

CB8 Resolution - Priority Boarding of the Roosevelt Island Tram for Residents and Workers

**To: The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (“RIOC”)
 The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation Board of Directors**

**CC: Governor Kathy Hochul
 Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright
 State Senator Liz Krueger
 Council Member Julie Menin**

WHEREAS the Roosevelt Island Tram has ceased to be available to residents and workers as a reliable method of transportation.

WHEREAS a combination of factors has led to a massive increase in the use of the tram by tourists, particularly since the tram has recently appeared in a number of “Top 10 things to do in NYC” lists and social media videos.

WHEREAS the Tram platforms are crowded and lines often form outside the platform.

WHEREAS what used to be crowding only at certain limited times of day and certain times of year is virtually now a constant. Residents and workers now struggle to get onto the tram, often starting in the morning until late into the night.

WHEREAS many residents have given up on the tram while others struggle through the chaos. This is particularly onerous for residents who may be elderly or unable to walk or stand easily. The island is home to a lot of elderly people and to people with limited mobility. The same is also true for families with young children. The vast majority of school age children who live on Roosevelt Island commute to school in Manhattan, and many to District 2 schools on the Upper East Side.

WHEREAS New York Transportation Law § 102 says: “No common carrier shall make or give any undue or unreasonable preference or advantage to any person...” It doesn’t say there can’t be *any* preference shown. It is, therefore, reasonable to give residents

and workers priority boarding and return the Tram to its original intended use of urban transportation.

WHEREAS the Tram is funded by the residents through resident land leases and not by New York City or New York State.

WHEREAS precedents for preferential treatment exist, such as:

- In 1976, “residents were issued priority passes for the tram and a minibus that travels from the tramway station through the island's Main Street.” due to the number of tourists displacing residents. Source: [NY Times](#)
- On December 7, 2023, Governor Hochul announced preferential treatment for residents of Queens and The Bronx who use the Henry Hudson Bridge and Cross Bay Bridge with a Toll rebate program which is not available for those who do not live in Queens or the Bronx. [Release by Gov. Hochul](#)

WHEREAS Manhattan Community Board 8 has determined that priority boarding of the Tram for the residents and workers of Roosevelt Island is necessary and in the best interests of the community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Manhattan Community Board 8 requests that RIOC present an action plan that fully prioritizes resident and worker boarding of the Tram.