

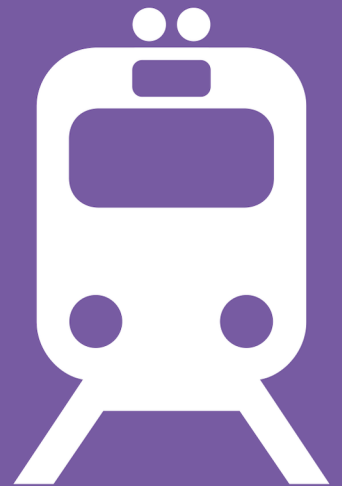


PCAC

PERMANENT CITIZENS
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE MTA

Bike and Pedestrian Access Recommendations

June 1, 2022





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2 Broadway, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10004
(212) 878-7087 mail@pcac.org

GERARD BRINGMANN CHAIR · MTA BOARD MEMBER · LIRRCC CHAIR
ANDREW ALBERT NYCTRC CHAIR · MTA BOARD MEMBER
RANDOLPH GLUCKSMAN MNRCC CHAIR · MTA BOARD MEMBER

LISA DAGLIAN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
BRADLEY BRASHEARS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
KARA GURL RESEARCH & COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATE
JESSICA SPEZIO ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

PCAC Bike and Pedestrian Access Recommendations June 1, 2022

With the passing of the MTA Bike and Pedestrian Access bill signed by Governor Hochul, PCAC's legislative mandate now includes recommending ways for the MTA to improve bike and pedestrian access to its stations and facilities. Following is PCAC's submission for use in informing the MTA's first Bike, Pedestrian, and Micromobility Strategic Action Plan.

A growing majority of transit users begin and end their journeys on foot – or wheels. As more and more people are walking and cycling to get around – particularly in the face of the growing climate crisis – improving access to the MTA network for bicyclists and pedestrians is more important than ever. Making it easier to get to and from stations without a car will help increase ridership around the system, while cutting down on congestion and emissions. Improving connectivity will allow more people to get where they're going under their own power or take transit. As the MTA continues to work towards attracting back riders lost during the pandemic, increasing access for cyclists and pedestrians will be key to increasing transit equity and adapting to evolving work patterns and travel trends while meeting the demand for bike access to transit. Improving accessibility for bicycles may also help improve accessibility for people in wheelchairs or with other assistive devices.

The MTA's commitment to studying ways to make micromobility work for transit riders is encouraging. The First- and Last- Mile study underway to increase bike and scooter share, parking options, and other micromobility options for Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad riders is an important step, and we look forward to seeing the plan in action. Other recent improvements – including the Oonee Pod pilot at Grand Central and policy changes to eliminate the need for permits for bicycles on Metro-North and LIRR trains outside of rush hour – will also help show cyclists that they are able and welcome to take transit to complete their trips. At the same time, it's essential that rules and regulations are developed and enforceable to protect rider safety – including riders with disabilities or mobility challenges who may end up competing for the same space on trains and in stations as cyclists – particularly in light of the increasing number of electric-powered e-bikes, e-scooters and even e-mopeds that are being brought into the system.

It's also encouraging that the MTA has begun to embrace cycling as complementary, rather than competition to, transit. Central to improving the experiences of transit riders, cyclists, and pedestrians alike is decreasing the region's dependency on cars and increasing the amount of street space dedicated to transit, bikes, and pedestrians, and ensuring that each has a safe space in which to operate. Improving cycling infrastructure around the region does not mean encouraging potential transit riders to forgo their MetroCard or OMNY swipe or train ticket for a bike helmet; instead, it means ensuring that everyone can move around the region quickly,

accessibly, and affordably without using a car. Improving the quality of transit and bicycle infrastructure can work hand-in-hand to increase usage of both modes. Recent improvements near 14th Street in Manhattan prove the potential for transit and cycling upgrades to lead to increases in both transit and bike ridership: NYC DOT found that just months after the 14th Street busway, and a year after neighboring protected bike lanes on 12th and 13th Streets were completed, M14 bus ridership surged 24%, nearby Citi Bike usage increased 17%, and bike volumes on 12th and 13th Streets went up 234%.

Our key recommendations include improving bike, scooter and moped parking, fare integration, and clearly communicating the rules for the ride across the system. PCAC is mindful that some of these recommendations will require coordination and communication with other partners in mobility and public safety, including city and state DOTs, local municipalities and transit operators, Community Boards and neighborhood associations, Citi Bike and other bike and scooter share companies, Oonee Pod and other secure bike storage companies, and law enforcement agencies to ensure recommended sites meet safety standards. We're confident that all stakeholders can work together to improve mobility for riders around the region. As the MTA develops its Bike, Pedestrian, and Micromobility Strategic Action Plan, we also hope to see a robust public outreach strategy both before and after the plan is drafted, including focus groups and discussions with cyclists. We look forward to continuing to meet our legislative mandate as required under the Bike and Pedestrian Access bill and working with the MTA and partners to provide ongoing input on improving bicycle and pedestrian access to MTA facilities.

PCAC Recommendations for the MTA's Bike, Pedestrian, and Micromobility Strategic Action Plan:

New York City Transit

1. Explore ways to improve secure bicycle storage at, near, and around transit stations.

According to the ongoing [New York Bike Census survey](#) about the habits and needs of the state's cyclists, over half of respondents said that they would pay for access to secure bike parking outside of transit stations. This bicycle parking could take the form of secure bike parking inside or directly outside of train stations, similar to the current Oonee Pod pilot program at Grand Central Station. Alternatively, as indicated on the [MTA Bike, Pedestrian, and Micromobility Strategic Action Plan webpage](#), many office buildings currently allow for bicycle storage. The MTA should work with office building management and local businesses and stores near transit stations to potentially allow transit riders with bicycles to park their bikes in and around their facilities. In addition, bike parking should be a component in Zoning for Accessibility discussions, and as City Planning considers any new parking requirements for development and/or zoning changes. Secure bicycle storage locations should be considered while ensuring that accessibility is maintained for riders with disabilities or other mobility concerns.

Toronto's Secure Bike Lockers



2. Integrate OMNY with Citi Bike.

Ensuring that Citi Bike users can use OMNY to pay for their rides and memberships can help riders more seamlessly transfer between bicycles and transit. There is also the potential for the MTA and Citi Bike to advertise creative and affordable fare options including transfers between transit and Citi Bike, or Citi Bike memberships that include bonus fare capping rides.

3. Improve coordination with DOT so that bikes and buses do not conflict with each other on the street, including by separating bus lanes from bike lanes.

More dedicated rights of way should be established similar to those on 14th street and the neighboring 12th and 13th Street protected bike lanes, which have increased safety and speeds of riders using both modes. Community Boards and block associations must be engaged in early discussions.

4. Study bus routes that may benefit from having bike racks on the front of buses, including buses that go over bridges without bicycle access.

Currently, the MTA has successfully implemented bus bike racks on routes going over the Verrazzano Bridge. The MTA should continue to look at other potential bus routes, including those that go over bridges that do not currently have bicycle access, that may be able to benefit from front bike racks. While doing so, it's important to make instructions on how to use the bike racks clear to bike riders.

5. Improve and clarify rules regarding bicycle storage on trains.

Currently, the rules for bringing bicycles and scooters – and even mopeds – on board the subway are unclear. While restrictions surrounding the hours and types of vehicles allowed on board exist, the MTA should better communicate and publicize these rules through visual posters and announcements in stations and on trains. These rules could also be updated to clarify restrictions surrounding electric bicycles and vehicles with motors that may be potential fire hazards, and diagrams in stations indicating size limits for bicycles. The MTA should also communicate which spaces on stations and in trains are prioritized for people with accessibility issues or mobility challenges to ensure their safety.

The use of e-bikes and e-scooters is a growing phenomenon across the MTA systems, with an alarming increase in the number of larger motorized vehicles of particular concern to riders. While e-bikes, e-scooters, and mopeds are fast and efficient ways to travel, they pose a safety risk on trains and platforms because of the risk of their batteries potentially exploding or catching fire, to people walking on platforms, and because they take up a lot of space. In the future, if and when standard electric vehicle batteries are manufactured with less of a risk of fire, the MTA should revisit and update these rules. Until then, they should be restricted, with enforceable regulations.

Sample Poster: Vehicles Permitted on MTA Transit

Folding bicycle



Folding scooter



Bicycle



E-Bike



E-Scooter



Moped/E-Moped



Madrid Metro's Bike Policy Pamphlet

When you travel on Metro with your bicycle, remember:



At most, only one bicycle will be permitted per passenger. Folded and children's bicycles will be considered as items of hand luggage and may be taken on in any service time period on any day. At time periods specified as rush hours they will have to be folded before being taken on the train.



The user taking a bicycle shall be responsible for its safekeeping and care and make sure on his or her journeys not to cause injuries or nuisance to other people and/or harm or damage to the underground railway installations and rolling stock, while accepting ultimate liability for any damages that may be caused.



Train journeys shall be made with a maximum of two bicycles placed in the front car and two in the rear car, always next to the driving cab in both cases. On trains provided with spaces set aside for bicycles, they should be placed in these spaces. In the case of light metros, bicycles should be put into the middle cars (modules 2 and 4, with double doors), as these modules are provided with a suitable space for this purpose.



The user taking a bicycle may carry it on the escalators, rolling walkways and in lifts, providing that the level of occupancy so permits and no nuisance is caused to other users.



Riding a bicycle is not permitted in the installations (corridors, platforms, etc.)



In any case, Metro may restrict access with bicycles when they may interfere with the normal working of the service and, in particular, when special circumstances arise that so advocate, such as crowding, breakdowns or other operating incidents that may obstruct transit and mobility within the installations.



From Monday to Friday you have unrestricted access with your bicycle throughout normal service hours, except from 7:30-9:30 a.m. and from 2-6 p.m. and 6-8 p.m. On Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays you have unrestricted access throughout all service hours.



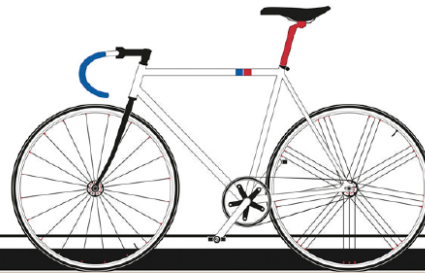
Users will be allowed to park bicycles at those stations that have spaces specifically prepared for the purpose. Their use will be in strict order of arrival and will be subject to compliance with the conditions laid down by the operator.



Some sections and lines around the system allow unrestricted access for bicycles. These sections and lines, as well as the terms of access, can be found in the Passenger Regulations (Art. 2 bis), at www.metromadrid.es and at the Metro Madrid official app.



Come with your bike



6. Use decals and stickers on Subway doors and platform floors for recommended bicycle cars.

Rather than implementing time limits when riders can and cannot bring trains on board, which is difficult to enforce especially when ridership is down, the MTA can indicate which cars on trains are best for bringing bicycles on board and where to store them. This is done successfully on Tri-Rail in Florida and other systems around the world. Printed decals with bicycles can be put on doors of cars with more space for accessibility, as well as markings on the floor of platforms that align with those doors, so that riders with bicycles know the best places to stand. Similar decals should also indicate where riders with accessibility or mobility concerns should board trains and wait on platforms.

Tri-Rail in Florida's onboard bicycle policy including decals and bike stickers on boarding doors, indicating where riders with bicycles should board:

Onboard Bicycle Policy

Only conventional two wheeled bicycles that do not exceed 80 inches in their longest dimension will be allowed on trains. Tricycles, tandems, bicycles with training wheels, and any motorized or power bicycles including Scooters are prohibited.



Bicycle Cars

Most Tri-Rail trains are equipped with one bicycle car per train set. Look for the bike sticker on the boarding doors as the train pulls into the station to identify the bicycle car. On the first level of a bicycle car there is a 14-space bike rack. These spaces are first come first serve.



7. Work with Citi Bike, NYC DOT and Community Boards to recommend improvements that will increase transit equity, access and mobility including wayfinding, bike lanes, and Citi Bike locations.

Expanding bicycle and pedestrian access to transit stations is a great way to make the transit system more equitable by providing additional mobility options to communities with less transit access. Many low-income and working class New Yorkers cannot afford a car and depend on transit, with stations that may be far from their homes.

Micromobility poses an affordable opportunity for riders to save time on their commutes by riding a bike or scooter to a station instead of walking.

The MTA should work with City DOT through Community Boards to site future and improved Citi Bike dock locations that are convenient for those biking to transit stations. This includes expanding the citywide bike lane network and Citi Bike access further into Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx where the bike network is currently sparse, and there is great potential for transit riders to supplement long trips with bike rides.

The MTA should also work with Citi Bike and DOT, in consultation with communities through local Community Boards and neighborhood associations, to increase street-

level real time subway arrival screens near all stations, but also on Citi Bike docks near subway stations for people who may consider transferring from a bike to the subway. Wayfinding can be improved to encourage transit ridership by putting up signs on Citi Bike docks farther from transit, such as near popular waterfront destinations and parks, that indicate that the nearest subway station and the estimated biking time to get there. For example, at Brooklyn Bridge Park, the Citi Bike dock should have a sign indicating “High Street A/C: 10-minute bike ride” with an arrow pointing in the correct direction.

Citi Bike can also provide backup service when weekend maintenance is being performed on the subway, including through working with Citi Bike to provide free rides to alternate subway lines on weekends with service disruptions (ex: free or discounted rides only to docks adjacent to J/Z/M stations when the L train is unavailable).

To increase pedestrian access to stations, the MTA should study stations with closed entrances that could potentially be reopened to decrease the walking time necessary for pedestrians to walk to stations. Improving wayfinding, signage, and lighting near stations will also help pedestrians and cyclists find and access transit stops.

8. As the MTA rolls out new neighborhood-level detailed maps at stations, add nearby bike infrastructure.

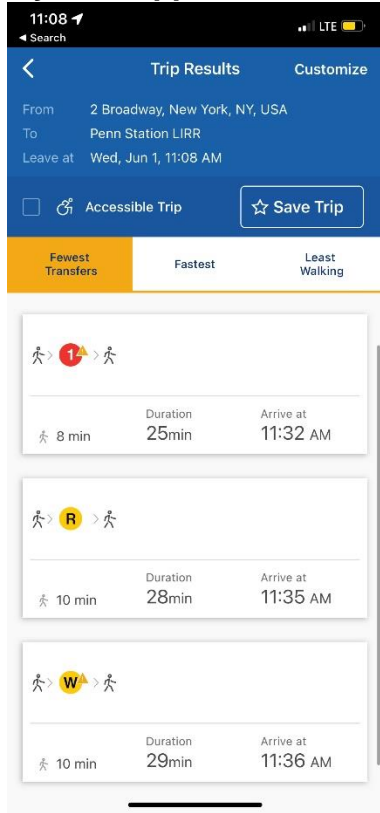
The MTA’s new neighborhood-level maps are helpful for wayfinding in the immediate locations surrounding stations, and many of these maps include Citi Bike docks and major bike lanes like the Brooklyn Bridge. These maps could help riders more seamlessly transfer between transit and bikes by visualizing more nearby streets with bike lanes and enlarging the Citi Bike icons on the maps. These improvements can help to show riders who may not otherwise choose bike riding that Citi Bike is a nearby option to get them across the last mile to their destination.

9. Include bike navigation options on the MyMTA app and Trip Planner, and work with other app designers to incorporate information.

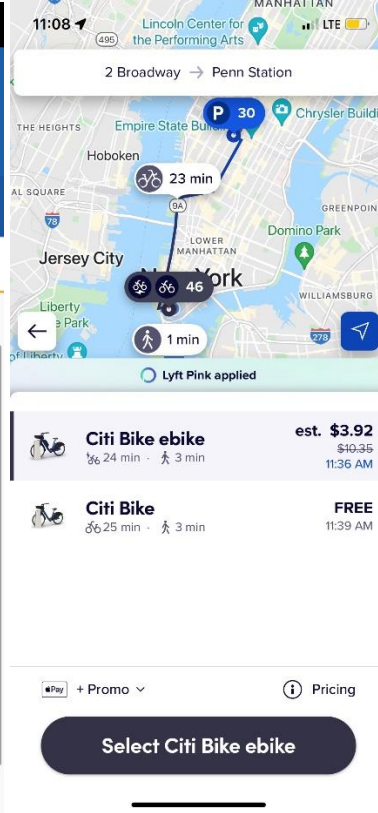
The MyMTA app and Trip Planner should be a central hub for riders to learn the best route for getting to their destination, which may include riding a bike or Citi Bike to a transit station. Similar to the MyMTA app’s walk time estimation, it should include locations of nearby Citi Bike docks and estimated bike times to nearby train stations when planning trips. The Trip Planner on the MTA website allows users to check a box for each mode that they’re interested in using, and “bike” should be an option. The Citi Bike app currently has a transit feature showing where trains are in real time, as well as bus and subway arrival information, but does not incorporate transit into directions for reaching a destination. Citymapper, a private app, currently allows users to choose multimodal routes that include either a regular bicycle or Citi Bike when planning a trip.

A sample trip from 2 Broadway to Penn Station on the MyMTA app, Citi Bike app, and City Mapper is included below. The option to bike to the Wall Street 2/3 station is the fastest option, but only Citymapper includes this option.

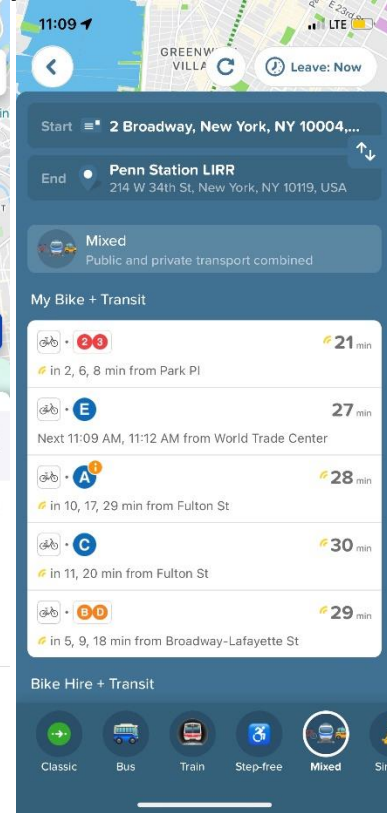
MyMTA App



Citi Bike App



City Mapper App



Suggested Routes to Travel from 2 Broadway to Penn Station

10. Use data from the ongoing New York Bike Census to monitor areas for improving bike and pedestrian access in the future. As more data on cyclists in the city and state becomes available, the MTA should look for updates and use it in its current and future micromobility planning efforts.

MTA Commuter Rails

Metro-North Railroad and Long Island Rail Road

1. Take advantage of underutilized MTA-owned parking lot space to increase secure bike storage.

To meet the demand for secure bike parking near Metro-North and Long Island Rail Road stations, the MTA can take advantage of the large amount of MTA-owned space on underutilized commuter rail parking lots. Particularly with depleted ridership due to the pandemic, this can help repurpose space that is currently not being used. Secure bike parking could include structures like Oonee Pod or other partnerships with bike parking companies to ensure that bikes are protected from theft and weather. Accessibility for riders with disabilities or other mobility concerns must be maintained as locations for secure bicycle storage are considered.

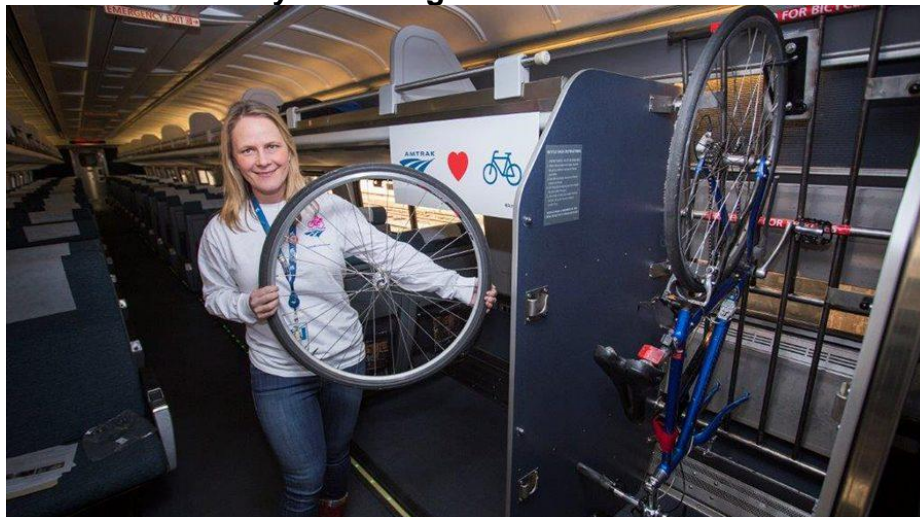
2. Improve and clarify rules regarding bicycle storage on trains.

Currently, the rules for bringing bicycles and scooters on board commuter rail trains are unclear. While restrictions surrounding the hours and types of vehicles allowed on board exist, the MTA should better communicate and publicize these rules through visual posters including the sample vehicle restriction poster above and announcements in stations and on trains. These rules should also be updated to clarify restrictions surrounding electric bicycles and vehicles with motors that may be potential fire hazards, and diagrams in stations indicating size limits for bicycles. "Rules of Conduct" for each railroad should be updated to include consistent messaging about bicycles and scooters, and prominently displayed so they can be used in enforcing the rules and regulations. The MTA should also communicate which spaces on stations and in trains are prioritized for people with accessibility issues or mobility challenges to ensure their safety.

3. Use decals and stickers on train doors and platform floors for recommended bicycle cars.

Implementing time limits when riders can and cannot bring trains on board is difficult to enforce, especially when ridership is down. As an alternative, the railroads can indicate which cars on trains are best for bringing bicycles on board and where to store them. This must be done to still permit sufficient space for riders needing accessible boarding and seating: if insufficient space exists for both bicycles and wheelchairs, bicycles should be directed to another car or train. Printed decals with bicycles can be put on doors of cars with more-than-adequate space for accessible seating, as well as markings on the floor of platforms that align with those doors, so that riders with bicycles know the best places to stand and board the train. Bicycle storage racks can also be implemented in certain commuter rail cars. Similar decals should also indicate where riders with accessibility or mobility concerns should board trains and wait on platforms.

Bicycle Storage Rack on Amtrak



4. Work with municipalities to develop first- and last- mile micromobility pilot programs.

Offering options for riders to access commuter rail stations without a car—including both those who currently drive to stations and those who cannot afford a car—is an important way to increase equity and access to transit across the region. Expanding micromobility options through bike and scooter share pilot programs can help fill this gap in an affordable way for riders. This includes working with private companies like Lime, Bird, Citi Bike, and other micromobility share companies to develop local bike and scooter share programs. For example, Suffolk County holds a contract with [PedalShare](#) for a bikeshare program that has 200 bikes and more than 50 stations across eight municipalities: Southampton Village; Southampton Town -Hampton Bays & Bridgehampton; Babylon Village; Babylon Town, Patchogue Village; Riverhead Town; Lindenhurst; Huntington. Under this agreement, Suffolk County holds the contract and municipalities have the ability to opt-in. Other local municipalities with commuter rail access should work to implement similar micromobility programs to increase bicycle and pedestrian access to stations.

5. Work with municipalities to increase protected bike lanes, sidewalks, and wayfinding signs on roads leading to stations.

In partnership with local towns and counties outside of New York City, the MTA should work to ensure that protected bike lanes with sidewalks for pedestrians are located on streets and roads leading to commuter rail stations. These streets should also include signs indicating directions for reaching the stations. Currently, some stations have entrances that may be confusing or difficult for riders to locate, including the Hollis and Rosedale LIRR stations. Improving wayfinding, lighting, and signage both at and around stations will help incentivize local residents to bicycle or walk to the station by improving safety conditions and wayfinding.