

**Statement of the New York City Transit Riders Council
Before the MTA Board New York City Transit Committee
September 21, 2009**

I am William Henderson, Executive Director of the New York City Transit Riders Council. The NYCTRC, which was established in 1981, is the legislatively mandated representative of New York City Transit bus and subway riders.

We would like to comment upon several items in the proposed Capital Program. First, we are pleased to see the emphasis on normal replacement of assets and returning facilities to a state of good repair. We also note, however, that the capital funding proposed for NYC Transit for the next five years is far short of the needs identified in the MTA's 20 Year Needs Assessment. In fact, the proposed plan will fund less than two-thirds of the needs identified for the next five years. Given the current funding gap of almost \$10 billion for the overall capital program, however, this may be the best we can hope for. We have made the case for adequate funding to our State and City officials in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

In view of the MTA's resource constraints, we believe that NYC Transit's station renewal strategy makes sense. We are pleased to see NYC Transit base capital investment decisions on an assessment of conditions of various assets in the subway system. While we would like to see the total rehabilitation of stations throughout the system and believe that there are a number of stations where this total rehabilitation is warranted, the Council also recognizes that there are a number of stations with severe deficiencies in one or more station components. As the station renewal strategy promises to address these severe deficiencies more rapidly we support this initiative.

We are also pleased to see that the replacement of fare collection system components will incorporate next generation fare collection technology, including smart card payment media. The NYCTRC and PCAC have long advocated that NYC Transit make the transition to smart card based fare collection systems, and while we have been concerned about the pace of this transition, we are gratified to see the benefits of this technology discussed in the Capital Program and to have next generation fare collection technology incorporated in fare collection equipment included in this Capital Program.

Thank you.