



NYCTRC

NEW YORK CITY TRANSIT
RIDERS COUNCIL

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Andrew Albert, chair of the New York City Transit Riders Council and MTA Board Member, and Lisa Daglian, PCAC Executive Director, on MTA's new overnight service plan:

Enhanced Overnight Service: An Encouraging Plan, Questions Remain

The subways are an integral part of our city and in many ways define who we are: having a 24/7 system will be critical to our re-opening and recovery. Subways are the only mode of efficient transportation for many workers of our city that never sleeps. Given the crisis the pandemic has wrought, we can see the potential of overnight closures as a viable short-term solution to further ramping up cleaning and disinfecting of subway cars and stations to protect essential workers.

The plan the MTA has put forward to significantly increase overnight bus service and pull together other resources for overnight service is impressive. We are looking forward to hearing the details of this ambitious plan, which will start in less than 36 hours. That being said, we do believe that since the MTA made the decision to shut down the system, it should start working now with public health specialists and the medical community on metrics for reinstating 24/7 subway service.

We have several other questions as well:

- How many people use the system between the hours of 1 – 5 a.m. who would qualify for the FHV trip that will be available for those who travel more than 1 hour 20 minutes or more than 2 transfers?
- How will riders be assured that those vehicles will be regularly cleaned and disinfected?
- How will people who are not essential workers but who need to travel for an emergency be able to access the FHV service?
- How will Transit receive input from riders who are not having adequate replacement service?
- What is Transit's communication strategy for receiving calls from riders not knowing what to do? Will a phone bank be set up to talk to a real person, as well as text and emails from riders who are stuck? In addition to Twitter, how will riders who don't know what to do be helped?
- Will there be signage indicating first and last trains at each station during the late-night hours?
- Nearly half the essential workers ride between the hours of 4-5 a.m. How flexible are the shutdown hours and can they be rejiggered to meet that ridership need?

Protecting riders and transit workers is key, and ensuring the system is as clean as possible is an important aspect. We look forward to returning to normal – the new normal – so getting it right is important.