



Testimony
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council

Public Hearing
on

*Transit Project Proposals for
Recovery Act Funding*

April 22, 2009

Respectfully Submitted by:
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My name is Lyle Sclair and I am speaking on behalf of Sustainable Long Island. I thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I have two main points today regarding the NYMTC stimulus funding.

This first is: The Long Island region is home to over 22% of the population living in the NYMTC region. BUT only 6.92% of the total NYMTC stimulus money is target towards the agencies serving Long Island, with only 2.59% of the funding being spent in Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The amount of funding that the projects in Nassau and Suffolk County do not reflect the necessary funding needed to make the necessary changes to our public infrastructure. Our lack of transportation options strangle our downtowns and hinder local redevelopment efforts. Too often the community projects that can have real impacts on improving the lives of Long Islanders and communities are shelved for those of New York City and the Subway.

If Long Islanders are going to help do their share of using public transportation and reduce their dependence on the use of automobiles, Long Island needs its fair share to develop a robust transit system that provides reliable services that meet the user's needs. Funding is needed to expand and create the necessary infrastructure needed to allow for intra Island transportation, such as the call for bus rapid transit along the route 110 corridor. The Huntington LIRR station and the Babylon station are 2 of the busiest train stations and the route 110 corridor is home to over 135,000 jobs - 20 percent of the workforce in Suffolk County.

The ARRA monies need to be targeting the necessary infrastructure that will allow for the shift of transportation behavior, not reinforce the behaviors that created unsustainable municipal budget when it come to road and infrastructure repairs. We urge NYMTC to consider providing a larger percentage of the stimulus funding to long island and directing the funding to areas that have been established as transp. Priorities by Long Island residents.

Need for Transparency

The second point is the need for transparency. While we certainly appreciate the opportunity to speak today it seems that the projects being considered for funding have already been selected. An open and transparent process would have allowed many of the shovel ready projects that Long Islanders do support and need to be included in this process.

Moving forward, Sustainable Long Island respectfully requests the opportunity to be part of the selection process. We work in communities across both Nassau and Suffolk Counties and are well versed in what the transportation needs of our communities are and would appreciate being involved at the beginning of the selection process.

Thank you for your time today.