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NYC Transit   IMMEDIATE

NYC Transit Introduces Trip Planner Interactive Map

New Map Provides More Trip Planning Options

The Interactive Map, a new feature of MTA NYC Transit's on-line itinerary service Trip Planner, opens up a new way for customers to search, locate and pinpoint destinations, as well as places of interest in and around the five boroughs. Using the tools of the Interactive Map, obtaining a travel itinerary using the NYC Transit subway or bus network will be as easy as marking two points on the map. Released in a Beta format today as an option on the Trip Planner homepage, the Interactive Map promises to change the way customers navigate the City and plan their trips.

Employing features of the Interactive Map, users can pan to any area in New York City and, with a click on the tool bar, view a location on either a road map or aerial view while utilizing multiple zoom levels. The subway map, showing all the subway lines in an area including each subway station, is available as a user-controlled overlay in either view. Station information is easily accessible by mouse overlay or clicking on an individual station. Accessible subway stations are also available as a user-controlled feature.

The Interactive Map was developed by the Internet Technologies Group of NYC Transit's Technology and Information Services Division. "With the Interactive Map, customers will have access to features not previously available through our Trip Planner itinerary service," said Sohaib Mallick, Sr. Director of Internet Technologies. "We are offering our customers more flexibility in how they not only use our network, but navigate around the City. By incorporating the subway map as an overlay on the street map, and including an extensive list of public locations, we've provided our customers with the ability to view the subway as it relates to their specific travel needs," added Mallick.

At the heart of the Interactive Map is NAVTEQ® map data, a recognized leader in digital map technology, while the aerial imagery is supplied by Microsoft® Virtual Earth™.

NAVTEQ digital map data, known for its accuracy and extensive coverage, provides an ideal

foundation for supporting innovative internet-based mapping applications like the Interactive Map that require accurate, rich and relevant content. Microsoft's Virtual Earth mapping platform provides the visualization component of the Interactive Map, offering customers an immersive touring experience of the City through high-resolution satellite and aerial imagery.

"The Interactive Map will add even more value to the itinerary planning experience that over 14,000 daily customers have come to rely on with Trip Planner," said Paul J. Fleuranges, Vice President of Corporate Communications. "In 2008, Trip Planner was used by more than 3.7 million customers to plan itineraries, a 187-percent increase over 2007. With the addition of the Interactive Map and the unique features it provides, we believe Trip Planner will become even more popular with our regular customers and visitors," added Fleuranges.

A unique feature offered by the Interactive Map is the ability to personalize it. By opening up and maintaining an account, users can log-in with an email address and password and retrieve marked locations, maps and itineraries. Instead of panning and zooming to a particular area each time they log on to the Interactive Map, account holders can save that map and any marked locations of interest – their home, office, school, doctor's office – for retrieval and use in future settings. This is particularly helpful for users when planning an itinerary with the Trip Planner feature, because they won't have to spend time marking locations each time they want to plan an itinerary.

Unlike our current text-based Trip Planner, map users can use the map's graphical marker feature to plan a trip directly from the map. Just like in the text-based Trip Planner, an Origin and Destination are required to get an itinerary. Users can place a marker on the map in any of four convenient ways: Station Locator, Place Finder, Address Finder, and Custom Marker.

"We've sought to integrate NYC Transit information like the Subway Map, Trip Planner, and Station Locator with customer specific information such as Places of Interest, the Address Finder, and the street map in one place to help our customers make efficient use of the system," said Bill Neary, Manager of Online Services for the Internet Technologies Group. "In this Beta release we are hoping customers make use of the "Contact Us" feature to let us know how we can make the Interactive Map even better," added Neary.

Using the Interactive Map a user can create a custom map view setting the zoom level, panning to a particular area, setting road or aerial view, adding any number of markers and then emailing the custom map view to a friend. By clicking on a link in the email the recipient will see the custom map view created by the sender. This feature would be helpful to someone hosting a conference, meeting or other event. An organizer can email the map to attendees, and recipients can then add their own location to the map to get directions to the event choosing the mode and time of travel, walking distance and other itinerary choices.

The Interactive Map is located at http://tripplanner.mta.info/map.aspx