



CITY OF NEW YORK

**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR**

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**CHRISTINE BERTHET**  
Chair

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District Manager

July 28, 2014

Ray LaHood & Jane Garvey  
Co-Chairs  
MTA Transportation Reinvention Commission  
2 Broadway  
New York, NY 10004

**Re: MTA Transportation Reinvention Commission - Public Comments**

Dear Mr. Hood & Ms. Garvey:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) applauds the MTA for creating the MTA Transportation Reinvention Commission focused on anticipating the challenges and opportunities facing the region's transportation network in the coming decades. Growing ridership, changing demographics, climate change, and emerging technologies mandate a rapidly changing mass transit system and we share your belief that it best dealt with in a proactive fashion. As part of the Commission's Public Comment initiative, Manhattan CB4 would like the Reinvention Commission to consider the following:

- **Regional Approach:** It is crucial to create better transportation coordination and integration across jurisdictional lines and to view transit needs in a regional context.
  - The MTA currently serves two (2) Connecticut and twelve (12) NY counties, including Long Island, New York City, parts of the lower Hudson Valley and parts of Coastal Connecticut. However, the economic and commuter region includes a far larger area, including many New Jersey counties. CB4 encourage the MTA to overcome jurisdictional challenges to create a more efficient system.
  - Specifically, Manhattan CB4 would like the MTA to move forward with advanced planning on the extension of the No 7 train to Secaucus NJ, as recommended by the multiagency Feasibility Analysis Final Report published in April 2013. The project would have many benefits, including improving Trans-Hudson Mobility and a reduction of bus traffic entering Manhattan. It also could enable a more integrated regional system – that more conveniently integrates NJT, LIRR, and Metro-North.
- **Uniform Regional Transit Payment Systems:** In the MTA's search for a replacement of the MetroCard the MTA should embrace a fare card that can be used on commuter rail

lines, ferries, and other emerging transportation modes in addition to existing PATH, MTA Bus and Subway, Airtrain, and other services. By creating uniform payment across various modes of transportation the MTA can increase usage on all. A universal fare card combined with increasing the frequency of the commuter rail traffic within NYC would help the MTA leverage existing commuter rail lines where additional subway and light rail construction are not financially feasible. The MTA could significantly increase public transportation options with minimal capital construction costs.

- **Solving the Crosstown Divide:** The divide between the east side and west side of Manhattan continues to grow as the borough's population, economic activity, and traffic increase. Put simply, it takes longer to get across town (in midtown) than it does to go to another borough. We call on the MTA to think creatively and aggressively on how to solve this problem. In addition to existing Bus and SBS routes the MTA should examine services with dedicated lanes, either full BRT (Bus-Rapid Transit) Lines or Lightrail service.
- **Train to the Plane:** In order for New York to maintain its status as a world-class city, La Guardia airport needs a direct rail connection.
- **Increased use of GPS and modern technology:** Manhattan CB4 appreciates the MTA's innovation and advancement in using GPS technology to create MTA Bustime. Allowing riders to ascertain where a specific bus is and when it will arrive is now expected of any modern public transportation system.
  - **Using GPS for Quality Control:** GPS data should be used to see which MTA buses are not meeting their necessary and advertised schedule. This information would help the MTA improve the quality of its service.
    - For example, the M42 is scheduled to run approx. every 7 min from 7am-7pm on Weekdays. However, waits of 20-30 minutes for a bus are not uncommon. Thus a mechanism whereby the MTA reviews the GPS data to recognize when MTA buses do not meet their schedules would allow it to better improve service on said routes.
  - **Defining Route Segments:** Many bus routes throughout the city have segments with significantly higher ridership compared to the ridership of the route as a whole. To better serve the areas that have higher ridership and demand, without wasting MTA resources; the MTA should explore creating additional shorter bus routes at peak hours along denser segments of longer routes.
    - For example, the M11 from Greenwich Village to Riverbank State Park might benefit from more frequent service on the southern half of its route.
- **Expand MTA Services and Revenue:** In exploring new sources of revenue for the MTA, it should consider new and alternative methods. For example, it could compete

with existing tour buses. In several other world cities public transportation companies operate services for tourists. The profits from these tourist services are used to help subsidize the public transportation agencies general services. In addition, MTA operation of these lines would enable easier regulation and a more efficient and less intrusive travel route path.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet  
Chair



Jay Marcus  
Co-Chair, Transportation  
Planning Committee



Ernest Modarelli  
Co-Chair, Transportation  
Planning Committee

CC: Tom Prendergast, MTA  
Senator Brad Hoylman  
Assembly Member Richard Gottfried  
Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal