

## **MTA Staff to Recommend Revised Fare Structure to Board**

(May 15, 2003) There will be no change in fares charged senior citizens, students and disabled persons if the MTA Board concurs, next week, with a revised staff recommendation on fare restructuring.

Cash fares would drop and discount tokens would be continued, if the Board approves the proposal.

The MTA staff is recommending restructuring Metro fares to offset potential operating deficits that could reach \$1.4 billion over the next 10 years.

There has been no change in fares in more than eight years despite rising costs for wages, fuel, equipment, security and other operating expenses.

Today, MTA recovers only 29 percent of its operating expenses from the farebox. The rest is subsidized by taxpayers. By comparison, fares of most large transit properties in the United States cover about half the operating costs.

On May 22, the MTA Board is expected to vote on the FY 2004 budget and will consider adopting a new fare structure to take effect Jan. 1, 2004.

Three options were presented at a public hearing, April 12. After considering public comment, the MTA staff now is recommending the following:

- Lower the current cash fare by a dime to \$1.25.
- No change in fares charged seniors, students and disabled persons.
- Keep discount tokens until the universal fare system comes on-line in two or three years. However, raise the price to \$1.10 (currently 90 cents).
- Offer a new \$3 day pass and discontinue transfers.
- Raise the price of the monthly pass to \$52 (current pass is \$42, the same price charged in 1989, despite a 51 percent increase in inflation since then).
- Raise the price of semi-monthly passes to \$27 (currently \$21).
- Raise the price of a weekly pass to \$14 (currently \$11).

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