



THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER  
SCOTT M. STRINGER

January 14, 2020

Andrew Byford  
President, New York City Transit  
2 Broadway  
New York, NY 10004

**Re: Closed Subway Entrances**

Dear President Byford:

I am writing to inquire about the large number of closed subway station entrances across the five boroughs, and to learn more about New York City Transit's plans for reopening these long shuttered and crucial access points. At a time when many subway stations are severely overcrowded and commute times are creeping upward—particularly for low-income New Yorkers—the abundance of unavailable entryways is problematic and ill-advised. Moving forward, it is crucial that we utilize all available entrances and exits from stations and ensure that New Yorkers do not have to walk extra blocks and waste extra time in order to access the subway system.

As of 2015, New York City Transit reported that 298 street stairs were closed to the public at 119 unique stations.<sup>i</sup> Many were shuttered in the 1970s, a period of dramatic decline for the city and the subway system.<sup>ii</sup> It is far past time to move beyond that era and invest in a more equitable and accessible transit system.

To better understand the scale and nature of this issue and its impact on surrounding communities, our office is interested in receiving the most up-to-date and precise information on closed entrances, exits, and fare control areas. Pursuant to the Comptroller's authority under Section 93 of the New York City Charter, the Comptroller's Office respectfully requests the following information by February 15, 2020:

- A list of all NYCT stations with closed street stairs and/or “control areas” for fare payment, and the reasons cited for closure (by station). For mapping purposes, please provide the X, Y coordinates for each set of stairs that are currently closed to the public as well as the X, Y coordinates for all stairs at those stations that remain open.
- Based on recent reports, it appears that access has been reestablished at eight of the 119 stations with restricted entry.<sup>iii</sup> For each street entrance and control area that has been reopened to the public since 2015, please describe the relevant characteristics of the station that made it a viable candidate for reopening and enumerate the other stations that share these traits.

- Please provide a detailed roadmap for reopening entryways at the 111 remaining stations. Which entryways do you plan to reopen in the next five years?
- Beyond budgetary limitations, what are the pertinent roadblocks to reopening subway station entrances? How can the City of New York assist in your efforts and be a better partner?

Thank you in advance for your timely response. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this request further, please call me or David Saltonstall at 212-669-7101. We look forward to hearing from you and working together towards a more accessible, functional, and fairer transit system.

Sincerely,



Scott M. Stringer  
New York City Comptroller

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<sup>i</sup> <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5OcxTR835YjUDY1TTFYRkITQWM/view>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.pcac.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2001-Reopening-Closed-Entrances.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.ny1.com/nyc/brooklyn/news/2019/11/21/why-transit-advocates-are-pushing-to-reopen-shuttered-subway-entrances>