

Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA

347 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017 • 212/878-7087 • Fax 212/878-7461
E-mail: mail@pcac.org • World Wide Web: <http://www.pcac.org>

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Statement of PCAC Transportation Planner Ellyn Shannon on the MTA Financial Effort

MTA Board Meeting
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While we are here today to learn about MTA service cuts, job cuts and fare increases that will be proposed to address the projected fiscal deficit, the Rider Councils believe that the MTA should take the opportunity in this current economic crisis to promote itself as the ideal economic stimulus package.

The jobs that have been created by the Capital Program in order to maintain the subway, commuter rail and bus operations to a state of good repair and provide a safe, clean and customer friendly riding have had positive long term impacts on the economy of the city and region. This fact has been well documented in a report issued in March of this year, The Economic Impact of MTA Capital Program Investment on New York State. However, while this document supports direct job creation from capital projects, the PCAC urges the MTA to also identify the number of jobs and projects it would take to earn every line in the MTA family a minimum overall Customer Satisfaction rating of "Good". Even further analysis could capture the impact of increased transit-oriented development as a result of transit investment and improved rider experience.

The MTA should compare this data with other types of job creation efforts across the country which will likely demonstrate that the MTA is one of the best places to invest infrastructure stimulus dollars. The Mayors Office in Washington, the Governors Office in Washington and the MTA should be working together to promote this information to federal legislators. Specifically, they must work with elected officials in Washington to get public transportation to become a regular component of environmental, energy, housing, health and economic development appropriation measures.

With increasing infrastructure investment needs and stimulus packages with billions of dollars at stake taking center stage in Washington over the next several months, the PCAC calls upon the MTA to fully quantify its potential to be an economic engine and push that message forward and vigorously advocate for the financial and physical needs of New York City Transit, Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad.