spoke about initiating
22 that in the Bronx. Are we still on schedule for
23 the end of the month in the Bronx, the end of
24 October, is that what you're referring to?

25 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: All right, my
3 concern is, as a Bronx Councilman, I can tell you
4 that there's not been much outreach about that
5 yet. Do you intend to initiate outreach? And
6 this is exciting for those of us in the Bronx and
7 I want to make sure people know that it's coming,
8 know how to use the technology, what the
9 technology is.

10 ROBERT MARINO: Yes, councilman
11 Vacca, Robert Marino, New York City--

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Yes.

13 ROBERT MARINO: --Transit. We've
14 actually--if you didn't get something, we sent
15 something out yesterday to your office. We're
16 organizing an event to publicize this.

17 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Oh, okay, good.
18 Let me ask you, the bus technology we're talking
19 about, does that involve express buses as well?

20 ROBERT MARINO: Yes, yes, it does,
21 all buses operating in the Bronx.

22 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: It's great,
23 good, okay. Let me talk about your testimony on
24 page five regarding MTA Tap & Ride. There is no
25 deadline here, there is no timetable for Tap &

1
2 Ride. You do acknowledge that there could be some
3 difficulties in refining the project and you're
4 talking about capital funding needs. I like the
5 idea of Tap & Ride, I think most people would, I
6 think that we have to talk about it in terms of
7 efficiency--and I agree with Chairman Lhota's
8 initiative, but I don't see specifics. Can you
9 elaborate on some more specifics about this?

10 CRAIG STEWART: Sure, we have our--
11 this is Mike DeVitto from--

12 MIKE DEVITTO: [Interposing] Good
13 morning, Mike DeVitto from New York City Transit.
14 Councilman, we're in the process now of developing
15 some of those detailed plans that will outline our
16 tactical approach for implementing a Tap & Ride
17 system. Right now, we have a strategic approach
18 in mind, Craig mentioned it's based on contactless
19 technology, account-based features for customer
20 convenience, and open standards where possible,
21 but right now, we're still developing those plans
22 to come up with the timeframes that you're looking
23 for.

24 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Most people
25 would refer to Tap & Ride in our terminology that

1
2 we know as a smartcard, is that basically the
3 interchangeable--

4 CRAIG STEWART: [Interposing] Not
5 only a smartcard--

6 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --technology?

7 CRAIG STEWART: --also credit cards
8 that have the ability to have a--you have a chip
9 in it--

10 [Crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Yes.

12 CRAIG STEWART: --read.

13 MIKE DEVITTO: Yeah, in general,
14 you're right, Councilman, but there is a nuance
15 and that's that there are many transit properties
16 around the world and in this country too that have
17 smartcard technology, there's no question, but
18 those are proprietary systems and we consider
19 those closed loop so you can't use that device
20 anywhere else. What we want to do is implement a
21 system where, as Craig points out, we can--
22 customers can use a card that's already in their
23 wallet, an open-loop credit card with a chip in it
24 or a mobile phone with a chip in it. So it's a
25 little different than a smartcard technology

1
2 that's currently deployed in transit systems.

3 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Let me
4 ask some questions about that because, of course,
5 I have some concerns. Now the MTA is going to be
6 considering a fare hike and many people use
7 different types of MetroCard plans as they go on
8 the train or bus every day. So now let me ask you
9 this: How would these options be preserved under
10 the smartcard plan? How would straphangers
11 continue to have those options? How would you
12 work that into your plan?

13 MIKE DEVITTO: Sure, we continue
14 to--the development of our plans will not change
15 any of the current products or plans that we have
16 in place today. In fact, we think that we can
17 provide some enhancements to some of the options
18 that customers have at their disposal.

19 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Now the
20 MTA plans to introduce a \$1 surcharge on new
21 MetroCards and are we looking at that money going
22 toward possible financing of the smartcard program
23 or are you dependent on capital money solely?
24 Tell me where the funding issues are and why we
25 are not prepared to come forth with a timetable.

2 CRAIG STEWART: I can't speak to
3 the new fare policy initiatives. I know that we
4 are--we do have some capital money identified for
5 this initiative. We're looking at determining
6 whether it is the right amount as we develop our
7 scope and move forward, but I don't know its
8 relationship to fare policy, it's not coming out
9 of a--that I know of, it's coming out of capital
10 program.

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: How much
12 expense money or capital money does this require?

13 CRAIG STEWART: We don't know as of
14 yet, we're developing the scope as we move
15 forward.

16 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: All right, so
17 it seems to me that we are not near a smartcard
18 yet.

19 CRAIG STEWART: No, we're not.

20 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: No, it is an
21 strategic plan, but it's not near reality.

22 CRAIG STEWART: It's in the
23 development phase and we are evaluating our
24 options and moving forward. We are looking at the
25 various options in terms of type of fare payment

1
2 devices.

3 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Are you
4 considering people who live in our city who may
5 not have bank accounts and how they would access a
6 smartcard? We have a significant number of people
7 riding our subways and buses who do not have bank
8 accounts per se, so, therefore, I wanted to bring
9 that to your attention. Is that a consideration?

10 MIKE DEVITTO: Yes, it is.

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Are you
12 having conversations with other transit agencies
13 insomuch as integrating the smartcard into other
14 aspects of mass transit that may not be under the
15 MTA jurisdiction?

16 CRAIG STEWART: Yes, we are.

17 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. You did
18 speak about that and I'm glad you did mention it,
19 but, again, I think--well I think you would
20 acknowledge we're waiting a little more specific
21 information.

22 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: You did mention
24 signal modernization. The entire system seems to
25 me to need signal modernization. Many of our

1
2 signals are old, they have not seen reconstruction
3 in years and, you know, it's--can you testify to
4 this?

5 CRAIG STEWART: I really can't,
6 signals is a separate area, but I can tell you
7 that the signals have been, for the most part,
8 have been modernized on the A Division and that's
9 why we have train arrival, that's the base for
10 giving train arrival. The modernization of
11 signals with an overlay of automatic train
12 supervision.

13 In the B Division, we've only
14 modernized a few lines and we are planning and
15 moving forward with capital projects to modernize
16 the B Division, but it's a very big division.

17 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: When we talk
18 modernize, when was the last time some of these
19 signal stations were modernized? How long have
20 they been--'cause many of them are antiquated. I
21 mean, we're talking horses and bayonets with many
22 of these systems.

23 CRAIG STEWART: Horses and
24 bayonets.

25 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: That's the

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reality.

CRAIG STEWART: Yes, they're very old, but I--

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing] They're very old.

CRAIG STEWART: --I'm not the right person to tell you the age or--either, but they are old. Very old equipment out there and we are moving--we are modernizing the various locations, we have several projects that are underway right now on the signal modernization.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Now, is there a total capital expenditure that's needed to do the modernization that the city needs? Is there a number out there for a capital allocation so that we can update signal stations, signal units?

CRAIG STEWART: I don't know the number precisely, but it's hundreds of millions of dollars. Signal systems are probably one of the most expensive components in the railroad.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Is it fair to say that these improvements have been delayed over a period of many, many years based on the lack of available resources?

1
2 CRAIG STEWART: Yes, based on our
3 ability to fund it, it has been delayed.

4 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: One thing I
5 didn't hear too much about and that is electric
6 buses, and I wanted to talk to you about that. Is
7 the MTA exploring the introduction of electric
8 buses? This is certainly environmentally friendly
9 and something I wanted to know where we stood on.

10 CRAIG CIPRIANO: So at this point,
11 electric bus technology is not--

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing]
13 Just identify yourself, I'm sorry.

14 CRAIG CIPRIANO: I'm sorry, Craig
15 Cipriano, Buses. So at this point, electric bus
16 technology is not robust enough, it is not--our
17 manufacturers don't have an electric bus that, you
18 know, they're willing to test in our environment,
19 however, we are in constant dialogue with them and
20 we're active dialogue, and when that technology is
21 available, we are interested in testing that in
22 our environment.

23 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: So we don't
24 envision having in the near future any electric
25 buses in our fleet.

1
2 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Not in the
3 imminent future.

4 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. We've
5 had a reported increase in cell phone and
6 electronic device thefts in the system, and I do
7 appreciate your testimony where there seems to be
8 a plan to increase availability of cell phone
9 service in stations, but how do we then address
10 the theft issue? Are you aware that there must
11 be--I think you are aware that there must be--that
12 there is a correlation because the more and more
13 cell phone usage is available in the stations, I
14 would think the more and more threat of theft. So
15 how do we address the two? A good thing on one
16 hand, but a problem on the other.

17 CRAIG STEWART: We're working with
18 NYPD to address some of those problems. They're
19 doing public awareness, they're also working with
20 the phone companies to try to get them to address
21 it by not reactivating stolen phones. But I think
22 that they're in the lead on the issue of phone
23 theft.

24 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Who's in the
25 lead? I'm sorry, the--

1
2 CRAIG STEWART: [Interposing] The
3 police, NYPD.

4 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: No, I know the
5 police are in the lead, but I think that there's
6 got to be a strategy for us going forth if we're
7 going to increase the usage.

8 CRAIG STEWART: Right.

9 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: But I
10 appreciate that that's being done, don't get me
11 wrong. Okay. Now you did indicate that on Staten
12 Island and Brooklyn where you've had the bus info,
13 it's been well received.

14 CRAIG STEWART: Very.

15 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: How many hits
16 have you had? Can you tell me how many hits
17 you've had? Can you use a line as an example?

18 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Sure, so we have
19 approximately 2 million hits to our texting site
20 and over a million to our website over the last
21 year.

22 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Over the last
23 year.

24 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Since it's
25 inception, yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Okay.
3 I'll go on to questions now, oh, Council Member
4 Cabrera, Chair Cabrera.

5 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Thank you so
6 much, Chair Vacca. Welcome. I have a couple of
7 question. You mentioned the station of Vine
8 Street information display, but you didn't
9 indicated--at least I didn't hear--in terms of
10 where are those being planned to be rolled out,
11 which boroughs?

12 MARK BIENSTOCK: Mark Bienstock.
13 Currently, we have installed and operating already
14 two at Penn Station, two at Grand Central, and two
15 at Atlantic Avenue, Metro North Railroad has 11 of
16 them. We plan on rolling out 52 displays at 26
17 additional stations in 2013.

18 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Where?

19 MARK BIENSTOCK: And I can you
20 provide the list of stations, it's a long list
21 stations, we'll provide it to you in writing.

22 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
23 Is it going to be--there's going to be equity in
24 terms of the boroughs?

25 MARK BIENSTOCK: There are SAID

1
2 signs that will be installed in all of the
3 boroughs.

4 [Crosstalk]

5 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: How many in
6 the Bronx?

7 MARK BIENSTOCK: --exact
8 distribution. Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: How many in
10 the Bronx?

11 MARK BIENSTOCK: Off the top of my
12 head, I don't know, I don't have the list in front
13 of me--

14 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
15 Okay.

16 [Crosstalk]

17 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --you
18 wouldn't know either. Okay.

19 MARK BIENSTOCK: We'll provide it
20 to you.

21 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: What about
22 the Transit Wireless, where are those going to be
23 rolled out?

24 MARK BIENSTOCK: Okay. For Transit
25 Wireless, we have currently have six stations that

1
2 were mentioned that operational as a pilot program
3 along 6-8th Avenue and 14th Street area. We're
4 currently planning to have 76 additional stations
5 in 2013; the first 30 are in Midtown, the next 40
6 are primarily in Queens, and then--that's through
7 2013. And 2014, an additional 40 that will extend
8 through uptown Manhattan.

9 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Why is the
10 Bronx and Staten Island like the last ones who
11 usually get technology?

12 MARK BIENSTOCK: I think the
13 deployment for Transit Wireless has been dependent
14 on negotiations between Transit Wireless and the
15 carriers in terms of their ability to provide
16 service at our higher usage stations. So that's
17 their initial plan, we've insisted that they do
18 provide some sort of geographical equity for all
19 of the outer boroughs as well because, clearly,
20 they would want to focus solely on the central
21 business district and then the follow up phases
22 after Phase 3, they will be extending the network
23 out to the additional boroughs and building the
24 required infrastructure to support the network in
25 the outer boroughs which currently doesn't yet

1
2 exist.

3 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: So basically
4 what you just mentioned, a place like Fordham
5 Road, which is, I believe, the third busiest
6 commercial strip in the entire New York City area
7 would have been one of those considered, and yet
8 based on that criteria, I don't see that the
9 Bronx--

10 MARK BIENSTOCK: [Interposing]
11 Chairman, it's not as simple as providing service
12 at a single station. The stations are grouped
13 together geographically and the vendor, Transit
14 Wireless, needs to build, essentially, an offsite
15 base station hotel to house all of the interface,
16 communication interface equipment between the
17 infrastructure and the subway and the carriers.
18 So it's not economically feasible for them to do
19 that for a single station, it needs to be done for
20 a group of stations, in this case 30 or 40
21 stations in a group. And so that's why that
22 selection is done.

23 In addition, all of the aboveground
24 stations already have cellular service, they're
25 only providing cellular service at the 277

1
2 belowground stations. So a significant portion of
3 the Bronx--that's, obviously, all of the elevated
4 lines, already have existing cellular service.

5 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. As you
6 could see, you know my concern--

7 MARK BIENSTOCK: [Interposing]
8 Absolutely.

9 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --all of us
10 here--it's not just you, every time I hear
11 hearings, I hear the Bronx and Staten Island being
12 one of the last ones. Two, three, four, five
13 years later, we finally get it the technology that
14 everybody else has been having. Your Help Point,
15 how many people used the Help Point last year?

16 MARK BIENSTOCK: We have
17 statistics, I don't have them with me, but there
18 have been hundreds of activations of the Help
19 Point, both for information, to a lesser extent,
20 for emergency calls, but between the two stations,
21 it's only active currently at two stations--23rd
22 Street and Brooklyn Bridge--hundreds of
23 activations.

24 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Do you know
25 the average per day?

1
2 MARK BIENSTOCK: The average per
3 day is somewhere between five and ten, I would
4 guess. I don't have the number, the--

5 [Crosstalk]

6 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
7 I'm sorry, five?

8 MARK BIENSTOCK: Between five and
9 ten per location per--

10 [Crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
12 Per location, okay. Natural gas buses, how many
13 of our buses use natural gas?

14 MARK BIENSTOCK: Craig?

15 CRAIG CIPRIANO: We have
16 approximately 700 in the fleet of 5,600 buses that
17 use CNG, compressed natural gas.

18 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And what are
19 the plans for expansion?

20 CRAIG CIPRIANO: We are taking on
21 new compressed natural gas buses, but we currently
22 have four depots in our system that have the
23 infrastructure for natural gas and that's our
24 current plans is to maintain those four depots.

25 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Is it more

1
2 inexpensive to use these type of bus? I'm just
3 curious, I don't know the answer to that question.

4 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Are you talking, I
5 mean--

6 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
7 Compared to what the other buses are using, which
8 I imagine is gas.

9 CRAIG CIPRIANO: I know maintenance
10 costs are generally higher on a compressed natural
11 gas--

12 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Oh, really.

13 CRAIG CIPRIANO: --as far as total
14 life cycle costs, I really don't have those
15 numbers.

16 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay.
17 Council Member Vacca was talking about the concern
18 about security in terms of if people are going to
19 start using more cell phones in the subways. Any
20 coordination with the NYPD to install video
21 cameras in all of these locations?

22 CRAIG STEWART: Yes, we actively
23 work with NYPD in determining our next station
24 that will get CCTV. We meet with them at least
25 twice a week.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: How many
3 stations have cameras?

4 CRAIG STEWART: I don't know the
5 exact count, but I would say it's up around 140
6 stations, and mostly our larger complexes.

7 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And how many
8 stations we have altogether?

9 CRAIG STEWART: There are 416--

10 [Crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
12 Four hundred, okay, great. My last question, and
13 I have some for later, but I know there are
14 Council Members who have question. In terms of
15 all of this technology that's going to be put in
16 use, which I'm impress, I'm very happy, I like the
17 next train arrival information one, I, like
18 Council Member Vacca, I look forward to--as soon
19 as I get to the subway station to look how many
20 minutes do I have and so forth, especially on a
21 cold day, I think mothers, single moms carrying--
22 you know, have children and so forth. But in
23 terms of these technologies, have you had
24 discussions with the unions in terms of, for
25 example, with introduction in the future of the

1
2 smartcard? Or I see like an EZ Pass, a metro EZ
3 Pass or so forth. In terms how many jobs, are
4 there any jobs that is going to cost the unions?
5 Are we looking to lose jobs, add jobs, remain the
6 same?

7 CRAIG STEWART: We're not at the
8 point where we can determine that, but our
9 objective is to lower our cost. Sometimes that
10 means increasing over in one area and decreasing
11 over in another, but we're not at the point where
12 we can determine that.

13 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Do you know
14 by when you will know?

15 CRAIG STEWART: I don't know, Mike-

16 -

17 [Off mic]

18 CRAIG STEWART: It's premature for
19 me to say, I wouldn't...

20 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. So
21 we're really at the genesis--

22 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --of--okay.
24 Well thank you so much, and keep up the great work
25 and keep introducing this great technology, they

1
2 really do help the quality of life to New Yorkers
3 and our guests from out of town.

4 CRAIG STEWART: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you,
6 Council Member Cabrera. I'd like to mention we've
7 been joined by Council Member Gale Brewer. And
8 the next question is from Council Member
9 Rodriguez.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank
11 you, Chair. Thank you for the great service that
12 you provide to our city. When it come to
13 technology, like, which piece of the new
14 technology are you take into consideration that
15 will also be used to safety?

16 MARK BIENSTOCK: Well the Help
17 Point intercom device has two buttons on it: A
18 green button for information and a red button for
19 emergency. The emergency button is there for our
20 customers to report an emergency within the
21 station, that could be a health emergency or any
22 emergency related to safety and security. Those
23 calls are answered by personnel in our Rail
24 Control Center who can be in direct communication
25 with the police department within seconds.

1
2 CRAIG STEWART: But I think
3 communications in general, the strengthening of
4 communications in general with the deployment of
5 these devices will help overall with safety. CCTV
6 that's been deployed, Help Point, many of those
7 have to do with improving our ability to
8 communicate with our passengers and their ability
9 to communicate with us, and cell phones, as we
10 open up the network for cell phones, they'll be
11 able to call us, as well as the NYPD.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay.
13 But what about a what precaution has you been
14 looking at opening our subway to any act of
15 terrorism?

16 CRAIG STEWART: Terrorism?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, I
18 mean, I [off mic] to knowledge and I think that I
19 believe that I hope to see our subway also like a
20 place that we can use our cell phone technology,
21 but with that new technology, we'll open ourself
22 also our train station to any potential act of
23 terrorism, like using recent technology.

24 CRAIG STEWART: Well I'm not--you
25 want to talk?

1
2 MARK BIENSTOCK: Sure, as Craig
3 mentioned earlier in response to the question
4 about cell phone theft in the subway, our
5 Department of Security works very closely with the
6 police department and their intelligence division
7 to monitor the safety of the subway system to
8 respond to any potential threats or incidents
9 within the subway system and to prevent acts of
10 terrorism within the subway system. All of these
11 other systems that we're putting in--closed
12 circuit television systems, intercom systems, the
13 present--

14 CRAIG STEWART: Access--

15 [Crosstalk]

16 MARK BIENSTOCK: --access control
17 systems, and various other monitoring devices that
18 are installed throughout the subway system will
19 obviously benefit our response, as well as the
20 police department's response, to any act that may
21 occur within the subway system, but more
22 importantly, prevent any act that may occur within
23 the subway system.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

25 When are you planning to--what is the deadline,

1
2 when are you planning to complete the seven phases
3 of this project?

4 MARK BIENSTOCK: The contractor has
5 a seven-year schedule, that's the maximum
6 schedule, it's obviously in the contractor's
7 interest and in our interest to accelerate that
8 deployment of the cell phones throughout the 277
9 underground subway stations. From the
10 contractor's perspective, obviously, the earlier
11 the system is up and running, the earlier they
12 start receiving payback on their capital
13 investment. And from our perspective, the
14 earlier the system is up and running, the sooner
15 customers can actually use their cell phone and
16 devices to report incidents and to receive
17 information about service within the subway
18 system.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: What was
20 the original date to complete that?

21 MARK BIENSTOCK: It was always a
22 seven-year deployment, the contract--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ:
24 [Interposing] Starting when?

25 MARK BIENSTOCK: Starting 2010, I

1
2 would like to say, off the top of my head, 2009,
3 2010 timeframe when we first entered into the
4 license agreement.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: So are
6 they on time to complete or you think that there's
7 going to be--

8 [Crosstalk]

9 MARK BIENSTOCK: [Interposing] We
10 had to revise the schedule because after we
11 initially awarded the license agreement to Transit
12 Wireless, we had the issue in the financial
13 sector, essentially, of the financial meltdown and
14 the lack of credit that was available at that time
15 prevented them from securing the necessary funding
16 to proceed with the deployment of the network.
17 This is a self-funded deployment, meaning the MTA
18 and New York City Transit are not contributing to
19 the capital cost of this network, the contractor
20 is bearing the entire capital cost of the network
21 and sharing the revenue with New York City Transit
22 after the network is deployed. So they needed to
23 secure funding, and they're in securing funded by
24 phases and they currently have funding secured to
25 proceed with the first two phases of the

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deployment.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: How much is the total cost?

MARK BIENSTOCK: We really don't know, it's--

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ:
[Interposing] Do you have the number?

CRAIG STEWART: It's their cost, we don't know.

MARK BIENSTOCK: It's the contractor's cost. When the network is up and we start sharing revenue with them, then we'll be receiving audited financial statements to determine our share of the revenue.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: But they never share with the MTA how much the cost--

[Crosstalk]

MARK BIENSTOCK: [Interposing]
Capital cost?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --going to be so that also that--

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --how much do they expect they will make in profit from

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that project?

MARK BIENSTOCK: We have some guarantees in terms of revenue share. At a minimum level, there's a minimum guarantee of revenue share and then anything above that minimum depends on the revenue that's received. And there are formulas within a very voluminous license agreement that define all of that.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: I just, at the local level, I also encourage the MTA also to look at the train station at 168 as one that I don't see as one of the first one to be included to have the WiFi. As you know, we have the major hospital there, Columbia Presbyterian there and I think that that's one of the station that in the city that probably they can also as more than other that also can benefit a lot, like there's a lot of doctors and students using that train station. And I also hope that, again, 181st that is the one that connect like 100,000 people going to the Bronx, they ending just like making the stop at 181st [off mic] and I think that that station also has been behind on other repair. But since we is looking at technology, I hope that

2 those two station are take into consideration, but
3 especially the one 168.

4 MARK BIENSTOCK: Those two
5 stations, Councilman, are in Phase three of the
6 deployment which we expect to come online in 2014.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you,
10 Council Member Rodriguez. Just briefly, to come
11 back to signal stations though, I think that we
12 need to know because of their age and lack of
13 upkeep over the years and postponement of needed
14 modernizations, are you constantly assessing
15 signal stations to make sure that your efforts to
16 patch up things is sufficient, that we don't have
17 signal stations that end up failing, that we
18 prioritize repairs on the signal stations with the
19 limited resources, I understand, you've indicated
20 the MTA has? We have to bring the signal stations
21 into the 21st century, but you're telling me that
22 the capital money is just not there to do so, so
23 what are we doing to maintain safe signal
24 stations, functional signal stations? And do we
25 identify when they are beyond the patchwork that I

1
2 think has been going--has been taking place for
3 some time?

4 CRAIG STEWART: We're not really
5 the right group to address that question, but I
6 can tell you what I do know. We do have a regular
7 inspection and maintenance cycle for our signal
8 systems and we ensure that it is a safe system and
9 that it fail safes so that there's no condition
10 out there that we would not deploy trains, we make
11 sure that the system is ready for service every
12 day. And we've increased our workforce
13 significantly in the inspection and maintenance
14 area of signals.

15 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I would be
16 remiss I think if I didn't come back to one thing
17 our committee had hearings on and that was the
18 falsification of signal inspection reports. And I
19 know that your agency was made aware of that, that
20 the D.A. did take action, but the fact that those
21 reports were falsified for such a long period of
22 time and now we look at age as another issue, it
23 is a concern of mine. There's been a history here
24 that should be a red flag for a lot of us and I
25 hope that that serves as a red flag for you. I

1
2 have to have an assurance, I have to know that
3 signal stations are safe, that they are working,
4 and that the reports that you are getting are
5 correct reports. That's important to the people
6 that are on the trains of our city, very
7 important.

8 CRAIG STEWART: That's one of our
9 highest priorities also and, though I'm not the
10 right person to discuss that issue, I'll be glad
11 to set up another meeting with the right people
12 here who can explain in detail what we're doing
13 about that.

14 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Council
15 Member Ignizio.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Yes.
17 Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Chairman
18 Cabrera. I mean, things just aren't as rosy on
19 Staten Island, apparently, as they are in some
20 other places in the city with beautiful technology
21 they're employing. I want to speak to the
22 stepchild of the New York City Transit service,
23 that being, unfortunately, Staten Island Railroad.
24 In 2008, I knew this would be the case, that
25 technology was going to go to the central

1
2 Manhattan district first, so in fiscal year 2008 I
3 allocated half a million dollars of capital
4 dollars to get some sort of real-time arrival
5 system to my train system. We only have one train
6 on Staten Island, two tracks, one going south, one
7 going north. Sounds like a pretty simple system,
8 right, anybody would think. So I allocated the
9 money in 2007 for the fiscal 2008 budget. Since
10 then, I've heard nothing but delays, delays,
11 delays from MTA, from New York City Transit, can't
12 be done, won't be done, maybe next year, six
13 months from now.

14 Same thing is going on with our
15 technology, with our camera system for the Staten
16 Island rapid transit. There's 21 station houses,
17 the casings are there, the little box is there,
18 but there's no camera there. And once again, for
19 many years, I think three years now, we've been
20 told it'll be done by December, only to hear, no,
21 no, no, spring, we mean it this time, spring. And
22 every spring, it's no, no, no, December. And
23 that's happened three times. So the reason I'm
24 articulating all this because I've worked with the
25 agency in their offices trying to be the good

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2 soldier, if you will, to say let's not have, you
3 know, this come to a council hearing where as
4 people start attack the agency, so genuinely, as a
5 general want to do well. But I have to tell you,
6 my frustration is boiling over when I just learned
7 two days ago that once again, the technology for
8 the camera system is delayed another six months
9 and once again, there's no real answer on the half
10 a million dollars for the [off mic] program.

11 And then I said, Mr. Chairman,
12 let's have a dummy system. Basically, the Staten
13 Island rapid transit basically runs on schedule,
14 as we said, it's only one train in, one train out,
15 how about we put a large LCD display up on the
16 train tracks. The desire was that people walking
17 up and say it says the next train is in 30
18 minutes, two minutes, whatever, and almost a
19 countdown clock. That was met with, well, we'll
20 see, maybe, whatever, that was two years ago.

21 So I have to turn to you guys and I
22 see you've even employed a lot of really exciting
23 things throughout the city. I put where my money
24 where my mouth is and I've tried to work with your
25 agency many a times. What gives?

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[Off mic]

CRAIG STEWART: Speak to the cameras, [off mic] the cameras.

MARK BIENSTOCK: I can speak to the camera program, Councilman. That job ran into a number of difficulties, a number of challenges, the primary one being that the vendor that was supplying the recording equipment and essentially the brains of the system went bankrupt a few years ago. And over that period of time, we've been looking to find and piloting, essentially, other vendors who can deliver a system that will provide, not only the integration of the cameras, but the integration of access control and intercoms as well, and that's been a significant challenge. We have identified a company that has a robust product that is deployed throughout the world, it's a product that we are using as well here and deploying at New York City Transit in our subway system and it will be a, sort of, a complement system for Staten Island Railroad, but you are correct, that project has gone through a number of fits and starts and delays over the past couple of years.

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2 The current schedule to complete is
3 the middle of next year, between late spring,
4 early summer of next year, and we're pressing the
5 contractor very hard to meet that schedule. The
6 next biggest challenge we have coming up,
7 obviously, is the winter and working on the
8 outdoor Staten Island railway, deploying the
9 cabinets having the electricians working outside
10 on these cabinets, terminating the cable and
11 testing that system. We have a number of cabinets
12 already built and tested in the contractor's
13 facility and we're working out a deployment
14 schedule with them to try to get some in before
15 the winter and the remainder in after the winter.
16 And we're going to press as hard as we can on
17 completing that system and deploying that system
18 for you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: And the
20 other issue?

21 CRAIG STEWART: The other issue, I
22 know we received a request recently for train
23 arrival and to evaluate our options. We are
24 looking at either a sign or a On The Go! system
25 that will tell you what time the train arrival and

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the next train is--

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO:

[Interposing] Yeah, maybe I could tell you since you're running the shop what was originally desired and what continues to be desired. Staten Island, in particular, in my district we have towns, and on the towns, a lot of them, we have the elevated trains--

CRAIG STEWART: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: --so we

were talking about on the trestle, on the overpass itself, to have a--we wanted a real-time arrival system, but even a dummy system which would tell people when their next train is coming. So if you're walking up, what happens is on Staten Island is you have the sprint, you're walking over to work, all of a sudden the train is a minute early or a minute late, you hear it, and you start running. Or if somebody wants to take the train and they start doing the mad dash for the train. If people would know as they were getting their bagel, getting their coffee, walking up saying, oh, I got three minutes, I'm okay, I can get my dry cleaner. So that's all was desired, as I

1
2 said, I put my money where my mouth is to try to
3 fund it and, quite frankly, it's been just delays
4 and continuing to be put off every single time
5 I've had a meeting.

6 And I've had very--a lot of
7 meetings over the last several years about this
8 and I'm also told--which frustrates the heck out
9 of me--is, oh, we were just there, but right on
10 the cusp, I'm telling you, six more months and
11 it'll be up, and this was 2007. So I'm not here
12 to yell or complaint at you per se, but I'm saying
13 the frustration is at the boiling point, I have to
14 be quite candid. And I'm frustrated with the
15 agency and I'm hopeful that we can get this
16 finally to a solution.

17 CRAIG STEWART: I only became aware
18 of it yesterday and I will look into it for you
19 and make sure that we get moving on--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO:
21 [Interposing] Thank you, but which is an issue in
22 itself that you only found out about it yesterday,
23 right? I'm a duly elected official representing--

24 CRAIG STEWART: Well--

25 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: --half of

1
2 Staten Island that has a project in your agency,
3 so, you know, I would hope that you would have
4 known.

5 CRAIG STEWART: --it fell under the
6 senior vice president's jurisdiction and he--I saw
7 his letter yesterday that he's preparing to send
8 back to you and consulted on it.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER IGNIZIO: Thank you
10 very much. Mr. Chairman, I just wanted you to be
11 aware of what's going on in the outer borough, so
12 to speak, and the issues that we have with
13 employing technology and how they are not always
14 employed, you know, on an equitable basis, but the
15 fares are collected on an equitable basis. Thank
16 you very much.

17 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you. As
18 an outer borough Councilman, I agree with you. I
19 see it every day in my own borough as my
20 colleague, Councilman Cabrera indicated.

21 You know, I do think the Councilman
22 Ignizio speaks to a larger question and that is
23 that when a member of the Council allocates
24 capital money to an agency, they only ask one
25 thing, they ask that it be spent expeditiously and

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2 I don't think that we're asking too much because
3 we're being helpful to you and helpful to our
4 neighborhoods. And we had this problem with the
5 Housing Authority and they say things are going to
6 get better, but I believe it when I see it with
7 them. So I believe it when I see it with you too.
8 I'd like to have the Councilman's money spent for
9 the purpose he allocated it for and if it's
10 sitting there from 2007. The problem with these
11 delays is that whatever the Councilman allocated
12 in 2007, the cost in 2012 is going to be more so
13 he's not going to get the bang for the buck that
14 he expected. So I just want to make clear that I
15 expect what the Councilman wanted to have done, be
16 done. And I would like a report myself on when.

17 CRAIG STEWART: Okay. We'll
18 provide that.

19 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: All right.
20 I've been joined by Council Member Greenfield and
21 Council Member Brad Lander.

22 Councilman Cabrera?

23 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I'm just
24 curious about one thing: Is Council Member
25 Ignizio's situation unique to his district or do

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we have this happening any other place?

CRAIG STEWART: I would say it's unique, I don't know of any other circumstances like this.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Why not use some of the other contractors that were effective in Manhattan, in Brooklyn, that had a good track record as soon as the first contractor failed to comply?

CRAIG STEWART: Well they're very different in terms of the operating railroad over there, a very different technology. And I think that's the problem, it offers us some very new challenges because they do have different technology over there, they have cab signaling and they have a very different set of circumstances there.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: We've been joined by Council Member Van Bramer. The next question is from Council Member Greenfield.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you good folks from the

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2 MTA. I have a couple of quick questions. First,
3 I'm a big fan of Bus Time and I'm very excited
4 about the pledge to roll it out citywide by the
5 end of 2013. I'm just wondering, one of the
6 complaints that I consistently get from my
7 constituents deals with the challenges of bus
8 bunching. If you're not familiar with the term,
9 basically this either intentionally or
10 unintentionally, I believe in some cases it is
11 intentional, where you have several buses on the
12 same line end up going one behind the other. The
13 reason why that's a problem, of course, is 'cause
14 buses are supposed to be spaced out and pick up,
15 say, every 20 minutes, if you've got three buses
16 coming at a time, you're probably going to wait an
17 hour for a bus.

18 I actually got a call from one of
19 my constituents literally the other day about this
20 exact issue. She ran up to a bus stop, there were
21 three of the same buses and she had to wait 45
22 minutes for another bus.

23 My question is that, with the
24 technology that you now have in place via Bus Time
25 with the GPS tracking system, will you use this

1
2 information to try to curb the practice of bus
3 bunching?

4 CRAIG CIPRIANO: So we are using
5 the information that we gleamed from Bus Time or
6 from the buses for our own internal service
7 management, so we've developed an internal
8 application that we use to manage service, you
9 know, via a website and you know we're developing
10 our strategies around that. We have seen some
11 improvements, I would be happy to say, in Staten
12 Island where we've first deployed Bus Time as far
13 as on time performance. Bus bunching per se,
14 though, in most cases, I won't say all cases, is a
15 function of traffic conditions, so in that case,
16 you know, I don't want to give anybody false hope
17 that technology, at least this type of technology,
18 could help in that regards, but the short answer
19 is, yes, we will be using that information to
20 manage service as well.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So I'm
22 no expert on MTA procedure, but let's just assume-
23 -let's just take what you're saying for granted, I
24 actually don't believe that, I don't believe it's
25 a function of traffic conditions, I believe that

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2 many times it's a function of sometimes folks not
3 wanting to work as hard as they should, but let's
4 just assume that it is innocent enough and that
5 somehow traffic manages to create a situation
6 where buses that leave 20 minutes apart end up
7 being three consecutively, one after the other.

8 I've never had that in my lifetime,
9 by the way, of having me and any of my colleagues
10 or any of my friends leave 20 minutes apart and
11 somehow end up exactly one behind the other behind
12 each other on the expressway, but let's just say
13 that somehow that is the case, you now have that
14 information in real-time, right? So what is to
15 stop you, say, from telling the second bus behind
16 the first bus to say, hey, you know, unload your
17 passengers, put them on the first bus, park for a
18 few minutes and wait, that way you can actually
19 expand the time between the buses and solve that
20 problem of this mysterious incident where traffic
21 causes all of these three buses in a row to end up
22 in the same place at the same time?

23 CRAIG CIPRIANO: So there are a
24 number of service management strategies that we
25 deploy, just as you described, and we've always

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2 deployed them. The challenge in the past has
3 always been that we've always managed service from
4 a local level, from a street corner, more or less,
5 'cause that's the information we had in front of
6 us. We knew what the bus is doing right now and
7 the buses that have passed us. But now in this
8 age of new technology, we have the ability to see,
9 you know, all along the route and we are making
10 those service management decisions and actually
11 implementing them on a more global scale and we
12 have found that to be effective.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.

14 So is that a yes, a maybe, a sort of--

15 CRAIG CIPRIANO: [Interposing] That
16 is--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --what
18 does that mean? I'm sorry, I'm not--

19 CRAIG CIPRIANO: --that is a yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.
21 So you will try to utilize that technology to
22 prevent this issue.

23 CRAIG CIPRIANO: We will use it,
24 not try, but will use it.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.

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2 Excellent. And then just I'm curious about the
3 electric buses and vehicles, can you just give us
4 the, sort of the update on that challenges? It
5 seems like we would be well placed in New York
6 City to be using these vehicles.

7 CRAIG CIPRIANO: So just to provide
8 a little bit more background, I mean, we do have
9 1,600 buses that use hybrid electric technology in
10 our fleet right now, so it's a mix of diesel
11 engine and electric traction motors, and, you
12 know, and they are very effective at, you know,
13 emissions control. Moving forward, you know,
14 clean diesel right now is what we're employing is
15 also, you know, with the latest EPA standards, is
16 also a very, you know, effective propulsion system
17 as far as emissions.

18 In the future, again, we're working
19 closely with our bus manufacturers, but at this
20 point, they're not ready with an electric
21 propulsion system to test in our environment. But
22 we have tested other electric propulsion systems
23 in other applications, you know, namely a non-
24 revenue vehicle fleet and, you know, some vehicles
25 we use in and around our facilities.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I'm
3 just curious, are you limited to certain
4 manufacturers? Because I know that in Asia, for
5 example, there are several large manufacturers
6 that do in fact successfully utilize electric
7 buses, pure electric buses. So do you have
8 limitations on that--

9 [Crosstalk]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: --or
11 how does that work?

12 CRAIG CIPRIANO: So currently we
13 have qualified manufacturers that have buses
14 qualified in our duty cycle and our environment,
15 however, it doesn't prohibit us from, and we do do
16 this, we go out and, you know, survey the vendor
17 landscape to see what is out there.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: So I
19 can send you information? I mean, just full
20 disclosure, I don't have any stock in this
21 company, it's just there seems to be a couple of
22 companies out in Asia who, very impressively, use
23 100% electric, so could I forward you some
24 information, maybe take a look at that and see if
25 it might be a good fit?

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2 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Sure, we'll be
3 happy to look at that.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Great,
5 well I appreciate that, thank you very much.

6 [Crosstalk]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Final
8 question, I'm sorry, just before I forget.
9 Wireless connectivity on buses, is that something
10 you guys are looking at?

11 CRAIG CIPRIANO: That is something-
12 -well when you say wireless connectivity, do you
13 mean like a WiFi environment?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Yeah.

15 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yeah, we are
16 actively pursuing that and looking at that.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: On
18 buses as well?

19 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

20 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yes.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Great,
22 thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Let me ask one
24 quick question, then Council Member Brewer. We're
25 not close to a smartcard, there are issues you're

1
2 looking at. The MetroCard, now that we are--we're
3 going to continue using the MetroCard, one
4 complaint is that you have to be careful where you
5 put your MetroCard. If I put my MetroCard in
6 here, it's not going to be usable, it's I have to
7 get a new MetroCard, whatever money I have on it,
8 I have to mail it to the MTA, it takes several
9 weeks for a new MetroCard to be delivered to me
10 with whatever is left on the MetroCard. What are
11 we doing about people who do put their MetroCard
12 in their wallet, in their clip? Is there some way
13 that we could prevent this? Because people then
14 complain that it takes so long to get their
15 MetroCard back from the MTA. What technology can
16 we use to not have this happen time and time
17 again?

18 MIKE DEVITTO: Councilman, yeah,
19 that's one of the drawbacks of the current system.
20 While the MetroCard system is robust and it will
21 work, we know it's not going to drop off the cliff
22 for a while, we have made strategic investments to
23 keep it going. One of the drawbacks of magnetic
24 technology is there are times where that magnetic
25 stripe gets corrupted. Now I don't know the

1
2 particular instance, usually just keeping it in
3 your wallet will not cause that type of damage,
4 but, frankly, the challenge we have is that once
5 that stripe is damaged, the card cannot be read at
6 the booth. So if the customer brings it to the
7 booth, the station agent, in most cases, can't
8 read what's on there to give back money and that's
9 the reason why it needs to go back to the back
10 office.

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: That's what
12 happened. I take the MetroCard, I put it here,
13 then it's gone. But even if I look here--

14 CRAIG STEWART: Is that a--

15 MIKE DEVITTO: A magnet?

16 CRAIG STEWART: --money clip with
17 a--

18 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Yes.

19 CRAIG STEWART: --magnet?

20 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: It has a
21 magnet.

22 CRAIG STEWART: It demagnetizes the
23 strip on--

24 [Crosstalk]

25 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing]

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2 So this, putting it here, and I also think putting
3 it here would demagnetize--

4 CRAIG STEWART: Yeah.

5 MALE VOICE: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --the entire
7 card.

8 MARK BIENSTOCK: It's a magnetic
9 strip on the card--

10 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing]
11 It's a magnetic strip.

12 MARK BIENSTOCK: That's right, it's
13 like taking a magnet and running it over an old
14 disk, for example, to destroy the data on the
15 disk, it's the same concept.

16 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: How many people
17 do this? I can't be the only one.

18 MARK BIENSTOCK: At least one.

19 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: At least one.
20 No, no, there are many, I'm not the only one or I
21 wouldn't bring it up. I've learned, don't get me
22 wrong, but I learned the hard way because it took
23 weeks to get it back and I know the MTA has other
24 people who have this same problem. So are you
25 thinking of this? I'm not clear on what we can do

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or what you're going to do.

CRAIG STEWART: Well I guess what we could do is some public awareness to make people understand that putting it close to a magnet--

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing] Well public awareness is one thing, I could see that this thing cannot go through the turnstile--

CRAIG STEWART: Right.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --but I can't understand why the station agent cannot read it. Why can't we give the station agents the technology in the booth to read it, even if we cannot guarantee that the turnstile will accept it? I can understand the turnstile, but tell me why we can't have technology in the booths so that there's not a need to go through that bureaucracy of replacing a MetroCard like that.

MIKE DEVITTO: Sure, thanks, Councilman. The issue really is about the information and where it resides. So information from the turnstile gets batched up into a mainframe environment in a back office system, and that's the system that's read by our customer

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2 service agents when that card or when that claim
3 is made. That information is not available to the
4 booth agent at this point, so it's turnstile
5 information going up to a backend that never makes
6 it to the station agent's location and the
7 equipment in the booth just can't read that
8 turnstile--

9 [Crosstalk]

10 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: So why can't
11 we--

12 MIKE DEVITTO: --can't read the max
13 drive.

14 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --why can't we
15 give them equipment? Why--where? I know you have
16 a question.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: No, I [off
18 mic].

19 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: But why we can
20 give them that technology?

21 CRAIG STEWART: We can look into
22 it, but my inclination is to believe that it's
23 probably pretty expensive to bring to the station
24 environment.

25 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Council

1
2 Member Brewer.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right,
4 thank you. Couple of things, one is I like that
5 everyone loves your opening data focus, so we
6 appreciate that. Number two, picking up on some
7 of these issues about transit engineers needed.
8 Obviously, the Mayor, to his credit, is working
9 with some of our universities on technology. Are
10 you plugged into the issue--the efforts that are
11 going in to through EDC and others to try to find
12 more pipeline for the kinds of transit expertise
13 that you need? Yes or no.

14 MALE VOICE: Yes.

15 CRAIG STEWART: Yes, we are.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And what
17 are you doing specifically?

18 CRAIG STEWART: I don't know
19 specifically, do you know what's--

20 [Crosstalk]

21 MARK BIENSTOCK: [Interposing] We
22 work with various universities, we bring in
23 engineering students as interns at the Transit
24 Authority. We've done that in a number of
25 different projects, both--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] Okay. But what I'm saying is, obviously, the whole city is trying to do the incubator, the discussion, and so on, so I'm just saying I think you should be doing more. I mean, you've got every--I go to a lot of these discussions and so on, I don't hear enough about transit, I'm just telling you. So, you know, I'm looking to see that you should be front and center of the need and support for the incubator, the engineer, and the list goes on and on in terms of your needs. Every single list, I go to all the tech meet-ups, I'm there, I don't hear Transit a lot.

CRAIG CIPRIANO: So I'll be happy to share with you that, you know, we have an active relationship--and we've had in the past, it continues with CCNY and Columbia on their engineering students and technology students. And as a matter of fact, one of the earlier pilots of Bus Time, they were active in, as well as a number of other technology projects they've helped us along the way.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. I

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2 know Columbia's got a new effort, also NYU has an
3 effort, and, obviously, Cornell and so on. But
4 I'm saying you need more.

5 CRAIG STEWART: Yeah.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

7 Number two, just picking up on the buses, maybe I
8 missed this 'cause I was late, although I read
9 everything, so the countdown is going to be at
10 every bus stop when?

11 CRAIG CIPRIANO: At this point, the
12 Bus Time information is provided via cell phones
13 and texting--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

15 [Interposing] It doesn't help my seniors. That
16 doesn't help my seniors. They're all waiting at
17 the bus stops.

18 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Right,
19 unfortunately, we don't control bus shelters and,
20 you know, original research into that area made it
21 cost prohibitive--

22 [Crosstalk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

24 [Interposing] Okay. So that's where you need the
25 tech meet-up people, so I'm just saying is 'cause

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2 we had countdowns for a while and then--a few
3 years ago, and then they went away, and I know
4 there was some reason for that. But we need to
5 have--so you're saying that this has to do with
6 Cemusa and the DOT contract as to why you can't
7 have countdowns on the shelters?

8 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Well that's where
9 we ran into some obstacles. There are some pilot
10 efforts underway, both at the MTA and the DOT
11 level, for some other ways that we can provide
12 that, namely maybe solar powered street signs, and
13 you'll be seeing some pilots coming--

14 [Crosstalk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
16 [Interposing] Perfect incubator question, okay.
17 So that's what we'll work on. I know smartcards
18 are not happening immediately, but between the--I
19 get calls all the time, why can't I use this--some
20 card for the Muni-meters that's the same as my
21 MetroCard. In other words, people want to be able
22 to be more seamless and I never go to New Jersey,
23 I think I've been three times in my life, but I
24 know there's a PATH train there or something,
25 right? So people say you can't always be seamless

1
2 about one card. Is that something that you're
3 working on? There's a lot of places that we
4 travel, you know, I never leave New York, but
5 others do--

6 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --and I
8 don't have a card, but lots do, and they want to
9 be able to have one seamless--

10 CRAIG STEWART: [Interposing] We
11 are working with other agencies, not only just the
12 MTA--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
14 [Interposing] What's the timing on all of that?

15 CRAIG STEWART: That's connected to
16 the scoping and development of the new fare
17 payment card, which I don't have right now.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.
19 Finally, seniors, they want to be able to buy a
20 bus card, a MetroCard, on the street. At 72nd
21 Street, they can do so, flat, but everywhere else
22 they have to go upstairs, downstairs to buy a
23 MetroCard, sometimes they can't go upstairs or
24 downstairs. So my question is: Technology-wise,
25 why can't we find some street side technology

opportunities to buy a MetroCard? Was that clear?

MIKE DEVITTO: Councilwoman, we do have out of system merchants, we do sell MetroCards over the counter at thousands of locations around the city.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
[Interposing] Do they charge you?

MIKE DEVITTO: There is no charge. Our agreements with these merchants stipulates that they cannot charge above the face value for those MetroCards. And we do have recruiting staff that goes out to make sure that, as much as we can, we cover every bus stop in the city with a merchant nearby. I would suggest that that's one option.

We also have a MetroCard van and bus that travel around the city--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right.

MIKE DEVITTO: --specifically for community centers and senior centers.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
[Interposing] No, I know that--

MIKE DEVITTO: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --they just

1
2 want--maybe it's not as clear as it should be as
3 to where to purchase, maybe that's something that
4 you don't do enough advertising on because I think
5 that I get every senior center complains a lot
6 that it's an upstairs-downstairs situation. Okay.
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you. And
9 let's follow through on Council Member Brewer's
10 question regarding bus stop shelter use. Why
11 can't we work with DOT and the contractor, the
12 concessionaire, Cemusa, why don't we work with
13 them?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Well we
15 take care of that one.

16 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: You're taking
17 care of it?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yeah,
19 there's somebody--

20 [Crosstalk]

21 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing] I
22 thought the MTA takes care of it.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know, but
24 somebody can figure out what to do with some tech-

25 -

2 CRAIG STEWART: [Interposing] We
3 can use all the help we can get.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --
5 innovative tech companies, they can figure this
6 out, I'm--

7 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing] I
8 want you to figure that out. It just makes sense
9 that we have thousands of bus stop shelters in our
10 city, so why can't they be used? And if that
11 means that DOT has to modify the contract, they
12 modify the contract based on a new technology that
13 we need to implement and work with the MTA to that
14 end. It doesn't seem complicated, I just think
15 it's something that it's all in our best interests
16 to do.

17 CRAIG STEWART: Yeah.

18 CRAIG CIPRIANO: So, yes, we have
19 worked with DOT and we will continue to work with
20 DOT to effect that.

21 CRAIG STEWART: Solve that problem-

22 -

23 [Crosstalk]

24 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Well if you
25 need our assistance, let us know.

2 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: 'Cause I just
4 think it makes such common sense, and I'm sure DOT
5 would be receptive, or at least I want to be sure-
6 -

7 CRAIG STEWART: Thank you--

8 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --that they
9 would be.

10 CRAIG STEWART: --appreciate it.

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay?

12 CRAIG STEWART: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you.

14 Council Member Lander.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So I just
16 am going to pick right up on this conversation and
17 push it even a little bit harder because I've been
18 at it for a little while now with the same set of
19 answers. Money was allocated through the
20 participatory budgeting process in my district,
21 we've been having the conversations with you guys
22 and--but let me back up for a minute.

23 I do want to praise all of the new
24 technology that's in place. The B63 and the B61
25 in my district have Bus Time and it's great, it

1 makes a big difference, I really appreciate it.
2 My 12-year old son uses it. It matters to a whole
3 lot of people who are able to use smartphones and
4 technology, and I'm looking forward to it doing
5 some of what Council Member Greenfield said as
6 well. As you may recall, on the 61, we sent a
7 whole bunch of people out to count rides because
8 on the lower--on bus lines that aren't the highest
9 levels, you guys don't have currently before Bus
10 Time, the data to really know what's going on and
11 make improvements. I'm excited about the
12 opportunity for you to use that, as you spoke to
13 Council Member Greenfield for a systemic
14 improvements as well. And I want to specifically
15 call out a couple of things that Andy Englesbee
16 [phonetic] has done recently around some of the
17 subway ads and the opening of the Barclay Center
18 station to make sure things are going smoothly
19 underground and in the community.

21 All that said, I'm glad to know
22 there's openness on getting the bus countdown
23 clocks, but we really need more than openness, we
24 got to get it done. And the sense that I have is
25 that the resistance in the nexus of relationship

1
2 between DOT, Cemusa, and you guys isn't really
3 moving forward, that there are some challenging
4 contractual issues to address, but we need them
5 resolved. And I question the--you raised the
6 issue of cost, but first I'll point out there's an
7 advertising opportunity here as well, and so, you
8 know, you can easily imagine countdown clocks that
9 toggle between when the next bus is coming and
10 advertisement, you know, and that's the whole
11 basis of the Cemusa relationship for the shelters.
12 So I don't believe that--not only don't I believe
13 there should be an operating cost to this system,
14 I believe first it could be revenue positive
15 because there's an advertising opportunity that
16 would be entirely consistent with people knowing
17 when the next bus is coming through toggling. And
18 I've already allocated capital, the Staten Island
19 borough president has already allocated capital,
20 there is--we're hungry for this, Bus Time is
21 wonderful currently if you use a smartphone, but
22 it's not--a lot of people that use our buses are
23 seniors, we got to get there.

24 And I like the idea of adding and a
25 way of doing it beyond the shelters because many

1
2 of our bus stops don't have shelters, so a solar
3 powered street sign with a little chip that you
4 could hang on is a great idea. It also could be
5 revenue positive if you toggle ads.

6 So there's something we need here,
7 there is an opportunity to do it in a cost
8 effective way, it feels like there is a kind of
9 agency and contract bureaucracy, which I
10 understand that you guys didn't create, but we've
11 got to do better than there's a pilot program,
12 we're working on it, we need, like, a deadline to
13 and then to cut through the bureaucracy. And so,
14 you know, what's needed to do that, I guess, is my
15 question, you know, what's needed to get us there.

16 CRAIG CIPRIANO: So I apologize if
17 I gave the committee the sense that, you know,
18 obstacles as such that, you know, we cannot
19 overcome. We are actually actively working with
20 DOT to provide that type of information in an
21 active way at bus stops, and it's actively
22 happening. So, you know, I believe that there's
23 going to be a request for information going out to
24 the vendor community in the near future through
25 DOT, and, again, we are actively engaged with them

1
2 and working towards that.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So that's
4 great to hear about the RF--give us a little more
5 sense of bench--I guess what I would say on our
6 end is, you know, at some point having the hearing
7 now, yeah, that's a good idea, we're working on
8 it, there comes a time when we have to think about
9 how to elevate the issue. Give us some sense of
10 benchmarks so we can have a sense if we see that
11 Request for Information, if we see information
12 about a pilot by some point, we can feel like
13 good, the agency and these things are on track.
14 And if not, we say we have to do something more to
15 push this to the next level so we can get it
16 moving forward.

17 CRAIG CIPRIANO: So because we're
18 not the primary project manager of this effort,
19 you know, I would rather get back to the committee
20 because, you know, I don't want to put any
21 deadlines on something that we're not primary
22 project manager on.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay. Well
24 then I'll follow up with the chairman, I think,
25 you know, doing it by letter and giving us a--but

1
2 giving us a real sense of benchmarks so that we
3 see the progress toward this will help us have the
4 confidence that it's--

5 CRAIG CIPRIANO: Yeah.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: --moving
7 forward.

8 CRAIG STEWART: And I just want to
9 speak to your idea of monetizing the sign, I think
10 that's a great idea, we're doing it on the On The
11 Go! project as well as with the SAID signs, and if
12 there's an opportunity here, we'll take advantage
13 of that.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Super. Mr.
15 Chairman, thank you, and thank you [off mic] very
16 much.

17 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you. And
18 there being no further--oh, one more question,
19 Chair Cabrera.

20 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I wanted to
21 go back towards the issue of the kiosks. You
22 mention in your testimony that the companies who
23 will be paying for this kiosk will be able to
24 recoup their monies after 12 months, correct?

25 CRAIG STEWART: During the 12-month

1
2 period that we launch these. They have 12 months
3 to regain their capital investment.

4 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And so what
5 happen after the 12 months?

6 CRAIG STEWART: Then we go to a
7 revenue share model that which right now is being
8 proposed at a 70%/30% split, we get 70%, the MTA,
9 and they receive 30%.

10 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: With that
11 particular company that set up the kiosks.

12 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. So
14 there's not an opportunity for any other companies
15 to lead on advertise in those kiosks?

16 CRAIG STEWART: This is a pilot and
17 these companies will go out and seek advertisement
18 opportunities.

19 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I see.

20 CRAIG STEWART: You know, they're
21 going to go get as much advertisement as they can
22 so they can pay themselves back as quickly as
23 possible.

24 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: But at one
25 point they will have recouped their money--

2 CRAIG STEWART: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --right?

4 And--

5 CRAIG STEWART: [Interposing] And
6 then we will begin a revenue share with them, but
7 these are only 100 to 150 devices, we plan to roll
8 these out system-wide.

9 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: How much each
10 of those kiosks go for?

11 CRAIG STEWART: They cost about
12 between 10 and \$13,000.

13 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: That's it?

14 CRAIG STEWART: That's all.

15 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. And
16 how much is it going to cost to advertise?

17 CRAIG STEWART: I don't know that
18 figure, you know, we're in negotiations with our
19 partners.

20 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. Sounds
21 to me like they got a good deal. My last question
22 is in regards to that, it's kind of trivial but I
23 think it's, in a way, important. So many people
24 are going to be touching these screens, have
25 anybody look into that? I mean, are these going

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to be cleaned on a daily basis or...?

CRAIG STEWART: We're developing a cleaning regimen for the screens.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. Fantastic, thank you so much.

CRAIG STEWART: Welcome.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: With no further questions, I thank our panel. It's exciting, it's something we're looking forward to and we know that we'll be seeing you again. Thank you.

CRAIG STEWART: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you, gentlemen. Our panel now is from TWU, Angel Giboyeaux--I can't pronounce it, I know it's wrong--Mario Galvez, and Celeste Kirkland.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you, thank you.

[Off mic]

ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Yeah, they give-- what is that one? He's going to give them out now. He's going to give them out now.

[background noise]

CELESTE KIRKLAND: Alan.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: I'm sorry, the meeting's not over.

MALE VOICE: Oh, I'm sorry, yeah, I just wanted to--

[Crosstalk]

MALE VOICE: Okay. I'm so sorry.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: You can just put that back there 'cause if you're going to move around--

[background noise]

MALE VOICE: I just got to take this, one second--

[background noise]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: The hearing's still going on, folks, you have to do this--

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing] We're not done. Okay. Please introduce yourselves, welcome.

ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Good morning, is this on?

[Off mic]

ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Okay. Good morning, Chairman and Committee, my name is Angel Giboyeaux, G-I-B-O-Y-E-A-U-X, I'm the

1
2 administrative vice president of the Transport
3 Workers Union, Local 100, and on behalf of our
4 38,000 members, I want to thank the committee for
5 allowing us to actually come here and make a
6 statement today. To my left, I have Ms. Celeste
7 Kirkland, who is actually a fiber optic
8 technician, nationally certified, as well as an
9 instructor in solar panels with the New York City
10 Transit through a program that we created called
11 Green Jobs, which was a cooperated effort between
12 New York City Transit and the Transport Workers
13 Union. To my right, I have Mario Galven
14 [phonetic], who actually sat as part of that
15 committee of the Green Jobs initiative program.

16 The MTA invested huge amounts of
17 money in high-tech projects, but once the funds
18 are committed, it often turns a blind eye to how
19 well the funds are being spent and whether the
20 projects are on time or on budget. The MTA's huge
21 cost overruns on its high-tech projects are
22 legendary. Out of control costs not only afflict
23 the construction mega projects like the Second
24 Avenue Subway, Eastchester Access, and the Fulton
25 Transit hubs, but also plague high-tech projects

1
2 like the ordering of police radios that allow law
3 enforcements to communicate below and above
4 ground, the installation of the New York City
5 Transit's fiber optic SONET network and its
6 associated network of surveillance cameras in the
7 subways. On the positive side, the MTA has made
8 progress upgrading the solar technology in certain
9 facilities and ordering new state of the art
10 subway cars and buses with improved HVAC systems
11 and more protection for operators. But it still
12 resists training its own workforce to meet new
13 tech challenges, often preferring to contract out
14 work and pay much higher prices than it would to
15 train MTA employees.

16 One illustration of the inability
17 of the MTA to control costs with contractors is
18 its attempt to install communications equipment in
19 the subway tunnels to allow police to effectively
20 communicate by radio, both above and below ground.
21 Decades ago, VHF antennas were installed in the
22 subway system to enable police to communicate from
23 point to point. From the 1960s through the late
24 1980s, there were many dead spots extensively
25 documented in crime reports where police could not

1
2 hear one another to get help to crime scenes. But
3 in the early 1990s, with funding obtained through
4 President Clinton's anti-crime bill, and then the
5 Transit police department was able to obtain funds
6 that allowed them to make huge improvements in the
7 VHF system. They purchased new synthesized
8 portable radios, Motorola SABRES, got rid of the
9 old 300 ohm twin-lead antennas and replaced them
10 with better radiax antennas in the tunnels, and
11 contracted with Verizon, then Bell-Atlantic, to
12 install dedicated radio lines from each base
13 station back to the transit command center at Jay
14 Street.

15 After these fixes, the VHF system
16 was working very well. Transit police were able
17 to communicate both above and below ground,
18 however, it wasn't possible for the city police to
19 communicate with transit police. Then, as now,
20 they coordinated responses through dispatchers in
21 common central command locations, but the MTA
22 reacted to bad publicity about the radio system.
23 Even though the problems in the subway system had
24 been corrected, they decided to bid out a new
25 system which would operate on UHF frequencies and

1
2 allow for the use of up to 14 new frequencies by
3 transit police as well as allowing them to
4 communicate with the city police.

5 In 1996, the MTA bid out the police
6 radio UHF project. The likes of GE, Erickson, and
7 Motorola put in bids that consist of designs that
8 specified that there should be a separate UHF
9 antenna system, but the MTA went with the lower
10 bidder, EA Technologies, which said that the MTA
11 could use the existing VHF antennas to propagate
12 the UHF signals. Local 100 members, who maintain
13 the radio equipment, advised against it.

14 It turned out that the VHF antennas
15 were the wrong design to propagate the UHF
16 signals. EA Technologies installed tens of
17 thousands of extra feet of antennas to allow
18 better UHF operation and then the thousands of
19 devices into the old antennas to boost the UHF
20 signals. MTA engineers told the New York Times in
21 2007 that the antennas were the wrong--the
22 antennas were being upgraded with new antenna
23 wires because many had corroded. This was flatly
24 untrue. The changes to the antenna system were
25 made to boost the weak UHF signals, and in the

1
2 process, thousands of new points of potential
3 failure were introduced, with dozens of breaks in
4 the antenna wire insertions of connecting cables.
5 These devices had been installed in very hard to
6 get to places, including the ceilings of express
7 tracks. Because there are many more components,
8 the antenna system requires much more servicing
9 and associated testing. In many cases, work
10 trains have to be deployed just to fix one defect
11 in an antenna.

12 The original plan was to allow for
13 the use of up to 17 frequencies--14 by the NYPD, 2
14 for FDNY, and 1 for EMS. But to date, the MTA has
15 only been able to set up two frequencies for the
16 NYPD in just some of the 48 communications zones
17 within the transit system. And in spite of the
18 MTA spending 450 million, the police radio
19 communications system is still plagued by
20 technical and interference problems. EA
21 Technologies was dropped by the MTA after their
22 costs for the project increased by a factor of
23 300%. The MTA then turned to in-house engineers
24 to fix the interference problems, without
25 significant improvement. Last year, facing

1
2 continuing complaints about the inability of the
3 police to effectively communicate on the UHF
4 system, Mayor Bloomberg approved 9 million to
5 purchase dual band radios, which work on both the
6 old VHF frequency and the new UHF frequency.

7 By its nature, the UHF system is
8 much less robust than the old VHF system. Just
9 one failure in any radio antenna component makes
10 it inoperable, rendering it impossible for two
11 police officers to speak to one another within the
12 same station and possibly to the command center,
13 depending on where the break is. By contrast, the
14 VHF system can sustain multiple breaks along its
15 radial tie lines and antennas or even the
16 destruction of the command center. Under these
17 conditions, the police would still be able to
18 communicate with each other in a span of up to
19 four train stations because of its local repeat
20 feature, which is not possible on the UHF system.

21 Today, to achieve acceptable
22 performance of the UHF system in certain zones
23 only, transit engineers have instructed the radio
24 communications technicians to lower the power
25 output of the existing VHF system predominantly to

1
2 dangerous low levels. Today, police--

3 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing]

4 Can I ask that you conclude? It's been--

5 MARIO GALVET: Huh?

6 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Huh? Yes, I'm
7 asking that you--

8 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Conclude?

9 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --try to wrap
10 up.

11 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Okay.

12 MARIO GALVET: You got to be
13 kidding me, is that the way it works?

14 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Excuse me, I
15 won't tolerate rudeness like that, if you don't
16 want to speak, that's your prerogative.

17 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Okay.

18 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I'm asking that
19 the speaker now--

20 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: [Interposing] An
21 even more--

22 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --conclude his
23 statement.

24 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Okay. An even
25 more shocking example of waste is the MTA's

1
2 installation of the fiber optic network called
3 SONET beginning in 1999. There are two types of
4 fiber optic communications networks--synchronous
5 and asynchronous. Synchronous communications
6 allow people to connect at a single point in time,
7 at one time. I hope that your eyes are not
8 glazing over this point because if you have ever
9 purchased a MetroCard or put a token in a train
10 turnstile in New York, this is your money.

11 Between '89 and 1991, the MTA
12 contracted Northern Telecom to install an
13 asynchronous fiber optic system throughout the
14 subway system. It worked well and is actually
15 still carrying 80 to 90% of the communications
16 traffic in the subways. The TWU Local 100 members
17 have been maintaining it since it was installed.

18 The Northern Telecom system has
19 nodes where signals are delivered and transmitted
20 in 96 locations around the city. Many of the old
21 power substations from these nodes communicate
22 signal fan out to various subsystems and
23 communication outlets.

24 There is more good news to follow
25 the bad, but there is some. In four MTA

1
2 properties--Roosevelt Avenue, Corona, and Gun Hill
3 depots, and the Stillwell Terminal at Coney
4 Island--the MTA has installed working photovoltaic
5 solar systems to save on electrical bills and
6 provide a showcase for solar panel. Working with
7 the MTA, TWU Local 100 has used a grant to train
8 450 union members in maintaining and
9 troubleshooting the solar panel arrays. Local 100
10 encourages the MTA to construct more solar panel
11 arrays on many properties that could easily
12 accommodate them and benefit from the net
13 reduction and the need to purchase electrical
14 power they make possible. This is in line with
15 Governor Cuomo's New York Sun Initiative that is
16 supposed to create new jobs in the solar energy
17 sector.

18 Training should also be expanded to
19 MTA employees to be able to service and
20 troubleshoot the new HVAC system in the state-of-
21 the-art subway cars. Although the procurement
22 process for new equipment takes at least a year,
23 giving the MTA plenty of time to prepare to
24 service what they buy, the Authority generally
25 does not train enough personnel to maintain the

1
2 high-tech products they purchase, then they must
3 turn to contractors who are much more expensive
4 than the in-house workforce.

5 In conclusion, modern technology is
6 crucial to the performance of the MTA's mission,
7 but mismanagement, lack of provision for training,
8 and questionable relationships with large
9 multinational corporations make this an area where
10 tremendous waste has been the norm. These
11 gigantic contracts are let without oversight,
12 without regard to expert advice offered by the
13 MTA's own employees and without regard to
14 tremendous cost overruns. Rather than take these
15 lessons to heart, the MTA barrels forward with
16 high-tech projects that end up putting a much
17 greater hole in the budget than any other single
18 factor.

19 Additionally, the police radio
20 communications system within the subway system, is
21 now slated to be made compliant with the FCC's
22 narrow-band mandate. Therefore, once this
23 transition takes place, there is no need to ever
24 use the UHF system and it should be abandoned.
25 Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you, sir.

3 And we will follow up on much of what you've
4 written, and I thank you for your input.

5 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: All right, thank
6 you for letting me finish at least the last part
7 of it.

8 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. We've
9 been joined by Council Member Darlene Mealy. Any
10 questions? Council Member Cabrera?

11 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: I have a
12 question. I'm sure you heard the testimony from
13 MTA, is there anything you heard that was of
14 concern to you and to your employees?

15 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Sure, they're not
16 actually involving us on the input of new
17 technology and our members are the ones that are
18 down there, you know, working day in and day out
19 and they're actually--you know, look, everybody
20 looks at transit workers as the bus operator or
21 the train operator, you know, we have high-tech
22 people working down there. We're not just, you
23 know, operating buses and trains, we're also
24 professionals too.

25 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: So you're

1
2 saying that you have the capacity within the
3 workforce to be able to do this type of work.

4 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Oh yeah, sure.
5 Actually, I could have Celeste Kirkland chime in
6 on that.

7 CELESTE KIRKLAND: Yeah. Hi, my
8 name is Celeste Kirkland, I'm actually a power
9 cable maintainer and I'm also an officer for the
10 maintenance sections. We work inside of the
11 tunnels, all of the trainways. So what I wanted
12 to say based on what MTA board had said--panel,
13 there is so much of our system that the riding
14 public doesn't see. There's not this glamorous
15 vision of modernization, as the Councilman Vacca
16 stated earlier. Once you pass the station, where
17 are the cameras? Where are the CCTVs? Where are
18 the safety manhole locks? There are numerous
19 ways, as far as terrorism, everything related.
20 All of that goes out the window and we're back to
21 a system that was built in 1904 that we're putting
22 Band-Aids on. And it's nice to say I can use my
23 smartphone to get a new thing, yeah, I'm going to
24 let the public know, oh, it's nice and pretty and
25 it's shiny, but where have we dealt with the real

1
2 safety issues as far as what you breathe when
3 you're down there, the--you know, the numerous
4 systems, we have solar panels now, but there's
5 nobody maintaining them. I'm a maintainer, we're
6 not maintaining these things. I installed the
7 antenna systems twice for something that's failed.
8 A lot of times, when our contractors have to work,
9 who goes in--and Mario knows this--who goes in and
10 has to fix the work that they've done? That
11 they've taken and they've delayed. We're capable,
12 we're definitely capable of doing the work.

13 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. Thank
14 you so much.

15 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Okay.

16 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I thank you.
17 We've been joined by Council Member Debbie Rose.
18 My concern is your concern regarding the
19 antiquated nature of much of the signal equipment,
20 and you mentioned other issues as well. You don't
21 have to even use the word antiquated when you're
22 on a train in the Bronx.

23 CELESTE KIRKLAND: Right.

24 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: You use the
25 word unrealistically antiquated. I mean, you have

1
2 to just look at the stations going south of
3 Parkchester on the six line and you will know,
4 once you reach Brooke Avenue, 143rd, and you reach
5 Hunts Point station, which I know that one
6 station's under rehab, but Cypress Avenue. You go
7 one by one and you see the antiquated nature and
8 you see the evidence of years of capital neglect,
9 so, yes.

10 CELESTE KIRKLAND: If I could just
11 answer that one statement.

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Yes.

13 CELESTE KIRKLAND: If you are
14 seeing it, Councilman, imagine what the workers,
15 imagine what TWU Local 100 members are seeing.
16 You don't want to know what's antiquated, I can't
17 even go to the bathroom.

18 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing]
19 Well I can attest to it. I have visited subway
20 stations without notice and I can attest to it.
21 Now I know Hunts Point, for example, is being
22 rehabilitated, but I got off at Hunts Point one
23 day just to walk the station and I couldn't--I
24 went out of my mind. I mean, the rats were there
25 dancing as I got off and they were dancing--I

2 don't know if I was seeing Dancing with the Stars
3 or--but I saw stars, I'll tell you that much.

4 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Dancing with
5 the Rats.

6 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Dancing with
7 the Rats. And then there was a water accumulation
8 issue on the tracks, significant West Nile issues,
9 and garbage, and graffiti. And the MTA, you know,
10 the next day was there 'cause I flipped. But it
11 shouldn't take that I have to flip out to have
12 those things taken care of.

13 And I was at Pelham Bay Park subway
14 station, garbage was stored improperly, causing
15 rat infestation, I got that taken care of. But,
16 again, Council Members are only one person and we
17 cannot be everywhere, so I understand what you're
18 saying. I appreciate your hard work and
19 diligence. Okay. Any questions? Council Member
20 Darlene Mealy.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Good
22 afternoon, well almost--

23 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Good afternoon.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: --good
25 morning. Sorry for being late. I just have a

1
2 quick question. You stated that you had technical
3 people, about 300 of them, did in-house technology
4 on the system. What is your Plan B if our Mayor
5 is going through with the new contract of
6 technology? Do you believe TWU is going to do a
7 lawsuit against that? 'Cause you know once that
8 technology program get in place, all outsourcing
9 is going to take over union jobs. So do you have
10 a contingency plan in regards to that?

11 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Well, you know,
12 basically, you know, this statement is basically
13 to let you know that there shouldn't be no out
14 contracting of the work that our members are
15 capable of doing. I mean, we've shown time and
16 time again that not only are we capable of doing
17 it, but, you know, we have the expertise as well.
18 And, you know, I mean, we just saw--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY:

20 [Interposing] So how are you highlighting that
21 expertise to the system or to the government to
22 make sure that once those jobs come into play, we
23 can show that you have 500 or 1,000 people can do
24 the job probably more cost effective than a
25 contractor outside?

2 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Well we've
3 already proven that with the fiber optic. The
4 fiber optic is done by our members who actually--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY:

6 [Interposing] About 400?

7 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Four hundred and
8 fifty, all right? And as well as the solar
9 panels, that's done by our members, they're
10 nationally certified fiber optic technicians. You
11 know, they can do the work, you know, throughout
12 the whole nation, so why hire an outside
13 contractor? I mean, you had MTA here sitting a
14 few minutes ago telling you about this big dream
15 and they be scheming while you be dreaming, all
16 right? And--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Yep.

18 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: --the thing about
19 that is that, you know, you should really look at
20 what they're saying. They're saying, yeah, you
21 know, we don't know how much this is going to cost
22 us, but this is going to work great, and we all
23 know how their greatness has worked in the past.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I just hope
25 that you have a contingency plan to counteract

1
2 this new technology division that City Council
3 will not have oversight over.

4 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Well we'll--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So all those
6 contracts outsourcing, we will not be able to
7 really say anything, so please be prepared.

8 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Oh, oh, sure.
9 You know, we'll go up to Albany, we'll, you know,
10 speak our mind as well, we're not just going to
11 let them run over, you know, our union members who
12 are qualified to do the work and save the Transit
13 Authority money.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Thank you.

15 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Thank you.

16 MARIO GALVET: Can I add something
17 too?

18 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Yeah, you can.

19 MARIO GALVET: Yeah, hi, I just
20 want to add something to what--

21 [Crosstalk]

22 MARIO GALVET: Oh, yeah, my name is
23 Mario--

24 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing]
25 Identify yourself, please?

1
2 MARIO GALVET: Okay. My name is
3 Mario Galvet [phonetic], I sit on the executive
4 board of the Transport Workers Union, Local 100.
5 I'm also almost 25 years as an electronic
6 equipment maintainer maintaining the police radio
7 communication system, and among the things we also
8 do is maintain all aspects of CCTV surveillance
9 systems for the New York City Transit Authority
10 and the NYPD.

11 One thing that really stands out in
12 my mind is following the bombings in Spain of the
13 railway system over there. Mr. Dove Haykin
14 [phonetic] allocated some money so that a CCTV
15 system could be installed in the subway stations
16 in his district, and that's the only time I can
17 think of in which things were really done the way
18 they should have been done. They tapped in-house
19 labor, they tapped in-house engineering to come up
20 with a system fast. We covered I don't know how
21 many stations, dozens of stations for a mere
22 pittance of \$1.2 million, and that system is the
23 most reliable system for the NYPD when it comes to
24 retrieving CCTV images of crimes that have been
25 perpetrated in that area or whenever there's

1
2 things like Code Reds and a lot of other things
3 that I'm not at liberty to talk about. And when
4 they suspect that a terrorist outfit is out there,
5 you know, staking the place out and doing things,
6 we get images for them like that.

7 By contrast, the CCTV systems that
8 have been put in by contractors are a nightmare,
9 garbage. Low resolution images, poorly focused
10 cameras, you name it, they're useless. And we
11 presented the Transit Authority about a year and a
12 half ago, we had a PowerPoint presentation we're
13 giving the transit president on a system that was
14 designed that we proposed--when we say we, us in
15 the workforce, certain engineers that work for the
16 Transit Authority--and it was a means by which we
17 were going to be able to put out CCTV systems,
18 high resolution CCTV system, using off-the-shelf
19 stuff, not the fancy stuff that Lockheed Martin
20 and all these other guys like selling. And to be
21 able to install it so inexpensively and that it
22 would be possible to put CCTV almost in every
23 station right away. But, you know, much as almost
24 happened here, our PowerPoint presentation was
25 interrupted with, well, you know, we're just going

1
2 to give it to the contractors anyway. That's the
3 way they do business.

4 And, you know, most of his prepared
5 statement here dealt with a radio communication
6 system. I was hoping somebody would ask him
7 questions about that. That's really the big story
8 here. You have a radio communication system that
9 they've spent nearly \$450 million on and its
10 beneficial use is zero, does not work. Okay?
11 That's the dirty little secret that the MTA has,
12 and they will never make it work. They've just
13 pushed it on to the--in recent days to the
14 maintenance division, telling them we don't want
15 to hear about your in-house testing criteria for
16 acceptance, you're going to take this and that's
17 the end of it. Okay? And it's a big ticket item,
18 \$450 million to date, does not work, will never
19 work, it's fundamentally flawed, the whole project
20 is an abject failure. So anybody want a report on
21 that or they all go home yet?

22 [Off mic]

23 MARIO GALVET: Oh, I know you, hey,
24 what's going on? Okay. That's it.

25 FEMALE VOICE: Wow.

2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. There
3 being no further questions--

4 FEMALE VOICE: Wow.

5 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --we have two
6 more people, next panel, I call up, I thank you--

7 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: [Interposing] Can
8 I add something before I leave?

9 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Sure.

10 ANGEL GIBOYEAUX: Although the MTA
11 was sitting here and asking for money for this
12 great dream they have, I really hope that you
13 would actually consider looking at the whole
14 statement, even though you didn't let me finish
15 it, because the stuff that's in here has a lot of
16 facts. Thank you very much.

17 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Yeah, oh, we
18 will look at your entire statement. Whenever we
19 have statements submitted, we do so.

20 Okay. Our next two speakers are
21 Amanda Moskowitz, Mobile Commons Bus Time, and
22 Veronica Vanterpool of Tri-State Transportation
23 Campaign. So, Veronica, why don't you go first
24 and identify yourself, please?

25 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: Yes, good--or

1
2 good afternoon, thank you, Chairman Vacca and
3 Cabrera and Council Members Weprin, Rose, and
4 Mealy. My name is Veronica Vanterpool and I'm the
5 executive director of Tri-State Transportation
6 Campaign, which is a nonprofit policy watchdog
7 organization that works in New York, New Jersey,
8 Connecticut on transit, land use, bike and
9 pedestrian at the city, state, and federal level.
10 That's a mouthful.

11 Technology has become a part of our
12 daily lives, but has been missing from our daily
13 transit commutes. Just a few short years ago,
14 police officers were the only enforcement for
15 speeding motorists and clogged bus lanes, bus and
16 subway riders waiting at a bus shelter or a subway
17 platform had no idea when their next train or bus
18 would arrive, buses waited for a green light,
19 idling along with cars along busy corridors,
20 trains didn't operate themselves, buses only
21 accepted coins and ran on highly inefficient and
22 polluting diesel fuel. Today, users of our bus
23 and subway network have benefited greatly from the
24 implementation and adoption of technology.

25 Camera technology has helped keep

1
2 bus only lanes free and clear and helped reduce
3 speeding and red light running, while allowing
4 police officers to pay attention to other, more
5 serious infractions. Bus riders have had a faster
6 commute as a result of bus camera technology, and
7 we know that intersections where cameras have been
8 installed have seen a 56% decline in serious
9 injuries, a 44% decrease in pedestrian injuries,
10 and a 16% decrease in all injuries overall, and
11 that includes for motorists too.

12 We've heard about the countdown
13 clocks earlier from the MTA. We've also heard
14 about Bus Time and according to a recent survey,
15 many users of Bus Time have reported a 90%
16 satisfaction rate of their bus service overall, so
17 we know that when people are connected to
18 technology and able to use it, it does enhance
19 their overall transit or commuting experience.

20 We know that we are able to now
21 receive text and e-mail alerts when our buses and
22 subways are delayed. Most often, we get those
23 alerts in advance of starting our trips, so
24 sometimes we can take an alternate route. That's
25 not always the case, so there's some improvement

1
2 needed there, but it is especially helpful to know
3 when the number five train is not running because
4 there's a tree down in the Bronx.

5 And commuter rail riders also have
6 a service where they can text something called
7 Coo-Coo and find out when the next five trains are
8 scheduled to depart from their desired station.

9 Transit signal priority is a GPS
10 signal priority system that has been used along
11 select bus service corridors throughout the Bronx,
12 Brooklyn, Manhattan that's been very successful in
13 helping to speed buses along that corridor. We
14 heard a little bit about signal optimization, but
15 that's not just within our subway system, that's
16 also our traffic lights and making sure that
17 there's optimal timing of traffic lights, which
18 helps improve traffic flow throughout an existing
19 corridor for all vehicles.

20 We heard earlier about new fare
21 technology. We all know that the MetroCard really
22 revolutionized the way people travel throughout
23 New York City but also throughout the boroughs.
24 There's transfers into Westchester County and
25 Nassau County with MetroCard, but we would love to

1
2 see, as many of you all have already expressed, a
3 more seamless system. Tri-State works in the
4 three states--New York, New Jersey, and
5 Connecticut--and we represent transit users on MJ
6 transit, the PATH, and, again the commuter
7 railroad, so we would love to have a fare media
8 that encourages that more seamless travel.

9 And then lastly, we know that clean
10 fuel and hybrid electric buses have helped reduce
11 the perception of buses as pollution spewing
12 vehicles. New York City Transit was the very
13 first public transit system in the country to
14 switch to all diesel buses--I'm sorry, to switch
15 all their diesel buses to ultra-low sulfur fuel.
16 And there's about 800 hybrid buses operating on
17 the street right now.

18 So in closing, I just want to
19 reiterate that investing in technology does have
20 significant benefits for our transit network. We
21 cannot boast about a modern transit network, nor
22 can we compete with other international systems if
23 we don't invest adequately on the technology side
24 of this. And we know that in order to make these
25 sorts of improvements and expansions and

1
2 investments, there needs to be always additional
3 aid. The needs of the system continue to grow, we
4 know that, ridership continues to soar and we need
5 our federal funding partners, along with our city
6 and our state funding partners to continue to
7 increase their investment for these sorts of
8 technological advances that we've seen make such a
9 difference.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Ms. Moskowitz?

12 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Great. Hi, my
13 name is Amanda Moskowitz, thank you, Chairman
14 Vacca. I am the General Manager at Mobile
15 Commons, it's a mobile software and strategy
16 company based in DUMBO, in Brooklyn. We work with
17 multiple government agencies, health care
18 organizations, and companies in New York City and
19 around the world to enable mobile messaging.

20 So basically we live in an era
21 where technology is revolutionizing how government
22 communicates with residents, whether in New York
23 City or anywhere else in the country. Text
24 messaging is an extremely effective way for
25 governments to communicate with city residents.

1
2 It spans income, age, ethnicity, and text
3 messaging is certainly improving the quality of
4 life for New Yorkers. So I'm here today to
5 actually talk about Bus Time, which the MTA
6 already talked about, I have a little bit more
7 data for you and can probably give you a little
8 bit more color.

9 So about Bus Time, simply put, the
10 MTA's Bus Time is a mobile service that provides
11 real-time bus information about how far away the
12 nearest buses are from a certain bus stop. A
13 commuter is, you know, at the bus stop, sees the
14 keyword for that specific stop, texts it to a
15 short code, which happens to 51123. On the back
16 end, our system is asking the GPS system behind
17 Bus Time where the nearest bus is and we package
18 this information up in a text message and send it
19 right back to the rider within seconds. So it's a
20 really, really simple concept, but it's had a
21 huge, huge impact.

22 It's allowed people to avoid
23 waiting in lines, you get to spend a little extra
24 time with your kids in the morning, you get to
25 have another cup of coffee, but more importantly,

1
2 you're able to make smarter, more efficient
3 decisions about your daily transit plans. And
4 this is beneficial on the micro household level,
5 it's also ultimately beneficial on a macro level
6 across the city when individual riders are able to
7 make these smarter, more efficient decisions. And
8 so this is kind of where we see quality of life
9 beginning to improve.

10 So Bus Time, as you know, is
11 borough-wide in Staten Island, there are a few
12 pilots out in--or a couple routes are enabled in
13 Brooklyn and in Manhattan and, as you know, very
14 shortly they'll be rolling out in the Bronx as
15 well. And, honestly, the reaction from Staten
16 Island is any indication, hundreds of thousands,
17 if not millions, of users in the next year will be
18 using Bus Time.

19 So here are the numbers, I was
20 mentioning before: Over 51,000 riders have used
21 Bus Time since it launched in January, phenomenal,
22 we're almost at 52,000 as of today. And in just
23 in Staten Island, we have over 38,000 people using
24 Bus Time, that's over 30% of the Staten Island bus
25 riding population. And so the usage has also

1
2 grown. In the first few weeks of the program, we
3 were receiving about 20,000 queries or requests
4 for Bus Time each week, now we receive 120,000.
5 And so we're looking at some real hockey stick
6 growth. If you just look at this past week versus
7 eight weeks ago, it's over 47% growth per week in
8 queries per week.

9 And finally, and last set of
10 numbers, not only is the adoption high at a
11 population level, but adoption is high in the
12 individual life of the commuter. The average bus
13 rider who uses Bus Time is actually making a query
14 nine to ten times a week. So, clearly, they've
15 incorporated this into their daily routines,
16 Monday through Friday they're coming and they're
17 going.

18 So, you know, we think the success
19 of Bus Time has really been extraordinary. We're
20 not surprised. There are over 332 million mobile
21 subscribers in the U.S., they have their phones
22 with them everywhere, text messaging is available
23 on pretty much every single one of these phones,
24 and Americans send 6.4 billion texts every single
25 day.

1
2 So, you know, you could say that--I
3 mean, I actually should just back up and point out
4 that actually the 88% of people who have the cell
5 phone, that's actually a higher percentage of the
6 population that has direct access to broadband or
7 dial-up Internet. So anyway, you could easily say
8 that text messaging is the fundamentally
9 democratic medium or, you know, you can say it's
10 the medium of the public.

11 So text messaging, as I said, is
12 ubiquitous across age groups, across ethnicities,
13 across income level, and in addition to ubiquity,
14 this very efficient, very humble 160 character,
15 message gets read, nearly 100% of messages are
16 read. So it's a great way for government to
17 communicate with the public.

18 And, you know, we're working with a
19 number of city agencies here in New York to enable
20 this kind of messaging. Obviously, the formats
21 are different from Bus Time, but the spirit is the
22 same: It's available to everyone and everyone is
23 using--everyone who has the opportunity to is
24 trying to use this medium to communicate with
25 government.

2 So we look forward to continuing
3 the work with the MTA, we have lots of ideas for
4 how else this could be used. And I'm happy to
5 answer any questions.

6 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you. I
7 can only say that I think a lot of people out
8 there are going to ask the question: If only the
9 MTA stuck to the schedules that were posted at the
10 bus stops, there would not be a need for all this.

11 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Well yeah--

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [Interposing]
13 Many senior citizens do not have this technology,
14 so I can envision going back to my district and
15 telling them to text and this and that and they're
16 going to look at me and say, what are you talking
17 about. Let the MTA stick to the schedules that
18 are posted that the people see at the bus stops,
19 this is what we are used to. Is this telling us
20 that they can't stick to the schedules, but that
21 they're going to have a technology to tell you
22 when the bus is finally coming?

23 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: I would say
24 that they should be complementary, one shouldn't
25 make the other obsolete. So you're absolutely

1
2 right that there's a certain segment of the
3 population that doesn't rely on technology and the
4 bus schedule should be adhered to when possible.
5 But there's another growing segment, and we all
6 know this, that--of young people and others who
7 are very, very tech savvy outside of the young
8 sect who are relying on this before they actually
9 arrive at a bus station or a subway platform to
10 help them plan their trips.

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Well I would
12 tell you and, based on my age, I don't fall into
13 the category of a very young person, but I will
14 tell you that I would not stay in my house and
15 wait for the text to be returned to me and then
16 put on my jacket and run to the bus stop. Now
17 maybe if I was at the bus stop and I texted
18 someone, the MTA, and they said the bus is six
19 stops away, I may go for a cup of coffee to the
20 deli and then come back and say I have time for my
21 coffee or my newspaper, but I don't think I would
22 do much more than that.

23 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Well keep in
24 mind--I'm sorry--

25 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: No, no--

2 [Crosstalk]

3 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: --do you mind if
4 I respond?

5 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Oh, no, I don't
6 mind.

7 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Okay. The
8 amount of time it takes to receive--and I hope you
9 all try it at some point soon--but the amount of
10 time that it takes for us to return this message
11 once it gets the GPS data and everything, one, two
12 seconds at the most. So a lot of people are
13 actually texting in the mornings while they're at
14 home to find out how far away it is and plan when
15 they leave their house.

16 And I also wanted to mention just
17 with regard to the age level, when we were talking
18 about texting, it's a very--and I don't want to
19 disparage, you know, the value of this medium by
20 saying this--but it's extremely simple. It was
21 built--there's a reason it can only hold a few
22 characters, it's just 'cause it's the most basic
23 form of cellular technology we have essentially.
24 And I say that because we have adoption in a,
25 like, older age groups: The AARP, this is one of

1
2 their, like, most--their largest ways of doing
3 advocacy to text out an alert to the hundreds of
4 thousands of people they have subscribed to their
5 list. Also, I mean, I put a few stats at the
6 bottom of the testimony, but I think it's over,
7 you know, nearly 60% of adults over 65 years old
8 actively use text messaging. So this is, in fact,
9 it's one of the reasons we say it's such a
10 fundamentally democratic medium, not just because
11 it brought--crosses socio-economic divides, but
12 age as well.

13 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I saw that, I
14 appreciate your testimonial, it was very thorough
15 and even your footnotes were very good. Okay.
16 Council Member Rose.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Hi, and I
18 apologize, I missed most of the testimony today.
19 But being from Staten Island, I had to ask a
20 couple of questions. And I wanted to know, have
21 you gotten any feedback about the select buses and
22 the use of the blue lights? I know on Staten
23 Island, not only the Council Members, but several
24 of the constituent groups have requested that the
25 select lights not have blue lights because it

1
2 desensitizes people to the emergency vehicles that
3 use them. Have you--

4 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: Okay.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: --you know,
6 have you gotten any feedback from any of your...

7 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: So Tri-State
8 Transportation Campaign, we're a nonprofit
9 advocacy group, but--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay.

11 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: --what we
12 understand about the blue lights is that they're
13 just part of the brand of this new select bus
14 service, and that's really the only information--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [Interposing]
16 Are there any plans to change it?

17 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: That I don't
18 know, that's a question, as you would imagine, for
19 both the MTA or New York City Transit.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay. And
21 Chairman Vacca and I have been, you know, very
22 concerned about the fare beaters and public
23 safety, and one of the issues that we found sort
24 of hinged around fare beating was also that
25 oftentimes the very people who are beating the

1
2 fares are also the ones who are stealing the
3 smartphones and iPads from riders. Have you
4 encountered any feedback or data about an increase
5 in thefts of smartphones and things or are you--is
6 there any concern for the ridership that there
7 might be an increase of theft of smartphones and
8 the technology that's needed to access your
9 services?

10 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Is this directed
11 towards--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Yeah.

13 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: --me? No, I'm
14 not aware of any increase in theft because of
15 this. I do want to be clear that, again, that
16 this is not just a smartphone technology, this is
17 available on all phones, text messaging is. But
18 to the point about theft, I do not know of any--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [Interposing]
20 Have you?

21 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: --increase in...

22 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: All I know is
23 what I read in the media, and the same stories
24 that we all see daily. That, sure, theft is on
25 the rise for smartphones, but that's a problem

1
2 that goes, you know, certainly beyond New York
3 City, that's just a nationwide problem as more
4 people carry these expensive devices. So it's
5 certainly not endemic to New York City's transit
6 system, it's just a problem that's being reported
7 nationwide.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So you don't
9 anticipate any increase more because as we utilize
10 this technology.

11 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Well I think
12 Americans sending 6.4 billion texts a day, I think
13 they have their cell phones out a lot period.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay.

15 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: It's great that
16 we're giving them more efficient ways to use it.

17 I--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: [Interposing]
19 I'm not trying to put you on the spot, I was just
20 wondering if you had any data that sort of
21 correlated with that. Thank you so much.

22 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Councilman
23 Cabrera?

24 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Bus Time,
25 your company, Mobile Commons, who pays for this

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service?

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: We're paid by the MTA for the software.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: What's the cost?

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: The cost for the monthly license is under--is quite low, it's approximately--and I'm sorry, I don't have this data, this exact number available, but it's between like 1 and \$4,000 a month, and then the monthly messages cost--we have a certain cost. We pay hard costs to the carriers to transmit these messages and the MTA pays for the messages.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: So the MTA pays for the license and then for each text that you have to send out, they have to pay for the text--

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --what it will cost you and then a little extra to pay you--

[Crosstalk]

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: [Interposing]
Yes, there's, I think, a standard New York City agreed-upon markup that would be on top of those--

2 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
3 You don't happen to know what that is.

4 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: I don't know off
5 the top of my head, but--

6 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
7 Could you get back to--

8 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: --I'm happy to--

9 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --us with
10 that information?

11 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Yes, absolutely.

12 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Do you have
13 demographics on users?

14 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: We do have
15 demographics across users nationally, but--

16 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
17 No, no, I'm talking about use Bus Time, not when
18 it comes to texting and so forth, just Bus Time.
19 Have you done any studies, any field studies?

20 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: On the
21 demographics of the Bus Time users.

22 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Yes.

23 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: No, I don't have
24 that data, but it would be strongly, strongly
25 correlative to the demographics of the Staten

1
2 Island Bus Time rider population. As we're
3 starting to hit 30--we're over 30% of the bus
4 riders, it would, I think, fit those demographics
5 very well.

6 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: So how many
7 riders are in Staten Island?

8 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: I think it's
9 over--my understanding is it's about 125,000.

10 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: And how many
11 are using it in Staten Island?

12 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Thirty eight
13 thousand.

14 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Thirty eight
15 thousand, okay. Distinct users.

16 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Unique users.

17 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Unique users.

18 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Overall queries
19 to the system have--the gentleman at the MTA
20 earlier was underselling himself, he said almost 2
21 million, it's actually been more than 2.4 million
22 queries to the system.

23 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. You
24 mentioned earlier that you know that a lot of
25 people are using--they're using it from home, how

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do you know that?

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Anecdotally,
people who write in--

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
Okay. So you don't have any data or anything like
that whether they're using it at home, whether
using it in the streets or--

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: [Interposing]
No, but, you know, we'd love to explore this more.
I mean, certainly, if the City makes some research
is available to study this kind of thing, we're
very involved with many of our clients in studying
the outcomes of these messages. We are exposed to
simply the messages that go back and forth often
and so we're always looking for ways to expand
knowledge of behavior and how to use that to make
it better.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Any
particular reason that the boroughs were selected
the way they were selected in terms of the roll
out?

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: You know, that
wasn't our decision, we follow the MTA's roadmap,
so I--

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CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]

Did they ask for your input?

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: This was over a year ago, and I don't believe so, but I don't know.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Which would have been helpful for you to provide an input?

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: It's always helpful to ask us for our input 'cause we always have some. But, you know, I think that from a scientific perspective, but looking at kind of a fixed and observable portion of the population, geographically separated, it makes sense, maybe it's easier for the MTA to study. But, you know, to be honest, that makes sense to me. I think, you know, I can't comment there, I--

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]

You think the way it was rolled out was the way to go?

AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: You know, I'm a businesswoman, I think it should have been rolled out to every bus stop in New York City on day one.

CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]

Yeah, but--

2 [Crosstalk]

3 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: --you know,
4 you have to go borough by borough.

5 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. My
7 last question is for the advocacy nonprofit--

8 [Crosstalk]

9 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: [Interposing] I
10 mean, if you--

11 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Yeah.

12 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: --don't mind,
13 I'm just going to say, I'm always--just going back
14 to the scientific part of it, I think anything
15 that, you know, a study, if you're looking at a
16 pilot, you want to go for an area, a group, a
17 sample that's as representative of your ultimate
18 roll out as possible. You want to--so what you
19 want is a group that, you know, represents a
20 sample--

21 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
22 You think Staten Island represents that?

23 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: I'm not from New
24 York and I don't originally--and I just would be,
25 I think, dumb at this point to say--

2 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay.

3 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: --and make any
4 conclusions there.

5 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
6 We'll spare you that answer.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And, Council
8 Member Cabrera, if she said that I would really--
9 I'd want all of the vast communications to hear
10 that.

11 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. In
12 terms of the--in your advocacy group, any concerns
13 that you heard from the MTA, any comments that
14 they made that brought a red flag to you in terms
15 of policy, timing, roll outs?

16 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: No, other
17 than, you know, and it's not a concern that was
18 expressed by the MTA, but it's a concern that's
19 shared among advocacy communities and groups
20 working on transit issues in New York City and
21 beyond is a lack of funding to get some of this
22 stuff done, and also the timeliness, and that goes
23 hand-in-hand with the amount of funds that are
24 available. So, for example, we had heard previous
25 chairman and executive directors of the MTA talk

2 about, you know, our smartcard system and there's
3 money in the capital program now to move that
4 forward, but it's been some time. But we also
5 understand that there's other needs and priorities
6 in the system that, quite frankly, need to be
7 addressed before maybe something like that can
8 advance. So I think that it's important to always
9 bring it back to the funding of the system
10 because, you know, we do want to see a lot of
11 these things rolled out a lot faster, but, again,
12 that's coupled with the amount of available funds
13 that can support that.

14 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: You know, the
15 average New Yorker think they pay too much for the
16 services and for what they're getting back in
17 return. Is that a fair assessment?

18 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: I would say
19 that's a fair assessment for the level of
20 understanding and knowledge that the average
21 person has about our transit system. We have a
22 very complex--

23 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: [Interposing]
24 But is that the reality?

25 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: No. The

1 reality is is that our transit network is an
2 incredibly old network, it shuffles 12 million
3 people around the region, the 12 counties of the
4 MTA service territory and the needs of the system
5 are growing exponentially. And the amount--
6 transit worldwide, maybe except in Japan, is not a
7 profit generating sector, it's just never meant to
8 make a profit, which is why it relies so
9 significantly on investments from the city and the
10 state. And, quite frankly, the role and the
11 challenge of the advocacy groups is to help the
12 public understand that. It's a very, very complex
13 funding scheme and a very complex political
14 funding structure that most people, you know, are
15 just not paying attention to it. It makes
16 people's eyes glaze over.

18 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: So based on
19 what you're telling me, if I understand it right,
20 we should now perhaps engage smart technology
21 while the signal lights, where 25% of them are, if
22 I recall right in our briefing, are over 70 years
23 old, that we should get back to basics because
24 that will put people back on time, you know,
25 that's what slows down the subway system. So

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2 you're saying we should get back to fundamental,
3 and is there enough funding for that? If we were
4 to not deal with all the fluff.

5 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: My answer to
6 that would be that our federal, state, and city
7 partners need to work together to find additional
8 revenue sources, number one. Number two, to work
9 together with the relevant agencies, those being
10 the MTA, New York City Transit, New York City DOT,
11 to help prioritize where that additional revenue
12 and that investment should be targeted. And in
13 some cases, it may make sense to advance some
14 technology; in other cases, it may not. So I
15 think this conversation needs to happen with all
16 the agencies and the players and the elected
17 officials at the table because it's not a one-
18 size-fits-all.

19 In some situations, improving and
20 advancing technology is helpful to, you know, the
21 system. For example, you take the select bus
22 service corridors with this new bus service and
23 having new fare technology is one of the only ways
24 to improve commutes for the thousands, tens,
25 sometimes hundreds of thousands of bus riders

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2 using that bus every single day.

3 In another section of the borough,
4 it may make sense to, you know, rehab the station
5 first. So it's not a one-size-fits-all approach.

6 CHAIRPERSON CABRERA: Okay. Thank
7 you, it was very informative.

8 VERONICA VANTERPOOL: Thank you
9 all.

10 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you.
11 Thank you both.

12 AMANDA MOSKOWITZ: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I thank my
14 committee members and I thank all of you. And
15 there being no further questions, it is 12:30 and
16 the joint hearing of the Technology and
17 Transportation Committee of the Council is hereby
18 adjourned.

19 [Gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Tammy Wittman, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature *Tammy Wittman*

Date November 18, 2012