



NEWS RELEASE

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2018's Top Ten Best and Worst in Transit for New York City

The NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign released its annual best and worst top ten lists for New York City's transit system.

"2018 was an unquestionably tough year for riders," said Jaqi Cohen, Campaign Director for the NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign. "While there were some big wins worthy of celebration, riders continue to feel overburdened and underwhelmed with service."

The year's top moments included the release of Fast Forward, a plan to fully repair and modernize New York City's suffering transit system, and the passage of Fair Fares, a program that will provide low-income New Yorkers greater access to transit with half-priced MetroCards.

Among the worst moments of the year? The state's failure to approve a comprehensive congestion pricing plan to raise new revenue for transit, and a proposed fare increase for the coming year by the MTA Board.

This is the Straphangers Campaign's eighth annual best/worst transit list. The first was issued in December 2010.

Detailed lists are below.

Top Ten Best List for New York City's Transit in 2018

- 1. Fast Forward:** New York City Transit released its highly ambitious plan to repair and modernize transit service, a plan which was well received by transit riders and advocates alike. All we need now is \$40 billion to fund it.
- 2. Fair Fares:** A historic win for low-income New Yorkers, New York City will now fund half-priced MetroCards for New Yorkers living at or below the federal poverty line, starting in 2019.
- 3. Bus Action Plan:** New York City Transit announced what can be considered the biggest triumph for bus riders in nearly half a century- a plan to turn around long-suffering bus service, complete with all-door boarding and a network redesign in each borough.
- 4. President Byford:** Andy Byford officially joined the MTA as the new head of New York City Transit in January, bringing with him a new style of leadership at the organization and ambitious new goals to aggressively fix and modernize transit service in New York.
- 5. A New Access-A-Ride:** Quality transit service from the MTA? The MTA expanded its Access-a-Ride e-hail pilot program to 1,200 riders, who benefited from access to on-demand rides and faster trips. Riders are anxiously waiting for a commitment and timeline from the MTA for full implementation of the program.
- 6. Bus Performance Dashboard:** A win for transparency, the MTA released a new performance dashboard for bus service, allowing riders to access "customer-focused" performance metrics like bus speeds, frequency of breakdowns, and additional travel times on buses per borough.
- 7. Cortlandt Street Reopens:** 17 years after it was demolished on one of the worst days in New York City's history, the Cortlandt Street subway station was rebuilt and reopened to the public after long last.
- 8. B82 SBS:** After some extensive back and forth, the B82 SBS route finally launched in September, improving the commutes of some 28,000 daily bus riders.
- 9. Need for Speed:** The MTA doubled the speed limit for N and R trains traveling through a stretch of Brooklyn, increasing speeds from 15 to 30 miles per hour.
- 10. Formation of Fix the Subway Coalition:** Recognizing the importance that a quality transportation system has for all New Yorkers, a broad group of environmental, labor, education, transit, business and community organizations formed to hold elected officials accountable to finding new sources of funding to fix and modernize the subway.

Top Ten Worst List for New York City's Transit in 2018

1. **Fare Increase Proposed:** Most New Yorkers think of December as the holiday season; for the MTA, it was the grim start of a long slog to a fare hike. The MTA will vote on a fare and toll proposal in January 2019.
2. **Budget Woes:** The MTA's finances are in bad shape with an over \$1 billion operating deficit expected by 2022. Without new sources of revenue, the agency will be forced to look towards raising fares and cutting service to close the gap.
3. **Congestion Pricing Delayed:** Albany failed to pass a fully comprehensive congestion pricing plan in its final budget. Let's hope congestion pricing fares a better fate in 2019.
4. **Pokey Buses:** New York City continued to have the slowest bus speeds in the country, and won't see much improvement without a commitment from the City to install more dedicated bus lanes along bus routes citywide. [Even a chicken can run faster](#) than the city's slowest bus, the M42, which travels at an excruciating 3.2 miles per hour.
5. **The Sky Fell:** Ceiling collapses at both Borough Hall and Barclays Center subway stations served as a stark symbol of the subway's overall decay, adding "falling debris" to the long list of problems riders experienced on their daily commutes this year.
6. **Entrapment at Court Street:** A nightmare scenario for any transit rider- over a dozen commuters found themselves trapped in an elevator at the Clark Street subway station for almost an hour before help arrived.
7. **Blame Game:** [A report by the New York Daily News](#) found that The MTA may have exaggerated the number of delays it reported caused by power-related issues, placing more blame on Con Edison for subway delays than was accurate or necessary.
8. **Ridership Drops:** For the second year in a row subway ridership continued to drop, many riders fleeing to other modes of transportation to avoid long delays and unreliable service underground.
9. **Hot City, Hot Platforms:** Hot cars aren't the only thing riders need to be weary of in the summer. A [report by the Regional Plan Association](#) measured temperatures at some of the city's busiest subway stations, finding that some reached temperatures of over 100 degrees in August.
10. **Delays, Delays, Delays:** Despite put forth as part of the Subway Action Plan, riders saw a nominal improvement in reliability of subway service, with trains arriving on schedule only 68% of the time this past summer.