**MTA Capital Program Committee Meeting Testimony**

**“Billions of Dollars in Capital Improvements is Good News for Riders, Points to Need for Congestion Pricing”**

**By: Lisa Daglian, Executive Director, PCAC**

**December 19, 2022**

Good afternoon, I am Lisa Daglian, Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA, PCAC.

This month, again, you’ll be referring $2.5 billion in projects to the Board for approval. Importantly, these include resiliency work, Park Avenue viaduct construction and new elevators AND maintenance contracts. We are glad to see these go hand in hand so that these important accessibility features can reliably get all riders where they need to go, and hope that maintenance will also be part of all future accessibility upgrades from private developers, including Zoning for Accessibility improvements. As you work toward the goal of 95% accessibility by 2055, if not sooner, we know that you’ll keep Mets-Willets Point stations — both the LIRR and 7 line — top of mind. We look forward to working with you to find funding for that important project, particularly in light of the new planned Willets Point development. As we’ve said before, a UBS-Elmont-style funding arrangement, with 90% private financing and 10% from the state, is a great model.

The number of projects being moved through the process is indicative of the system’s needs. Riders will benefit from the improvements. The Committee book says that “In 2022 the MTA plans to commit nearly $8.1 billion worth of capital projects.” That’s impressive! The dollar figures are again testament to the need for congestion pricing as a reliable funding stream for the capital program. We are hopeful that bundling projects and streamlining the process will hold down costs and speed up delivery, and that next year we’ll see more green, and less red — as festive as that may be.

We continue to urge the federal government to return a Finding of No Significant Impact, FONSI, as expeditiously as possible to ensure we see many more $2 billion days, and improvements for all riders.