

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

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March 23, 2021
Start: 2:12 p.m.
Recess: 3:12 p.m.

HELD AT: Remote Hearing, Virtual Room 1

B E F O R E: Ydanis Rodriguez
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Ydanis Rodriguez
Fernando Cabrera
Chaim Deutsch
R. Diaz, Sr.
Robert F. Holden
Peter A. Koo
Stephen T. Levin
Mark Levine
Carlos Menchaca
I. Daneek Miller
Antonio Reynoso
Deborah L. Rose

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Jaibala Patel
Chief Financial Officer
New York City Transit

David Keller
MTA Acting Director of Management and
Budget
New York City Transit

Steve Berrang

MTA Director of Capital Program
Management
New York City Transit

Eric Loegel

Arthur Schwartz

HP Schroer

Kevin Jones

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Recording to the PC
3 has started.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Recording to the cloud
5 is up.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: And Sergeant Bradley,
7 with your opening statement, please.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS BRADLEY: OK. Good
9 afternoon, and welcome to today's New York City
10 preliminary budget hearing on Transportation. At
11 this time will all panelists please turn on your
12 cameras. To minimize disruptions please place all
13 electronic devices to vibrate or on silent mode. If
14 you do wish to submit a testimony you may do so at
15 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Again, that is
16 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Thank you for your
17 cooperation. You may begin, Chair.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, eh, to
19 all of you sergeants and every men and women behind
20 the, the technology to be sure that all New Yorkers
21 are connected to this and many other budget hearing
22 led by Speaker Corey Johnson and the rest of my
23 colleague. Good afternoon and welcome to the City
24 Council Transportation Committee hearing on the MTA
25 calendar year and [inaudible] budget in the calendar

1 year 2024 capital project. If you hear any sound,
2 that's because I am in front of a great playground
3 here in the great borough of the Bronx. My name is
4 Ydanis Rodriguez and I have the privilege of chairing
5 the committee, this committee. Two weeks ago this
6 committee heard testimony from the Department of
7 Transportation and the Taxi and Limousine Commission.
8 Today we will continue the budget process and we will
9 hear this morning from the MTA. Tragically, nearly
10 30,000 New Yorkers have died due to the coronavirus.
11 I don't want any single one to die regardless of the
12 social and economic background. But the reality is
13 that most people who died they were black, they were
14 Asian, they're Latino. They were working class.
15 Again, I don't want any single one of the 8.6 million
16 residents and all visitor to die in our city, but
17 most people who die they die because of pre-health
18 condition and because they live in ZIP code that
19 already they've been dealing with a lot of issue that
20 together with the coronavirus took the lives of so
21 many great New Yorkers. One year out it is clear how
22 the pandemic has [inaudible] our society, as we
23 painfully continue to be separated from [inaudible]
24 ones. Economic toll of the virus is unprecedented.
25

1
2 Local businesses have been forced to shut down,
3 resulting in job losses and high unemployment.
4 [inaudible] of this community corner stores have
5 closed permanently, changing the fabric of the city
6 we love, a city built by New Yorkers that have come
7 to this great city from all over the world. With a
8 campaign to vaccinate New Yorkers on the way, COVID-
9 19 cases have been declining and we can begin looking
10 forward to transitioning back to a more open society.
11 However, as we reopen we must remain vigilant to
12 ensure that long-standing societal inequity do not
13 grow. We must also acknowledge that as we began
14 seeing an increase in the subway ridership across the
15 city we must also begin seeing a return of our
16 subways regularly, regular schedule. That include
17 the restoration of the services for the C and F train
18 as well as a return of our overnight train services.
19 I would like to thank the city essential workers,
20 many of whom are from underserved minority community.
21 Without their hard work our city would not be able to
22 function. Thanks to their dedication and sacrifice,
23 our trains and buses have continued to run. Our cabs
24 are able to drive medical staff to hospital and
25 deliver food, food to the needy. Our society, our

1 grocery store remain in stock and our nurses and our
2 doctors have been able to save lives. However, far
3 too many workers has passed away, including more than
4 140 transit workers. I would like to take a moment
5 of silence to recognize and honor the sacrifices of
6 these workers as well as the 30,000 New Yorkers who
7 have fallen to this virus. The MTA calendar year
8 2021 adopted operating budget is 17.6 billion and
9 include more than 1 billion in city subsidy. Over
10 all the MTA requests, over 16 billion in federal
11 recovery-related funding, to date it is projected to
12 receive approximately 15 billion, over three similar
13 plan for COVID-related aid. This is in addition to
14 nearly 3 billion borough-funded federal reserve
15 municipal, municipal [inaudible] facility. The MTA
16 has been mandated to have a balanced budget and in
17 the [inaudible] of such it may consider an acting
18 service reduction permanently [inaudible] freeze and
19 fare increase beyond the scheduled 4% increase. If
20 enacted, this proposal, proposed reduction for
21 calendar year 2020 could impact 9400 MTA workers and
22 could include service reduction of 40%. This
23 doomsday scenario is one that we cannot allow and I
24 will be working with my colleague on the state and
25

1 the federal level, Speaker Corey Johnson, and all my
2 colleagues to ensure that the MTA is receiving the
3 support that, is receiving the support, the support
4 that we must see more, to see more transparency in
5 the return of our train and buses services from the
6 MTA. The authority adopted 2024, 2020 24, copy of
7 program total 54 point billion and remainder in
8 change from last year. However, congestion pricing
9 revenue was estimated was to cover 27% of this plan,
10 which was adopted prior to COVID-19 pandemic. Today
11 the infrastructure requested to start congestion
12 pricing it, it is not yet in place and federal
13 approval system needed. Moreover, the state has
14 authorized the MTA to diverge congestion pricing
15 revenue to fill budget gap in the MTA expenses
16 budget. It us unclear how this will affect the
17 authority's capital plan, including former NYC
18 Transit Authority president Andy Byford
19 transformation plan. Overall, we look forward to
20 hearing the MTA update the committee on the state and
21 the transit system and how we will navigate its
22 ongoing fiscal crisis. We also expect the MTA to
23 discuss its plan to reinstate over nine subway
24 services which has been suspended since May 16, 2020.
25

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2 The subway system is the lifeblood of the city and
3 ensuring overnight services return is essential to
4 transitional out, transitioning out of the pandemic
5 and allow for more equitable transit system to all
6 New Yorkers. Before we hear the MTA, from MTA, I
7 would now have the committee counsel to recognize the
8 members in attendance and swear in the representative
9 of the MTA. But before passing to the counsel
10 [inaudible] I would like also to thank Brooklyn
11 borough president, eh, Public Advocate Jumaane
12 Williams, eh, Speaker Corey Johnson, all of them
13 together, Eric Adams, Corey Johnson, Jumaane
14 Williams, Gale Brewer, eh, Brad Lander, and many
15 other who went today together with those [inaudible]
16 members of TWU we were there at the press conference
17 at noon at West 4 calling for the MTA to restore the
18 services, especially the C and the F that is so
19 important for resident that we have in New York City
20 who rely on them. So with that I go back now to
21 Elliot.

22 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

23 Ah, I'm Elliot Lynn, counsel to the Transportation
24 Committee of the New York City Council. Um, we have
25 been joined by Council Members R. Diaz, Koo, Holden,

1
2 Menchaca, Cabrera, Rose, Miller, Levine, Reynoso, and
3 Lander. Um, I want to remind everyone that you will
4 be on mute until you are called on to testify, when
5 you will then be unmuted by the host. Please listen
6 for your name to be called, and I will periodically
7 announce who the next panelist will be. During the
8 hearing if council members would like to ask a
9 question please use the Zoom raise hand function and
10 I will call on you in order. Unless indicated by the
11 chair, we will be limiting council member questions
12 to five minutes, including answers. I will now call
13 on our panelists from the MTA. Ah, chief financial
14 officer for New York City Transit, Jaibala Patel, MTA
15 acting director of management and budget, David
16 Keller, and MTA director of capital program
17 management Steven Berrang. I will now read the
18 affirmation and then I will call on each of you to
19 confirm your response aloud for the record. Please
20 raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the
21 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth
22 before this committee and to respond honestly to
23 council member questions? Jaibala Patel?

24 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: I do.

25 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: David Keller?

2 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: I do.

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Steven Berrang?

4 DIRECTOR BERRANG: I do. Complained
5 thank you. You may bring your testimony when ready.

6 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: Um, thank you
7 very much. Hello and thank you for having us today.
8 My name is David Keller. I am the MTA's acting
9 director of management and budget. I'm joined
10 virtually by Jaibala Patel, chief financial officer
11 for New York City Transit, and Steve Berrang,
12 director of capital program management. Before I
13 begin, I would like to thank Chair Rodriguez, um,
14 Speaker Corey Johnson, and the rest of the council
15 for the direct aid provided to the MTA in the adopted
16 budget for 2021 and for its continued contributions
17 to the 2016 to 19 and 2020 to 24 capital programs.
18 Your support is very much appreciated as the MTA
19 looks forward to the 21st century transit system that
20 New Yorkers need and deserve. Before I go on, I'd
21 like to thank, um, Chair Rodriguez for the kind words
22 that he has said for the New Yorkers who have lost
23 their lives as well as the MTA employees who have
24 lost their lives. We mourn the more than 150
25 employees at the MTA who have lost their lives, and

1
2 in our minds they are the true heroes of our transit
3 systolic. As you know, the last year has been the
4 most difficult period an agency has [inaudible] MTA.
5 Our chairman, Pat Foye, spoke in detail about the
6 challenges we continue to face last month when he
7 appeared to be before the Transportation Committee
8 alongside New York City Transit president Sarah
9 Feinberg and chief financial officer Bob Foran. In
10 the time since that hearing our problems haven't
11 disappeared. However, they've been greatly helped by
12 the passage of the American Rescue Plan. We're
13 grateful to our federal partners, especially
14 President Biden, our hometown hero, Senate Majority
15 Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and the entire New
16 York delegation for their tireless hard work and
17 support. The legislation provided an historic level
18 of funding for mass transit, including an estimated
19 6.5 billion dollars for the MTA. That's on top of
20 the roughly billion dollars in emergency aid we
21 received previously through the CARES Act and
22 [inaudible]. We were also able to borrow another 2.9
23 billion dollars through the Federal Reserve Municipal
24 Liquidity Facility. The 14.5 billion dollars in
25 combined emergency COVID funding has been a critical

1 lifeline for the MCA over the past 12 months and, and
2 go a long way towards addressing the 16 billion
3 dollar four-year deficit we were facing, and we are
4 very grateful. As you are aware, we have been
5 looking at 40% cuts in service to the subways and
6 buses as well as thousands of employee layoffs. But
7 the arrival of this federal relief parking allows to
8 move away from our worst-case budget scenarios.
9 Additionally, as Chairman Foye has specified, the
10 federal emergency assistance will enable us to begin
11 contract negotiations with our labor partners and
12 move forward with previously agreed-upon contractual
13 obligations. It has been well documented COVID's
14 impact on mass transit is enormous, surpassing that
15 of even the great depression. Ridership fell by 95%
16 on the subways at the peak of the pandemic and even
17 now it is still down about 70%. Our buses were
18 hovering around 50%. Those precipitous declines in
19 ridership and revenue wrecked havoc on our budget,
20 which is half made up of funds raised from
21 [inaudible]. Dedicated taxes and subsidies also
22 dwindled over the course of the pandemic. But there
23 have been some positive signs as we move forward and
24 the city begins to reopen. We recently announced our
25

1 subway ridership hid a pandemic high of 1.9 million
2 trips and our bus ridership is also showing signs of
3 rebounding and we are frequently topping 50% of pre-
4 pandemic levels. While both are still significantly
5 below our pre-pandemic levels, they are headed in the
6 right direction. We look forward to welcoming back
7 more and more customers in the months ahead. So
8 please wear a mask and take a ride with us. It is
9 still the quickest and safest way to get around.
10 Meanwhile, beyond just helping us fight to keep the
11 lights on, the latest round of federal aid brings new
12 possibilities for our historic 2020 to 24 capital
13 program, which has been on pause because of the
14 pandemic. Important projects like modernized new
15 signals on our subway lines, making more [inaudible]
16 accessible, bringing Long Island Railroad service to
17 Grand Central Terminal, expanding Metro North service
18 to Penn Station with four new stations in the Bronx,
19 and extending the Second Avenue subway to East and
20 Central Harlem are again under funding consideration
21 and discussion. The MTA goal is to award at least
22 6.2 billion dollars in total work to third-party
23 contractors or in-house team in 2021. Our goal for
24 the first quarter is 865 million dollars and we are
25

1 on track to meet that target. And if the federal
2 government acts to advance to environmental review
3 process for our central district [inaudible] program
4 that is even better news for the capital program.
5 We're encouraged that the Biden administration has
6 said it would prioritize review of our application
7 which sat dormant for more than 18 months under the
8 previous administration. We are committed to
9 advancing progress as much as we can at every level
10 of the MTA in the years ahead. Part of this work
11 includes taking a look at internal operations to rein
12 in costs. We are doing our part to [inaudible]
13 consolidation, [inaudible] cutting overtime, and
14 major reductions in using consultants. Regarding
15 overtime specifically, our latest report shows the
16 MTA has achieved 244 million dollars in savings since
17 2018, a decrease in overtime of 18%. This was the
18 first time in a decade that the MTA has achieved two
19 consecutive years of overtime reduction and we are on
20 track to reduce overtime spending by 1 billion
21 dollars total between 2020 and 2024. This is great
22 news, but we know our work isn't done yet. To build
23 on this success, we will be moving forward with a
24 range of initiatives to further drive down
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1
2 controllable overtime and address potential abuses as
3 quickly and as efficiently as possible. We are
4 confident that there are better days ahead for the
5 MTA and we look forward to working with the City
6 Council to find the best path forward. A strong MTA
7 is essential to New York and the nation's economic
8 rebound, and we're eager to help get the economy back
9 on track. Thank you, and we're now happy to take
10 your questions.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. Eh,
12 how, how soon do you feel that we can, and, and first
13 of all before asking the question I also would like,
14 eh, to recognize that eh, eh, a few months ago we had
15 Pat Foye and the other, eh, leadership of the MTA
16 being in front of us. Eh, so the fact that we have
17 also, eh, other members of the leadership, eh, that
18 they are experiencing issue related to financing
19 other, eh, [inaudible] without the participation of
20 the Pat Foye and other members of the whole team is
21 not, eh, any reduction, no, the respect that they
22 have for the work that we doing and the level of
23 collaboration. But this is something that as we plan
24 together we, eh, for this hearing, eh, eh, eh, we, we
25 thought that, eh, we could have this conversation

1
2 with the great team that they send to us today since
3 we also have the chairman and other members of the
4 team [inaudible] with us a few months ago in another
5 hearing very related to the discussion that we are
6 having right now. Eh, how soon can we have the MTA
7 ready to reopen, eh, those two hours that the trains
8 are closed right now?

9 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: Thank
10 you. Um, so we are looking at this as our Chairman
11 Foye has said previously, um, we'll open up our
12 subways overnight for those two hours when we can do
13 so safely.

14 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: But if tomorrow
15 the governor call and say let's opening on Sunday
16 because it's good for him MTA will, eh, [inaudible]
17 open. So I think that, you know, we should have a
18 better plan. I think it's a fair expectation that we
19 can have a plan or when we got, we are gonna be
20 having the train now, the train open 24/7.

21 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: So,
22 again, as we did for the sort of the 1:00 a.m. to
23 2:00 a.m. hour and then the, ah, 4:00 to 5:00 a.m.
24 hour, as the city reopened we committed to opening,
25 ah, with the phased opening and we will continue to

1
2 look at, ah, how the city reopens and we will make
3 decisions based on that as, as we open the city
4 safely. We want to make sure our customers and our
5 employees are safe.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: We do and we
7 appreciate it, but I think, as we know, eh, eh, this
8 is, at this moment this is about, eh, you know, we
9 need to reopen, like all the study, all the numbers
10 saying that, you know, by giving those two hours so
11 that we go back to celebrate that we are not only the
12 largest transparent system in the whole nation and we
13 appreciate your leadership, of you and many other,
14 but this is about working class, working daily, who
15 work in restaurant, eh, eh, who live in underserved
16 community, to be able to have access to 24 hours and
17 those two hours make a big difference. And I, and I,
18 and I believe my colleagues not only to the MTA but
19 my colleagues also to the governor to please use his
20 powers, use his resource. We need to have those, eh,
21 two hours that the train being shutted down, closed,
22 right now, open as yesterday. So I take your word.
23 Eh, I want to keep it positive. But I just think
24 that, you know, no one has been in the, in the
25 battleground more than many of us. We know what it

1
2 is to be in the city and not going to the home too
3 much as they help somebody or going to Canada to work
4 from there. So we can tell you that those two hours
5 are very important. Please advocate. I know that
6 it's beside what you and the leadership, the MTA
7 would like to see happening. A lot has to do with
8 Albany. And we need to be sure that the governor,
9 you know, get his support and come on board and work
10 with MTA so that the train is open 24/7. But what
11 about on the C and the F train, eh, eh, can we have
12 any, eh, how are we doing? How are you guys doing
13 from the MTA? I know that you are in the process of
14 so a lot conversation going on. Eh, our conversation
15 moving forward can we, you know, in, do we have some
16 positive expectation that, you know, that New
17 Yorkers, especially those who rely on the, on the F
18 and C train will be getting full services, eh, very
19 soon?

20 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: So, as
21 you know, Chair, we are running 80% of our service,
22 right, to, um, ah, our, our customers that is 30% of
23 ridership. Ah, we continue to monitor ridership, um,
24 as the city continues to reopen. Um, we're
25 continually in, in the system monitoring our

1
2 ridership. And, um, we've been there many times
3 during the week to make sure that their crowding and,
4 and other issues, um, that are possible to see. Um,
5 so we'll continue to monitor that and, um, hopefully
6 in the future there, there will be, you know, a
7 response from, ah, the MTA on the services. We're
8 continually monitoring. Ah, currently we're in
9 court, right? So I, I can't comment any further on
10 that.

11 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: As we discussing
12 this budget and as you know most of my colleague,
13 myself, Speaker Johnson, being advocating for the
14 city to always increase the contribution to the MTA,
15 eh, eh, but also we want to be engaged and I know
16 that this isn't just about you, those who are in
17 front of us today or even the chairman of the MTA.
18 This is about the city and the state have to make a
19 decision. In the past, Speaker Johnson and us asked
20 for conversation to begin on the possibility for New
21 York City to take over the New York City Transit.
22 How will that bring a different way or how the city
23 transit will be run if New York City take full
24 control?

1 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: I, um, Mr.
2
3 Chairman, I think that's the type of conversation
4 that would be best, um, had with Chairman Foye when
5 he comes back later this month.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: OK, OK, thank
7 you.

8 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: During this
10 process of COVID in, in, as we are going back to our
11 feet when it come to, you know, eh, taking our city
12 back, our economy, hopefully guys, you know, running
13 the train 24/7, restaurant, theater, [inaudible]
14 institution being reopened and, and how is the MTA
15 planning to work with the riders of the train to be
16 sure that it, it, individual riders continue doing
17 their part and I, I gotta say that taking the train
18 very often I, and the buses, I know that most people
19 who use the train they use their mask and they keep
20 their distance. And what is in the budget, the
21 projection that you have, eh, when it come to how
22 much you will need to continue doing the educational
23 part of, eh, riders know what they have to do be, to
24 protect themselves and protect others when it comes
25 to COVID?

1 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: Um, well, in
2
3 2020 we spent about 250 million dollars to clean and
4 disinfect the MTA system, both subways, buses, um,
5 Metro North, and Long Island Railroad. And so far in
6 2021 we have spent another 44 million dollars through
7 the first week of March. Um, we anticipate to spend
8 about 300 million dollars more on an annual basis
9 going forward. It's already in our financial plan.
10 The MTA continues with its mask force and we send
11 people out. We also know that our customers have
12 expressed, um, comfort in known that we have been
13 cleaning and disinfecting our system daily and
14 vigorously.

15 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Right. It, what,
16 what do you think is, what will it take, eh, for, eh,
17 the buses, eh, to enact a systemwide, eh, outdoor
18 boarding in all buses, eh, in New York City?

19 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: So I
20 think that, that conversation, um, ah, Sarah provided
21 an answer last month. But, you know, as we roll out
22 Omni, um, that, that will be possible even more. Um,
23 currently we have readers, um, for all our subway
24 stations as well as our bus, um, ah, fare boxes. Um,
25 so as we roll out Omni and, ah, integrate Omni into

1
2 our system I think that that would be a good
3 possibility.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Do we still have
5 area in New York City where New Yorker has to take
6 three buses to go from where they live to go to work?

7 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: I'm
8 sorry, I didn't understand the question, Chair?

9 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Eh, as you know,
10 when people are, eh, eh, need to make a transfer from
11 one bus to the other, right, eh, eh, we take for
12 granted that all New Yorkers need to have, eh, to
13 take only transfer. But I know in the past there
14 were places in Queens, there was places in Brooklyn,
15 where people had to take three buses, eh, because a
16 second bus doesn't take them to the, the destination.
17 Have you find out if we still has area where in
18 certain, eh, community, eh, the New Yorker had to do
19 like the, eh, two, three transfers, eh, and if that
20 will be the case have you engaged in any conversation
21 with some Council Member to address that situation or
22 a senate or assembly member?

23 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: I don't
24 have that answer in front of me. But we can
25 definitely follow up with you, um, working with our

2 operations planning team to make sure that, that, ah,
3 is reviewed.

4 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: OK. I have other
5 question, but I want to go back to my colleague and,
6 eh, so I bring it back to Elliot so that he can then
7 call those council, eh, eh, on the order that they
8 raised their hand.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.
10 We'll now call on council members in the order that
11 they've used the Zoom raise hand function. Um,
12 please keep your questions to five minutes, including
13 answers. Um, first we will hear from Council Member
14 Miller. Council Member Miller.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Council Member, you
17 need to unmute yourself.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Am I unmuted?

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes, yes you are.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: OK, good.
21 Thanks. See, I did that without touching anything.
22 Um, so, ah, thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the
23 MTA team for being here. I have a number of
24 questions so I'm gonna kind of just try to get to
25 them and, and, and get your answers. So, ah, prior

1
2 to the pandemic bus redesign was on the way in all
3 five boroughs and have been completed in the Bronx
4 and Brooklyn, and, and working on Brooklyn and
5 Queens. Um, can we anticipate that, when can we
6 anticipate, ah, bus redesign that will, ah,
7 conversation to, ah, be reengaged, and, and, and do
8 you still maintain that that is a process that is,
9 ah, should be course neutral considering that we are
10 operating particularly here in Queens, the buses are
11 running on old trolley lines, all right, and that's
12 how long it's been. So, um, that would be the first
13 question. And, and then, you know, I have so many,
14 but in the interest of time I want to, my, my
15 conversation here and question is, is around equity
16 and accessibility to public transportation and
17 because transportation is a great equalizer and, and
18 the great chair just talked about the transit deserts
19 in places like Queens. So the next question would be
20 about, um, access to public transportation and, and,
21 and things like expansion of the Atlantic ticket and,
22 ah, what can we see there and what have we learned in
23 particular, um, ah, um, by integrating, ah, during
24 COVID-19, ah, about integrating the transit system,
25 ah, commuter rails, and, and others and, and getting

1 access, ah, coming out of COVID, ah, what can we see
2 different? What can we expect, and can we expect
3 certainly the expansion of the Atlantic ticket, ah,
4 access to the commuter rails for New York City
5 residents. Um, in the area of health and safety you
6 talked about, um, the robust cleaning that occurs,
7 um, having been and, and I know you guys are fairly
8 new to this. I spent 25 years, um, employed at the,
9 at the MTA, ah, the last 10 as president and business
10 agent of the Amalgamated Transit Union, and so we are
11 certainly intimately familiar with, with what that
12 cleaning process looks like. Um, what does future
13 investment looks like and the CDC guidelines, ah,
14 suggest that that is the most important, um, aspects
15 of health and safety or investment, or could we
16 address load guidelines? We still getting phone
17 calls myself and, and, and many of my, ah, colleagues
18 are getting phone calls of overcrowded buses and,
19 particularly overcrowded buses. Um, ah, we have
20 legislation introduced, ah, ah, introducing
21 legislation that addresses load guidelines and
22 particularly load guides [inaudible] because we know
23 throughout the city, um, buses in the outer boroughs
24 carry more folks than they do in the city. Ah,

1 [inaudible] the pandemic is that something that we
2 will be addressing as a matter of health and safety?

3 Um, are we, how soon can we expect to, ah, increasing
4 the amount of buses to make sure that people are
5 traveling and being able to respect load guidelines
6 and, and more importantly, um, social distancing?

7 And finally, ah, as, I'm glad we have the financial
8 folks here now because there is a, a, ah, we talk
9 about a, um, fidelity and fiscal responsibility, um,
10 to address your, the, the cost of labor. I know that
11 there are many, ah, labor unions that have, um,
12 outstanding contracts, and I while know that you're
13 gonna say that you're not prepared to talk about
14 ongoing negotiations, I'm talking about negotiations
15 that aren't ongoing, negotiations that [inaudible]
16 impasse and potentially in arbitration. Ah, going
17 back to, ah, past practice and, and, and things like
18 the Zucati decision in which the MTA, ah, arbitrated
19 unsuccessfully six or seven different times. Um, I
20 know you're not gonna go down that road, but
21 considering that there is a pattern that has already
22 been established, have you lived up to that
23 responsibility and set aside the dollars that would
24

1
2 offer that pattern to the bargaining units that do
3 not now have a contract?

4 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: Um, so I, I will
5 start with your last question, um, Council Member.
6 Um, in terms of pattern bargaining, um, the MTA, the
7 MTA financial plan, um, includes pattern bargaining
8 in its, in its [inaudible]. However, I cannot
9 comment on any negotiations whatsoever, as you noted
10 yourself. Um, so I think that probably addresses to
11 the [inaudible].

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: I know that you
13 would say that. I didn't know that you couldn't do
14 it. So you, you're saying that the money is there,
15 it's been set aside to meet the pattern that has
16 already been established?

17 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: That's our
18 budget practice, yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: OK, great.

20 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: OK, and the
21 second item I'll talk about very briefly.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: No, that's, no,
24 that's for me, not for you.

1
2 ACTING DIRECTOR KELLER: Oh, OK. Um,
3 I'll, I'll just touch briefly on the Atlantic pilot,
4 ticket pilot. Um, it continues without any plans to
5 discontinue it. Um, the intention was to use the
6 pilot extension to evaluate more data before the next
7 round of fare hearings. So the MTA board could
8 evaluate merits and decide on permanently
9 incorporating the tariff into the Long Island
10 Railroad tariff. Um, but of course with the pandemic
11 we have not been able to do a full analysis and, and
12 go on and talk to customers about their likes and
13 dislikes. Um, the [inaudible] study was intended to
14 be done in 2020. Um, we plan to relaunch the study,
15 the analysis sometime later in 2021 or very early
16 2022, based on how much ridership rebounds and then
17 we'll have a better idea about the Atlantic ticket.
18 Um, and the other thing I wanted to just point out in
19 terms of other, um, other MTA Transit uses for New
20 York City, um, residents, the, um, outer borough
21 transportation count, which was supposed to fund, um,
22 intercity railroad, um, discounted travel along with
23 several other items, um, the outer borough
24 transportation fund has not been funded because the
25 reviews from the for-hire vehicle surcharge has not

1
2 come close to even hitting the first 300 million,
3 which was anticipated for the subway action plan.
4 Um, forecasts from the state, which is what we base
5 our, um, for-hire vehicle fee surcharge revenues on,
6 because we do not have a long history of it, um,
7 indicate that probably that will start, um, hitting
8 the outer borough transplantation count again in
9 2022.

10 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: And in
11 regards to the, ah, the bus redesign, it still
12 remains a priority for the MTA. Um, due to the
13 pandemic, you know, there's an impact on our staff
14 resources and the challenges to safely conduct, ah,
15 public outreach with community stakeholders under the
16 prevailing social distancing guidelines. Um, so the
17 projects are currently on hold. Um, you know, ah,
18 the sessions require engagement from our operations
19 planning team, GCR, um, to meet and discuss various
20 routes, bus stops, so it's, it's a very sort of
21 hands-on type of, ah, outreach that we do for bus
22 redesigns. Um, as soon as it's, ah, we're able to do
23 this safely we will open it up and continue to do,
24 ah, progress on the, the redesigns.

1 COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION 31
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And, and I'm
3 sorry, Jamaica Depot.

4 DIRECTOR BERRANG: Um, well the, ah, as
5 I'm sure you are aware, Council Member, ah, the, ah,
6 design is underway. We've chosen option A, which is
7 a one-story, ah, depot with on-roof parking and
8 ground level parking that has a 30-foot sound barrier
9 that surrounds it. Ah, we've been coordinating
10 closely with, ah, community interest and stakeholder
11 interests. Ah, we anticipate awarding that contract
12 towards the end of next year, ah, with completion to
13 be approximately 42 months later, which would be
14 towards the end of 2026.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: OK. Thank you.
16 Thank you very much, and, and the load guidelines
17 stuff you can send that, OK? Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: And before,
19 before we calling also the, our next colleague, I
20 also want to thank the men and women of TWU also for,
21 you know, being, eh, eh, the voice of the riders and
22 the voice of the workers. So it was very, eh,
23 [inaudible] that we were standing together today at
24 the press conference and I know that there's
25 conversation going on. There should be conversation

1
2 again between TWU and you guys. But I just hope that
3 everyone, all New Yorkers recognize the work that
4 they're doing and only representing the interest of
5 the workers by representing the interest of the whole
6 city. Thank you. Back to you, Elliot.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Chair.

8 Ah, before we move on to the next member I would like
9 to acknowledge that we were also joined by Council
10 Member Levin. Um, next we will hear from Council
11 Member Koo. Council Member Koo.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you very much.

14 Ah, thank you, Chair, and thank you, representatives
15 from MTA. Ah, I have a public safety issue question.
16 Like, like today my wife is supposed to go to city,
17 ah, usually she takes the train to go to the city.
18 But right now she, today she decided not to, she
19 wanted to spend the \$30 to use car service because of
20 the, ah, all these, ah, um, hate crime against Asians
21 or hate crime against, or crime against anyone. Ah,
22 today, today I read the news, ah, the [inaudible]
23 they even have a passenger urinating to another
24 passenger, ah, and it's so disgusting. And if you're
25 a passenger you may get slashed or stabbed or, or,

1
2 any kind of physical abuse you can encounter on the
3 train. So my question is what steps are you guys
4 doing to alleviate the anxiety and hesitancy, ah, for
5 like people to use the train? Because you always
6 talk about the ridership [inaudible] but if you don't
7 improve, ah, public, ah, safety issues, ah, people
8 are afraid to use the subway or the bus. So are you
9 doing anything? I know you have requested more
10 police. Have you considered to have the MTA public
11 safety agents on the platforms or on, on the trains?

12 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: So I
13 think you, you, hit the sort of nail on the head.
14 We've called for an additional 1000 cops in our
15 system, right, to provide mental health services in
16 our subways and, and our platforms. Um, this is a
17 call that our Chairman Foye has made as well as, ah,
18 President Feinberg. And it's very important for us
19 to have additional NYPD officers to help protect our
20 customers and employees in these cases. Um, the MTA
21 also has, you know, a anti-Asian hate crime campaign
22 going on right now. So we support the community in,
23 in that fashion.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Yeah, but, but I
25 don't see [inaudible] you guys doing, no, because

1 hate crimes still happen every day, not only against
2 Asians, but against everyone. So, so how to resolve
3 this? I mean, you have to do it immediately, not
4 just like, well, last month, ah, Chairman Foye has a,
5 ah, a budget meeting with City Council. Ask him the
6 question. But a month's gone by, I mean, there's
7 nothing being done.

9 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: So, ah,
10 we're a transit agency, right? We need the
11 partnership of NYPD and additional mental health
12 services to continue to help with this issue. Ah, we
13 have our MTA PD that, ah, you know, ah, currently
14 patrols, excuse me, um, our, our system but this is
15 really, ah, more about NYPD officers being in our
16 system to help us.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I think you have to
18 create a state of urinary, you know, making sure, you
19 know, this is the top issue, ah, for your agency.

20 CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER PATEL: We
21 want...

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: And asking the
23 mayor, the governor to help. You know, I mean, City
24 Council, we all, we didn't know this, but we don't
25 have, ah, any budget to send to you. The governor

1
2 has the National Guards, they have the police, and
3 the NYPD has police. MTA has police. So between all
4 these agencies you can, you can do some [inaudible]
5 and have some agents patrol the platform.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: [speaking in
7 Spanish]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Hmm? Thank you. I'
9 finished my questions.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you, Council
11 Member. Um, are there any other council members at
12 this time that would like to ask a question of the
13 MTA? OK, seeing none at this time, Chair Rodriguez,
14 we can turn it back over to you if you have any
15 follow-up questions.

16 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: I, I think that
17 right now if, and I do appreciate, you know, all the
18 thing of the, everyone on the MTA is, especially, you
19 know, we willing and [inaudible] who's been very
20 helpful from the governmental relation side, I, I,
21 and, and I appreciate that you guys, you know,
22 accommodate your time to come back and be in front of
23 us today. I think that for me this is about, you
24 know, prioritizing, you know, being fortune to invest
25 to, eh, restore the services, but also, you know, all

1
2 those question related to upgrading the signal
3 system, you know, if there are part of this
4 conversation so if, if you have any update on, how
5 are we doing when scheduling-wise when it come to,
6 eh, the plan, capital plan to upgrading the signal
7 system, eh, eh, is that, has that plan been delayed
8 as a result of the financial crisis or, eh, what do
9 you anticipate would be the plan to continue
10 upgrading the signal system?

11 DIRECTOR BERRANG: Ah, Mr. Chairman, ah,
12 as you know, I'm sure we have, ah, three, ah, signal
13 projects, CBD signal projects, under way. CBD West,
14 ah, Queens Boulevard West, ah, and Culver CBDC, and
15 Eight Avenue CBDC. The balance of the CBDC, ah,
16 projects, which in the 20 to 24 program, have
17 currently not yet started, ah, due primarily due to,
18 ah, the financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
19 But we are, ah, looking to start those and some
20 design is under way and, ah, we look forward to
21 advancing those as financial resources and, ah,
22 possibilities, ah, provide themself, ah,
23 opportunities to do so.

24 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: OK. And when,
25 when it come to, eh, women and WMB, eh, eh, of course

1
2 I appreciate also the conversation that I have, have
3 with the Director Keller women and minority, eh,
4 program of the MTA and, and looking to continue
5 having that conversation, bringing other, others in,
6 in New York, and other individuals that already have
7 they own the small businesses so that they, they can
8 connect with you and what do, what do we anticipate
9 in this budget coming would be the percentage of, of
10 projects, eh, resources [inaudible] only for women
11 and minority?

12 DIRECTOR BERRANG: So, ah, Council
13 Member, in, in the last, ah, New York State fiscal
14 year, which is 2019-2020, ah, the MTA, ah, spent
15 772.5 million dollars on M/WBE, ah, ah, contractors,
16 ah, that were inclusion in, in our contracts. That's
17 at a 27.2%, ah, rate. Um, that made us, ah, the
18 highest-ranked, ah, agency in the State of New York
19 for, ah, New York State inclusions. Ah, we also, ah,
20 spent 304 million dollars, ah, last, in that same
21 time period on federal contracts. Ah, we are fully
22 committed to, ah, meeting our obligations, ah, for
23 both, ah, ah, state and federally funded contracts
24 for M/WBE, and we also have a, ah, small business
25 mentoring program which we are actively, ah, ah,

1
2 pursuing and, and, ah, managing and encouraging
3 participation, so, ah, M/WBE contracts can, ah,
4 become prime contractors, and so, ah, but that's the
5 status of our M/WBE program at the time.

6 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: So, eh, again,
7 eh, looking to continue having this conversation with
8 you guys. I think that, you know, even though the
9 number, you know, look good but when it come to, eh,
10 eh, what percentage of those are New Yorkers who live
11 in the five borough and how we can do better this is
12 something again that I'm looking to continue
13 addressing with you guys. So, eh, you know, looking
14 to continue, eh, to have that conversation with the
15 director WMB, WMBE and, and the other staff of the
16 MTA to connect more local residents of the five
17 borough to that opportunity of an institution that
18 has the value of 1 trillion dollars, where some
19 people make huge amount of money but still there's a
20 lot more that we can do to connect, eh, eh, local
21 women, black, Latino, minority with those
22 opportunity. So with that, eh, I would like to thank
23 you guys and I hope that and as we were hearing
24 members of the public starting to represent the TWU
25 that you will hear their testimony, their testimony,

1
2 and if you have to step out, as you usually do, to
3 leave your, your representative to hear the testimony
4 from the TWU and members of the public. Thank you.

5 CHIEF BARRERE: Thank you, Chair
6 Rodriguez, ah, on behalf of the entire MTA. Thank
7 you again for hosting us and giving this opportunity
8 today, and there will definitely be representatives
9 listening to the public's, um, comments.

10 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. We will
12 now turn to public testimony. I'd like to remind
13 everyone that unlike our typical council hearings,
14 we'll be calling individuals one by one to testify.
15 Each panelist will be given two minutes to speak,
16 unless otherwise instructed by the chair. Council
17 members who have questions for a particular panelist
18 should use the Zoom raise hand function and I will
19 call on you after the panelist has completed their
20 testimony. For panelists, once your name is called a
21 member of our staff will unmute you. Ah, please wait
22 for the Sergeant at Arms to announce that you may
23 begin before delivering your testimony. Um, our
24 panelists will be Eric Loegel. Eric?

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

1
2 ERIC LOEGEL: Hello and good afternoon,
3 everyone. Um, thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of
4 the committee, um, everyone who's here. Um, so I'm
5 gonna speak about the C and the F line service
6 reductions. Um, my name, of course, Eric Loegel.
7 Um, I'm vice president of Rapid Transit Operations
8 with the Transport Workers Union, Local 100. I
9 represent the more than 7000 subway conductors, train
10 operators, and tower operators through Move New York.
11 I'm testifying today to voice opposition to the MTA
12 service cuts on the C and the F lines. The reduced
13 service is more than just an inconvenience for
14 riders, who have to wait longer in stations to be
15 picked up. It's a health hazard. By running through
16 trains, the MTA is exacerbating crowding conditions
17 on platforms and inside trains. Instead, we should
18 be doing everything we can to give riders and workers
19 as much space as possible as we continue to battle
20 COVID-19. The authority cut service on all subway
21 lines after the pandemic hit last year, as ridership
22 dwindled to about 300,000 a day. Um, it was restored
23 on all subway lines except for the C and the F. The
24 F now has 29 fewer train runs and the C now has eight
25 fewer runs. The gaps between trains have increased

1 by up to 12 minutes compared to before the pandemic.
2 That might have made some sense during early in the
3 pandemic, but ridership has been increasing as more
4 and more people get vaccinated. In recent weeks the
5 number of daily riders has been between 1.7 and 1.9
6 million. The MTA needs to restore service and
7 restore it now. The service reductions have also
8 imposed significant hardships upon our own union
9 members, the operating crews who serve riders on the
10 C and the F lines. In addition to being displaced
11 from their normal job assignments for many months,
12 some members have been put into new job schedules,
13 which severely impact their ability to manage their
14 own lives, including family and childcare
15 responsibilities. The New York State Public
16 Authority requires transit officials hold public
17 hearings before making service cuts like this. The
18 law also says the authority has to give the mayor and
19 City Council 30 days' written notice so the city can
20 hold proper hearings. The MTA never held those
21 hearings. There is no economic justification for
22 these service cuts. The MTA has received many
23 billions of dollars from the federal government. So
24

1
2 I urge you to call on the MTA to restore full service
3 on the C and F lines.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

5 ERIC LOEGEL: Thank you.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your
7 testimony. Are there any council members that have
8 questions for this panelist? OK. Seeing none, our
9 next panelist will be Arthur Schwartz. Arthur?

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

11 ARTHUR SCHWARTZ: Ah, good afternoon.

12 Ah, my name is Arthur Schwartz. I am special
13 assistant to the president of the Transport Workers
14 Union and counsel. Um, I just want to add one thing
15 to what Eric said, and that's that this committee
16 should understand, as we showed in court last week,
17 that it has the power to require the MTA and the New
18 York City Transit Authority to come before the City
19 Council, report all cuts in service, and the City
20 Council has the power to request public hearings. I
21 dare say that in the 40 years since that law was put
22 into effect, part of the Public Authorities Law,
23 Sections 1205-4 and 1204-15 that has rarely happened.
24 And probably most current City Council members do not
25 even know that that right on the part of the City

1 Council exists. Um, we went to court and said last
2 week to Judge Frank Perry that these cuts in the C
3 and the F train were in fact becoming permanent and
4 Judge Perry, and we said that they had not notified
5 the city or given the City Council the opportunity to
6 ask for public hearings and the, the judge agreed
7 with us. He stopped the permanent implementation of
8 the C and F cuts, and then this morning actually
9 extended that injunction until April 7. Ah, this
10 City Council should be demanding, ah, not just the
11 union should be demanding, but the City Council
12 should be demanding its role, not just by having this
13 hearing, but by having public hearings demanding that
14 the MTA hold public hearings if it really intends to
15 go through with the C and F train cuts. I also want
16 to talk about another issue that is highlighted this
17 morning in the *New York Times*. The New York City
18 Transit Authority, ah, operating budget is the most
19 rider-funded budget of any transit authority in the
20 United States. Ah, the consumers, the people that
21 ride the trains, are the ones that pay a majority, an
22 overwhelming majority of the money that runs the, the
23 Transit Authority. That wasn't always the case.
24 There was a time before the 1970s, 7 and 78...

2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

3 ARTHUR SCHWARTZ: Can I finish, may I
4 finish one more sentence?

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, summarize your
6 testimony.

7 ARTHUR SCHWARTZ: Ah, where New York
8 City, ah, funded the authority. Ah, I call on the
9 City Council to take up that responsibility now that
10 you're doing the budget and to put 1% of the city
11 budget into the New York City Transit Authority
12 operating budget, which would allow the authority to
13 maintain service and lower fares. Thank you very
14 much.

15 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your
16 testimony. Ah, as a reminder, written testimony can
17 be submitted. Ah, the address is
18 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

19 ARTHUR SCHWARTZ: We, I have done that, I
20 didn't.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Um, are
22 there any council members with questions for this
23 panelist? OK, seeing none, ah, our next panelist
24 will be HP Schroer. HP.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

1
2 HP SCHROER: Can you hear me now?

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes, we can.

4 HP SCHROER: For the record, I'm HP, a
5 World War II veteran, and director of You Me We, a
6 veteran organization representing 12,000 veterans
7 attending colleges in New York City. My sole mission
8 for the last four years was to get the MTA to charge
9 veterans the same price as seniors. Three years ago
10 the council and the mayor approved giving veterans
11 attending college a discount. Unfortunately, after
12 three years of the 12,000 eligible veterans only 700
13 have received a discount because of restrictions
14 imposed by the mayor. So we decided to do something
15 about it. Three bills were established in the state
16 legislature, which enable all veterans to purchase
17 discounted fares. The bills stipulate the money will
18 be supplied by the state and only be used for
19 veterans' discount. Sadly, although supported by the
20 public and the majority of the legislature, they have
21 languished in committees. Why? A lack of money and
22 a commitment to funding. The American Relief Act is
23 supplying the state and the MTA with billions of
24 dollars. It is estimated it would take two cents
25 from every fare to fund the veterans' discount. Yet,

1
2 the governor and the MTA have not taken any action to
3 pass the bills. If you want to thank veterans for
4 our service, then give meaning to the words by
5 demanding the mayor keep his promise, demanding the
6 MTA put a veterans' discount in its budget, and
7 demanding the governor pass the bills and announce on
8 Memorial Day a veterans' discount on the MTA.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time has expired.

10 HP SCHROER: I ask you, isn't this
11 service and sacrifice of veterans for the country
12 worth two cents? I thank you.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your
14 testimony. Um, do any council members have questions
15 for this panelist? OK, seeing none, our next
16 panelist will be Kevin Jones. Kevin.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time will begin.

18 KEVIN JONES: Ah, good afternoon, and
19 thank you to the members of the committee for
20 allowing me to testify today. My name is Kevin
21 Jones. I'm the associate state director of advocacy
22 at AARP New York. We represent 750,000 members of
23 the 50-plus community in New York City. AARP New
24 York believes that the MTA's network of subways and
25 buses remains the life blood of New York City and we

1 stand committed to ensuring that the system provides
2 safe and reliable transportation for our members and
3 all New Yorkers citywide. Despite the unprecedented
4 challenges that the MTA has faced as a result of the
5 pandemic, the MTA system prior to, ah, COVID-19
6 pandemic was far from perfect and plagued with a host
7 of issues, especially as they relate to the overall
8 accessibility o for transit network. The
9 overwhelming majority of the New York City subway
10 stations remain inaccessible to people with
11 disabilities and older adults with mobility issues.
12 A 2018 study published by the New York City
13 comptroller's office found that only 24% of the
14 subways, um, of the subway's 472 stations were
15 accessible. The comptroller also found that the
16 majority of neighborhoods that lack access to a
17 single ADA accessible station are predominantly, ah,
18 communities of color in the outer boroughs of the
19 Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. In addition, thousands
20 of residents, um, in the outer boroughs of the Bronx
21 and, ah, Queens and Brooklyn also lack access to
22 nearby public transit options entirely, which
23 essentially rendered, ah, renders them in transit
24 deserts. These pervasive accessibility issues
25

1 diminish the quality of life for 50-plus New Yorkers
2 and often limit an individual's access to quality
3 employment and health care opportunities, as well as
4 other critical services offered by the city. The MTA
5 has made notable commitments to address these issues
6 in recent years by prioritizing ADA station
7 accessibility projects in the 20, ah, 2020 to 2024
8 capital plan, as well as undertaken New York City
9 Transit Fast Forward plan. But these project remain
10 suspended, projects remain suspended due to the
11 unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Ah,
12 ah, we commend the work of the Senate Majority Leader
13 Chuck Schumer of the New York Congressional
14 delegation and the Biden administration in passing
15 the American Rescue Plan and are eager to see the
16 MTA's receiving an additional 6.5 billion dollars in
17 emergency aid to offset the financial losses from the
18 pandemic. As the MTA becomes more financially stable
19 and looks to restart...

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time has expired.

22 KEVIN JONES: ...many of the projects, we
23 urge the agency to begin prioritizing, begin by
24 prioritizing the completion of ADA accessible
25 stations. Um, I will submit the rest of the

1 testimony in writing. Ah, but I'm happy to take any
2 questions.
3

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you for your
5 testimony. Ah, are there any council members with
6 questions for this panelist? OK, seeing none, I'll
7 turn it over to Chair Rodriguez.

8 CHAIRPERSON RODRIGUEZ: Well, thank you
9 to, eh, eh, everyone from the MTA for [inaudible]
10 this hearing. Thank you to my colleague. Thank you
11 to the speaker. Eh, working together again with
12 borough president Eric Adams, eh, everyone that
13 joined the hearing today, press conference today,
14 including, eh, eh, Speaker Corey Johnson, Council
15 Member Lander, eh, Jumaane Williams, Gale Brewer. I
16 know that advocating together we will be able to
17 restore the funding. With that this hearing is
18 adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date May 15, 2021