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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA NYC Transit to Suspend Work on No. 7 Line Over St. Patrick's Day Weekend

Full weekend service for holiday revelers the latest in a series of initiatives to limit impacts of vital construction designed to improve service for Queens riders

MIDTOWN - The MTA announced today that construction work on the No. 7 line will be suspended over St. Patrick's Day weekend to accommodate the expected increase in riders celebrating the holiday. The decision is based on an analysis performed by MTA New York City Transit at the request of MTA Executive Director and CEO Elliot G. Sander. This change is the latest step in an action plan aimed at easing the impact of construction on the MTA's subway customers. The work will be made up by extending the project one weekend to conclude on April 2, but the change will not incur additional costs.

"MTA NYC Transit and its Acting President, Butch Seay, deserve enormous credit for their flexibility in responding to a difficult situation, Sander said. "The work must be done to provide improved service to Queens riders, but the team at NYC Transit found a solution that will also allow Queens residents and businesses to fully enjoy St. Patrick's Day."

The construction on the No. 7 line is the second part of a two-phase project to upgrade the track and signal infrastructure of the line. During the project, new track is being installed and the track layout is being reconfigured to incorporate new switches between the 33rd Street -Rawson and Queensboro Plaza stations. The addition of the new switches will allow for greater operational flexibility and enhanced safety of the Flushing line. In addition, signals in use on the line dating back to the 1920's are being replaced with modern signals as part of this project, funded by the MTA Capital Program.

Since work on the latest phase began on February 17 NYC Transit has pursued a number of initiatives to limit the impact of the work on riders, including:

- Improved communications, including an increase in signage, the addition of customer information booths, customer service agents, announcements and designation of shuttle bus stops.
- Increased and more effective travel alternatives, including additional E and F service (increased from 15 to 20 trains), more frequent shuttle bus service and an increase in the number of dispatchers available to route buses.
- Additional training for subway employees involved in the project to better communicate with MTA riders.

The MTA has also committed to a more robust outreach campaign to explain projects like this one. The MTA wants to better inform customers of upcoming work and solicit input on how to limit impacts. This program will include the formation of a new task force and a series of community forums to address potential issues and inform riders.

Elected officials representing impacted neighborhoods in Queens reacted positively to the announcement.

Senator John D. Sabini: "The new leadership at the MTA has proven to be user-friendly on this issue. St. Patrick's Day is a New York tradition and the adjustments made by the MTA will help keep it safe and enjoyable for everyone."

Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan: "This is a positive development and we are grateful to the MTA for listening to the voices of the community."

Councilman Eric Gioia: "I am gratified that the MTA understands the importance of St. Patrick's Day to the people of Queens. They have heard our call and they have acted. For many people in my neighborhood and throughout Queens, marching down 5th Avenue or lining the parade route is an event the entire family looks forward to year round."