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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA to Introduce New Fare Payment System to Replace MetroCard

Customers Will Have Contactless and Mobile Payment Options Throughout System

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) board voted today to approve a contract to phase in a new fare payment system that will incorporate the latest digital technologies and ease travel across all MTA transit and commuter rail systems. The moves help officially mark the formal transition away from the MetroCard, which was first introduced in 1994. The design-build contract, which improves efficiency and quality by letting a single world-class, private sector vendor both design and build the new system, was awarded to Cubic Transportation Systems, Inc., which has delivered similar technology for London's public transit system.

The shift away from the MetroCard and other existing ticketing systems will take place in a series of phases over a period of more than five years, with customers first being able to use contactless open payment options as soon as midway through 2019.

Rather than swiping a MetroCard, MTA users will instead be able to use a mobile wallet like Apple Pay or tap a contactless bank card at turnstiles and on buses across the city. The new system will test payment options for all-door boarding on SBS buses, a critical measure for reducing the time it takes for customers to board and travel. Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North Railroad customers will also be able to merge their subway, bus and rail tickets into one integrated form of payment as well.

The new account-based system will allow customers a variety of convenient self-service options to manage their account, including via the web and on mobile devices.

An additional critical component of the program will provide benefits to customers who do not have, or want to use, smartphones or contactless bank cards by enabling them to purchase and reload contactless transit cards from new vending machines and through an out-of-system retail network. The new system is expected to have lower maintenance costs than the current systems, and the vendor will be able to adapt to new technologies as they emerge during the course of the contract.

"The move to a truly 21st century method of payment represents a critical step in our overall efforts at modernizing the subway system and improving service for all our customers," said MTA Chairman Joseph Lhota. "The subway, bus and commuter rail network is the lifeblood of our regional economy and major upgrades like this help make the system more convenient and efficient for the millions of New Yorkers who use it every day."

By 2019, a total of 500 subway turnstiles and 600 buses are set to receive the necessary technology upgrades. At the same time, customers will still be able to use MetroCard until 2023. MetroCard will not be retired until the new system is fully tested and operational.

Mike Brown, Commissioner for Transport for London (TfL): "It's great to hear that New York will be introducing contactless payments, similar to that introduced on the Tube and buses in London, to help its customers travel more conveniently. This system has completely transformed the way people pay for travel for public transport in London, with over a billion journeys already made since it was first introduced in 2012."

Shashi Verma, Chief Technology Officer at Transport for London: "As cities become smarter and more reliant on public transport, technology like this provides customers with a simple and convenient way of paying the right fare at the right time, without the need to purchase a ticket. This contactless ticketing system is helping commuters all around the world and it's great that New Yorkers will benefit from the technology."

Matthew Cole, President of Cubic Transportations System: "Today's vote is a tremendous win for New Yorkers, paving the way for flexible payment options, a streamlined trip through the region's public transit, and updated equipment that will help save money in operating costs. Together with the MTA, we look forward to building a transportation system of tomorrow."