NYPTA 2021-22 State Budget Recommendations
February 2, 2021

Transit Responds During COVID-19 Crisis

Transit systems across New York State responded quickly to the COVID-19 crisis, connecting essential workers, and providing a lifeline for those without access to jobs, food, and healthcare. Transit systems implemented cleaning and disinfecting protocols and operational changes to protect customers and employees. Public transit stepped up during the pandemic to maintain service, provide a mobility safety net and help the economy recover. Despite significant declines in revenues, they kept their communities connected to jobs and services by using federal relief funding, but these funds will be depleted in 2021.

Increased costs and revenue losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will impact transit system’s finances for several years and if not addressed will limit our ability to expand mobility options to reopen, recover and grow our communities.

Transit Investment is Vital for Economic Recovery and Growth

Robust transit service and the connections it provides can be a catalyst for a strong economic recovery and returning vibrancy to our communities. Transit systems are implementing innovations to provide more travel options and make transit easier to use. Services are being reimagined and there is a commitment to build back better coming out of the pandemic. Capital funding is vital to replacing over-age vehicles, improving infrastructure, and ensuring safety. New funds are needed to support a transition to electric vehicles to meet climate change and energy goals. Transit infrastructure investment creates economic stimulus and jobs.

Robust transit service supports growth in the economy, addresses climate change, improves social equity, and moves people from poverty to prosperity. Accelerating investment in transit will accelerate these benefits at this critical time.

2021-22 STATE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase STOA above the levels in the 2020-21 enacted budget ($238 million upstate and $409 million downstate) towards the goal of a 50% STOA increase over 5 years.
- Extend the STOA Formula Hold Harmless provision through March 31, 2022 using pre-COVID statistics.
- Increase capital funding for non-MTA systems above the $124.5 million in the Executive Budget and include additional funds to convert to electric vehicles.
- Develop a robust 5-year capital program for non-MTA transit for enactment by April 1, 2022.
- Continue the $4 million for rural public transportation in the DOH budget.
- Support the MTA’s priorities and legislative proposals in Parts B, E, F, G, H, and I of the TED bill.