

A Question of Balance

So let's get this right. The MTA will spare no expense on some 79 projects that benefit from the federal stimulus program. (see NY Post article that follows our commentary.)

Yet it refused to allocate some of that same federal revenue source to maintain service for straphangers – including many bus riders who no longer have ANY service (and no service alternative).

*Why do we never get an answer
When we're knocking at the door!*

Hmm...So the information recently became available on line in a nod to transparency. Query: might disclosure of the plans to do just this a few months back have raised questions about priorities?

Thus the title we give to today's commentary that is shared with my favorite LP by the Moody Blues.

Where is the balance?

Why does the MTA continue to leave folks at the curb?

http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/mta_budget_bust_bared_EaGzsFA54zO6kK9TJDU3cL

NY POST

MTA budget bust bared

By TON NAMAKO

Last Updated: 5:42 AM, August 11, 2010

Posted: 5:04 AM, August 11, 2010

1 From Question by The Moody Blues, lyrics by Justin Hayward

More than half of the MTA's most expensive or ongoing capital projects are over budget, according to agency records.

Of the 146 projects that use federal stimulus dollars or cost more than \$20 million in the 2005-to-2009 capital budget, a staggering 79 will end up costing more than budgeted.

For 32 of those projects, riders will be getting more amenities than were initially planned.

But another 24 of the over-budget projects are being scaled back, like purchasing new buses and subway cars.

The release of the data is part of a massive transparency move. The cost, schedule and location for every project in the upcoming \$26.3 billion capital budget for 2010 to 2014 is now online.

MTA CEO Jay Walder called it "an unprecedented level of detail" that will "keep the capital program on schedule and on budget."

The over-budget items range from an 11 percent increase on a \$2.6 million rehab at the Columbus Circle subway stop to a 329 percent increase on a \$17 million concrete deck on the Throgs Neck Bridge.