

**NEW YORK STATE**  
**METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (MTA)**  
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INTERAGENCY TASKFORCE  
**DRAFT ACTION AGENDA**

**I. Draft General Recommendations and Agency Actions**

Many issues and actions that the numerous environmental justice groups were concerned with are also being addressed by the *Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability and the MTA*. Convened in September 2007, the Commission's mission is to expand the MTA's contributions to regional and national sustainability, while reducing and managing the MTA's energy consumption, carbon emissions, waste, water use and other elements of the MTA's ecological footprint. Many of the initiatives and projects undertaken and recommended by the Sustainability Commission have also been discussed here as they have a significant impact on the MTA's operations within EJ communities. The Final Report of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability and the MTA can be found online at [www.mta.info/sustainability](http://www.mta.info/sustainability).

**Recommendation 1: Provide for Increased Community Representation and Access to Decision Making Processes**

Action Agenda

- The majority of committees, councils and advisory groups to the MTA consist largely of externally appointed members. For internal committees, councils and advisory groups, the MTA will continue to encourage and facilitate increased meaningful environmental justice and other community involvement. This involvement will result from continued communication and coordination with groups including WE ACT for Environmental Justice, Sustainable South Bronx, Go Green Inwood and Washington Heights, Go Green Lower East Side, Go Green East Harlem, the New York City Green Collar Jobs Roundtable, and others. An ongoing example of this involvement lies in the active, formal involvement of WE ACT in the ongoing work of 'Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability and the MTA,' as the WE ACT Director of Programs is a Blue Ribbon Commissioner.
- The MTA has devised a cohesive and comprehensive program to identify and meet the special needs of its diverse customers and to improve information and service delivery, using new technologies and breaking down institutional barriers to establish easier access for customers with disabilities, senior citizens and non-English speaking customers. These types of public outreach activities include: posting notices; providing brochures and supplementary project information; holding day, evening and weekend public hearings; webcasting and captioning public hearings; holding regular meetings with community boards, holding community visioning sessions with public, local and regional organizations; engaging the project Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Public Advisory Committee (PAC); working with interested governmental agencies; offering materials in multiple languages in multiple locations (i.e. notices posted at subway stations, opportunities to get information at local libraries and at MTA offices where public can get information, and on the internet); and, providing contact information and multiple opportunities for contact. Meetings are held with affected community boards, including

those from environmental justice communities and those with predominantly minority and/or low-income populations. The MTA will include interested environmental justice individuals and groups to the MTA's electronic email correspondence/notification list regarding issues and outreach events of relevance to EJ communities.

## **Recommendation 2: Continue Collaboration with the Environmental Justice Community**

### Action Agenda

- As more fully described in the Agency Survey of current programs, recent examples of MTA projects involving significant, early public outreach and environmental justice review include the South Ferry Terminal project, the Second Avenue Subway project and the Mother Clara Hale Depot Permit Review Process. The public outreach process for the Mother Clara Hale Depot conversion – co-sponsored by the MTA and WE ACT – included and continues to include a significant community visioning/design charette process led by a community-based task force to ensure that the depot is clean, green, and safe for environmental justice community members and workers alike.
- The MTA will continue to work with environmental justice communities and groups to collaborate on the planning and development of different MTA projects.

## **Recommendation 5: Develop Environmental Justice and Sustainability Provisions in Permitting**

### Action Agenda

- As a result of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability, the MTA is investigating the rehabilitation of existing facilities and the development of future facilities that include numerous green, sustainable design elements in order to reduce and/or eliminate potential pollution in our service area. A number of these green elements are likely to follow those outlined within the existing LEED design standard, including high performance roofs, such as vegetated, green roofs, and white roofs in order to increase energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions.
- Further, the MTA will continue to work with the Environmental Justice Interagency Taskforce to identify particular environmental justice communities in order to develop policies that address the future siting of polluting facilities in already overburdened communities.

## **Recommendation 6: Give Priority to Environmental Justice Communities in Relevant RFP Requirements, Scoring Systems for Funding, Assistance and Training Programs**

### Action Agenda

- Based on recommendations of the Facilities Working Group of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability, the MTA will continue to advance the potential for greening our existing and future facilities, stations and depots within environmental justice communities. In addition, the Materials Flow Working Group of the 'Blue Ribbon Commission on Sustainability and the MTA' will continue to identify, investigate and

pursue relevant waste reduction, recycling and green procurement opportunities within MTA operations system-wide.

- See below for the MTA response to the Specific Recommendation on Green Jobs.

### **Recommendation 7: Prioritize Enforcement Actions and Pollution-Reduction Programs and Resources in Environmental Justice Communities**

#### Action Agenda

- New York City Transit has launched an alternative fuel vehicle program: ‘The Clean Fuel Bus Program.’ To date NYC Transit has committed roughly \$1 billion to the Clean Fuel Bus Program. As a result of this initiative, in 2000 NYC Transit became the first public transportation system in the country to switch all diesel buses in the fleet to ultra-low sulfur fuel, which has 90 percent less sulfur than traditional fuel and reduces emissions. To date, New York City Transit also has retrofitted more than 3,200 buses with diesel particulate filters, an emissions control technology that reduces diesel particulate emissions from engines by as much as 95 percent. In addition, we have received 1,300 new buses that have diesel particulate filters. Further, New York City Transit has the largest hybrid-electric bus fleet in North America. By the end of 2008, the hybrid fleet will reach nearly 700 buses. Another clean fuel initiative - compressed natural gas (CNG) operations- has been undertaken at the Jackie Gleason Depot (100% conversion) and the West Farms Depot with approximately 500 CNG buses purchased to date. These MTA fleets will continue to operate within environmental justice communities. Further, the MTA will continue to expand its clean fuel bus program, resulting in immediate and long-lasting environmental and health benefits within environmental justice communities and the entire MTA service area.
- The MTA continues to work on better implementation of its idling reduction measures in order to improve air quality within environmental justice communities. Not only are MTA bus operations employees informed and trained on bus idling rules, employees are also tested and monitored for compliance to these rules on an ongoing basis.
- For real-time bus idling complaints, MTA customers may call our Customer Service number at 888-692-8287 (Monday to Friday, 7am to 5pm) or use email via the Contact Us button at [www.mta.info](http://www.mta.info). They should provide us with the Bus Number, the time, the bus location (street and cross-street) and how long the bus has been idling and request that immediate action be taken. For Long Island Bus Co., customers may call 516-542-0100 and press 2 for Customer Service. The Customer Service desk can contact the Bus Command Center which can immediately address the problem by sending a supervisor to the bus or contacting the Bus Operator directly. As in all cases, the call will be registered and tracked in the Customer Service database so the MTA can determine whether there is a recurring problem at a location that needs further action.
- The MTA will work with DEC in order to reduce instances of idling and improve air quality within environmental justice communities.

## **Recommendation 8: Diversify and Green the Workforce**

### Action Agenda

- The MTA will continue to actively participate in the numerous green initiatives ongoing within our service region in order to collectively promote the development of the green transportation sector and training programs for green-collar jobs in transportation in the New York region (the New York City Green Collar Jobs Roundtable, Go Green Inwood and Washington Heights, Go Green Lower East Side, Go Green East Harlem). The MTA will continue to promote the progression of green transportation jobs with career ladders that demonstrate a potential to foster pathways out of poverty.
- The MTA will continue to work with the Environmental Justice Interagency Taskforce to identify particular environmental justice communities in order to promote green-collar jobs and training programs within environmental justice communities.
- This Action Agenda also addresses the specific recommendation that:
  - NYS should establish, promote and support the development of green-collar jobs and green-collar job training programs, in the transportation and other sectors. As a program and funds that are developed to establish, promote and support this initiative, NYS should give priority to environmental justice communities in green training programs, promoting ease of entry, location and accessibility. Further, NYS should take steps to ensure that the progression of the green local economy in NY positively impacts environmental justice communities and community members. Resulting benefits should include increased sustainable development, funding for parks and community gardens, green infrastructure projects, and “green” job training programs within environmental justice communities.

## **II. Draft Specific Recommendations and Agency Actions**

### **Air Pollution Prevention**

#### Stakeholder Recommendation

- NYS should prioritize enforcement actions, pollution- reduction programs and resources in environmental justice communities.

#### Action Agenda

- The MTA will continue to take steps to prevent and reduce air pollution resulting from our agency actions. MTA programs include cleaner-fuel buses and the use of light-duty alternative vehicles for non-revenue service, which ultimately benefits the environment and the health of all communities. MTA agencies will continue to revitalize their revenue and non-revenue fleets to integrate the purchase of new equipment and remanufacturing select buses, cars, coaches and locomotives and reduce vehicle idling in order to become more sustainable and reduce air pollution in our service area.