

# Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA

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## **Statement of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Before the New York City Council Transportation Committee Oversight hearing on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority 2015-2019 Capital Program**

**Monday, October 6, 2014**

Good afternoon, my name is William Henderson. I am the Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory Committee to the MTA (PCAC). The PCAC was established by the New York State Legislature as the umbrella organization for three legislatively-mandated Councils that represent the interests of riders of the Metro-North Railroad, Long Island Rail Road and New York City Transit system. A representative from each Council also participates as a non-voting member on the MTA Board. The Councils were created by the New York State Legislature in 1981.

We appreciate the opportunity to discuss the upcoming MTA 2015-2019 Capital Program. As you know, the program has been vetoed without prejudice by New York State's Transportation Commissioner, opening a period of public discussion concerning the MTA system's immense needs and the resources to meet these needs. While the process will certainly take some time, it is crucial to move forward in a timely manner so that critical work is not interrupted and our system does not begin to deteriorate. Although its infrastructure has been stabilized and reliability improved greatly from the 1970's and early 1980's, our City's Transit system requires a constant infrastructure renewal and maintenance effort to support this improved service.

The question of resources is a very real one, as the Capital Program that the MTA proposed included a funding gap of over \$15 billion, or nearly one-half of the total value of work under the plan. All stakeholders in the system, who benefit greatly from the work that the MTA system does in transporting 8.7 million riders each weekday, should be involved in the discussion of what is to be done and how to pay for it. As a very important stakeholder in the MTA system we would expect the City to have a prominent position in this discussion.

In short, transit riders need the City and MTA to work as partners to ensure that the transportation system that is the lifeblood of this region is maintained and improved. While the City's contribution to the MTA's capital needs has declined relative to the

cost of the work done, there have been a number of encouraging partnerships, including the extension of the 7 subway line and the establishment and expansion of Select Bus Service, that point the way to the future.

We encourage the members of the City Council and this Committee to push for the City's full participation in the dialogue about the next MTA Capital Program.