

# Keep NYC Free

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## ***Did MTA “Hide” Required Prior Federal OK***

A [report](#) today makes clear that any legislated timetable to implement the congestion tax scheme – and any anticipated revenue – in Manhattan south of 60<sup>th</sup> Street remains several years. In “Why congestion pricing might be delayed,” we learn the heads of the MTA and NYC Department of Transportation met with Federal DOT officials concurrent with the scheme’s adoption last April. The topic: the need for federal approval and what kind of environmental review USDOT would require. Some ten months later, this key question remains unanswered.

The failure to disclose the prior need for approval from Washington and how it affects any implementation of this unfair, inequitable and misguided tax raises real questions on the ability of the MTA to fund its capital plan. The average environmental review takes 2,691 days; the shortest 697 days. This makes it very clear that the need exists to look at [alternative](#) revenues, such as those proposed by Keep NYC Free and others. Keep NYC [raised](#) this when the need for prior approval from the federal government for this careless transit experiment first came to light.

This new MTA failure to disclose follows Keep NYC Free and others already raising concerns about the lack of public disclosure concerning [unresolved](#) issues about the scheme’s implementation; this includes who will set the tolls, how much will they cost, and who gets exempted from paying.

Read the [Politico](#) article (excerpt follows on next page).

# Why congestion pricing might be delayed



By DANA RUBINSTEIN  
02/18/2020 05:01 AM EST

In Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao's offices last April, Metropolitan Transportation Authority chairman Patrick Foye, New York City Transportation Commissioner Polly Trottenberg, and several aides had an urgent question for Chao's deputies — an answer that could determine the fate of one of New York's most ambitious transportation projects in decades.

Ten months later, that answer still hasn't arrived.

Were the MTA to start the environmental impact statement process today, it would be "extraordinarily difficult" to complete it by January 2021, said Columbia University law professor Michael Gerrard, an expert in environmental law.

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For agencies like the MTA that have conducted environmental impact statements with the Federal Highway Administration, it took an average of 2,691 days to complete the process, Gerrard said, citing a report by the National Association of Environmental Professionals on reviews concluded in 2018. Those processes largely involved highway construction.

The shortest time .....was 637 days.

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