**MTA Board Meeting**

**“Transit is Our Tool for Fighting the Climate Crisis”**

**By: Kara Gurl Planning and Advocacy Manager (PCAC)**

**April 26, 2023**

Good morning! I’m Kara Gurl, Planning and Advocacy Manager at the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC).

Last week was Earth Week, a fitting time for the MTA to reach the milestone of four million rides on the Subway in a single day for the first time since the pandemic started. Transit is one of our greatest tools for fighting the climate crisis, and the MTA is already pulling more than its own weight to help the state reach its emissions goals. New York City has some of the lowest per capita emissions in the country, almost entirely thanks to the MTA, which helps New Yorkers avoid over 20 million metric tons of carbon every year.

The MTA’s recent announcement of a commitment to reduce its own emissions by 85% by 2040 is timely. Investing in electric buses, solar power, regenerative braking, and other initiatives will help advance the agency towards a zero-emissions fleet while conserving energy in facilities – and saving money in the long run. PCAC has long called for the MTA to create a comprehensive guiding strategy for addressing both sustainability and resiliency needs—which are inherently connected and can’t be separated when mitigating the impacts of the climate crisis. We’re thrilled that this is the direction you’re headed in with a unified team and approach: combining ongoing sustainability initiatives with resiliency efforts to protect the system from extreme weather and flooding.

As Summer fast approaches, so does the next round of once-in-a-century storms that the MTA must prepare for. This is yet another reason why we need congestion pricing as soon as possible: it will reduce emissions and improve air quality, while also funding critical resiliency and sustainability projects around our transit system.

Yesterday, today, and always, one of the most important things the MTA can do to fight the climate crisis is improving and expanding bus, subway, and commuter rail service to get even more drivers out of cars. We’re eagerly awaiting a budget that fully funds the MTA now and into the future—a future with an even better and more reliable transit system than we have today. Transit is our path forward, and it must be invested in. Thank you.