



The City of New York

# Manhattan Community Board 1

Catherine McVay Hughes CHAIRPERSON | Noah Pfefferblit DISTRICT MANAGER

**Assembly Standing Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions**  
**Public Hearing on the**  
**METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY'S**  
**2015 – 2019 CAPITAL PROGRAM:**  
**EVALUATING TRANSIT PRIORITIES FOR MANHATTAN AND THE BRONX**  
**Assembly Hearing Room**  
**250 Broadway, Room 1923, 19<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York City, NY**  
**Thursday, August 7, 2014 from 10:30 AM**

Thank you, Chairman Breen and Committee Members for holding this important meeting today and inviting our testimony. My name is Catherine McVay Hughes, I represent Community District 1 in Lower Manhattan where I am Chair of Community Board 1. Our district includes most of Manhattan below Canal Street, and in a city that depends on transit for prosperity, no neighborhood relies more on subways, buses, and ferries. 310,000 workers every day, 11.5 million tourists every year, arrive in our district of only 1.5 square miles.

I am going to list a number of desirable and urgent priorities. At the top of our priority list is:

- **Harden the subway stations and tunnels** against extreme weather

Hurricane Sandy showed how vulnerable our mass transit lifelines are, and, with the closure of the Montague Street tunnel and other repairs underway, we've seen that a two-day storm can create more than two years' repairs. Above all else, we must protect the transit assets we already have. In any list of priorities something has to come first, and this is Job One.

Our other priorities are:

- **Complete the vision of the Fulton Transportation Center** – we can see the progress being made for the oculus, various platforms and the concourse, but the Fulton Center vision also includes connecting passageways to the N line at Cortland Station through the Dey Street Concourse, E and 1 lines and the PATH trains. These connections are vital to managing congestion above and below ground, maximizing connectivity among rail lines, and maximizing the success of the retail expansion that is part of the design. Only a completed Transportation Center, with all those lines interconnected with the 2, 3, 4, 5, A, C, J and Z trains, will assure the economic revitalization of lower Manhattan.
- **Fast track Rehabilitation of the South Ferry Station** – so that it is "buttoned up" from the next extreme weather event and so that the area is returned back to Battery Park for the public in a community starved for park space
- **Repair leaky stations** with dripping ceilings

- **One-Seat Ride to Airport** – for more than a decade, CB1 has advocated for a one-seat train ride to and from the airport. In February 2014, the PANYNJ announced a project to extend the WTC PATH to Newark Liberty International Airport, giving travelers a one-seat ride from Lower Manhattan to the airport. A similar option for JFK should also be planned. Convenient and affordable mass transit to international airports is critical to maintain our global competitiveness as an international center for business and tourism; it also reduces congestion and improves quality of life. If we achieve both connections, NYC will be the only world class city served by two international airports with a one-seat connection
- **Subway Service Change Signage** – signage for subway service changes must begin to be posted at street level in addition to in subway stations and on platforms. This problem in CD1 has gone unaddressed. This is especially problematic for disabled passengers, passengers with strollers, and passengers with luggage or packages that must make their way fully into the station before potentially discovering that their train is not running, or that vital accessibility features like elevators are out of service.
- **Hugh L. Carey Tunnel (Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel)** – fast-track renovation and resiliency measures
- **Improve signaling for subways** – to alleviate congestion and eliminate the "wave" affect. There is 120% overcrowding on 4/5/6 and 2/3 subway lines which leads to dangerously crowded platforms and overcrowded subway cars
- **Countdown Clocks** – subway stations should be upgraded to include countdown clocks on subway platforms
- **Wi-Fi** – subway stations should be upgraded to include Wi-Fi internet service
- **Accessibility** – subway stations must be improved to maximize accessibility for all ranging from mothers with strollers and disabled patrons, including ADA compliance
- **2nd Avenue subway** – must be completed as soon as possible in order to relieve other modes of transportation that are significantly over-capacity
- **Mechanism to protect people from falling into the tracks** (i.e. platform screen doors) – the City is doing a pilot program in the Rector Street station in Lower Manhattan using sensors that would alert the train conductors when/if something/someone falls in the tracks; what is the status of that project and if/when will it be expanded to other stations?
- **Request analysis of transportation infrastructure shortfall** – given the rapidly increasing residential, tourist, worker populations and infrastructure deficits; identify problem areas and make a plan for alleviating over-crowding of public transportation

We are also concerned that there are the necessary resources to:

- **Maintain Bus Service** – bus service must be maintained, specifically the M20 line
- **Regular cleaning of subway stations and tracks** – general cleanliness is an issue

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to working with you to improve our vital public transportation system to make it a model for other world cities.