



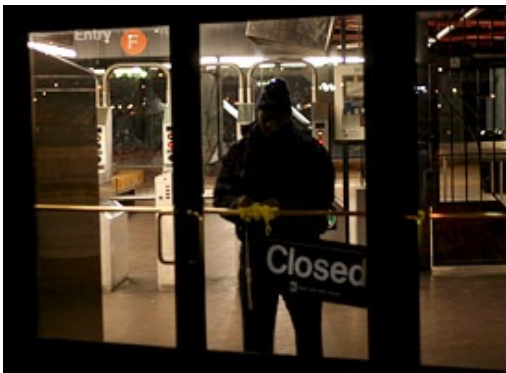
NYC Transit on STRIKE!

Posted by [Glenn](#) on December 20, 2005 - 8:29am in [The Oil Drum: Local](#)

Topic: [Policy/Politics](#)

Tags: [mta](#), [new york](#), [new york city](#), [public transportation](#), [strike](#), [twu](#) [[list all tags](#)]

[editor's note, by Yankee] Although this post is obviously NYC-centric, I think it makes a good starting point for a TOD discussion. Peakguy raises a good point when he asks why it takes a strike for the mayor to start encouraging cycling, walking, and carpooling as good ways to get to work. Also see peakguy's [update](#).



For the first time in 25 years New York City is largely shutdown today as the Transport Workers Union local 100 rejected a final offer from the MTA and [went on strike](#). I could tell that the strike was on early this morning because of all the honking horns out my window (traffic will be a nightmare today). As I have [mentioned before](#), a lot of wealth rides on NYC rails and buses. Which is why the Taylor law was enacted, making any strike illegal, resulting in fines that increase exponentially everyday.

This could be a watershed in how New York City views it's all its transit systems, including biking, walking, carpooling and even skating to work. The 1980 strike is largely given credit for making people more comfortable wearing sneakers to work and then changing into their dress shoes at the office.

Roger Toussaint, leader of TWU local 100 issued the following [statement](#), ending with a direct plea to riders:

To our riders, we ask for your understanding forbearance. We stood with you to keep token booths open, to keep conductors on the train and oppose fare hikes. We now ask that you stand with us. We did not want a strike. Evidently the MTA, governor and the Mayor did.

We call on all good will New Yorkers, the Labor Community, and all working people to recognize that our fight is their fight, and to rally in our support with solidarity activities and events. And to show the MTA that TWU does not stand alone.

They have also set up a [blog](#).

Bloomberg fired back with this [statement](#):

Tonight, Roger Toussaint and the TWU have taken the illegal and morally reprehensible action of ordering a citywide strike of our mass transit system. For their own selfish reasons, the TWU has decided that their demands are more important than the law, the City and the people they serve. This is not only an affront to the concept of public service; it is a cowardly attempt by Roger Toussaint and the TWU to bring the City to its knees to create leverage for their own bargaining position. We cannot give the TWU the satisfaction of causing the havoc they desperately seek to create.

also ending with a similar plea to riders:

Rush hour will begin in few hours. I will join fellow New Yorkers going to work by walking across the Brooklyn Bridge to lower Manhattan. **Let's show our determination by walking, cycling or carpooling, to get to work and school.** We will show that New York City works even when our buses and subways don't. I have no doubt that, by working together, we can and will get through this.

Both have taken extreme positions in my opinion, but I think they will come to agreement soon. My question is, why did we wait for a strike to start talking about walking, cycling, carpooling as primary ways for people to get to work.

As people walk around the city, they will find pedestrian paths squeezed into narrow areas that in places only allow a single file in each direction.

As people ride their bikes they will find that biking in NYC is dangerous with cars cutting them off, dooring them and double parked in bike lanes, where there are bike lanes.

And even with the carpool restrictions in place, many people will realize that even with those requirements, everyone can't just get in their cars in New York City.

This should be a wake-up call to all local officials to build more Alternatives for local residents to get around other than overcrowded subways and cars.



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