

**New York Civil Liberties Union • New York Public Interest Group
Open NY Meetup • Open Plans • Pratt Center for Community
Development • Regional Plan Association • Reinvent Albany
Transportation Alternatives • Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Regional Plan Association • Women's City Club of New York**

Joel Ettinger
Executive Director
New York Metropolitan Transportation Council
199 Water Street, 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10038-35

October 15, 2012

RE: NYMTC data online in a data hub and in a machine-readable format.

Dear Mr. Ettinger,

We write today to urge NYMTC to use new policies and practices to unlock its great wealth of valuable transportation, land-use and demographic data. New digital technologies and new thinking about the value of government open data are spurring a revolution in knowledge. NYMTC can be a leader in this burgeoning movement to maximize the public benefit of government digital information.

Specifically, we request that NYMTC do three things to open its digital information to the public:

1. Create an online open data portal similar to NYC Open Data, the federal government's data.gov or the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's soon to be launched open data site.* Like other first-rate open data sites, this site should include improved metadata, better search, machine-readable files which are downloadable in multiple formats, and an API.
2. Going forward, make all documents available online in a common, machine readable, web searchable format. (This includes making tabular data in narrative reports available in CSV or Excel formats.)
3. Create a public process for opening up NYMTC data, including publishing a roadmap and designating an open data officer.

Our groups have a variety of missions, but we share a strong common interest in seeing that tax-payer funded, government data is easy to find and use for both the public and government. At the moment, much of NYMTC's information is locked-up in a PDF file format that is not searchable from the Internet, and is difficult to use.

* Chicago CMAP RFP for open data hub
http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=d3dac6ed-c8fc-4142-a1a8-d12cce755bfc&groupId=20583

Our groups look forward to working with the NYMTC staff and voting members to make NYMTC a national leader in open data, and we look forward to learning about the digital developments NYMTC has planned to improve public developments. We would welcome a meeting or conference call to follow-up on this request.

Thank you,

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