



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) | ▼

Press Release

January 16, 2013

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

Double Track' Information Center Opens Today at Ronkonkoma Station as Part of LIRR Public Outreach

Adding a Second Track between Farmingdale & Ronkonkoma Stations

MTA Long Island Rail Road today opened the first of two Double Track Information Centers along the Ronkonkoma Branch so customers and the public at large can learn about the LIRR's proposal for a second track on existing LIRR property between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma

"The Double Track Project is the key to improving service reliability and on-time performance on one of the LIRR's busiest branches as well as increasing service during off-peak and weekend periods," said MTA Interim Executive Director Thomas Prendergast. "We also know, and the experts agree, Double Track will be a boon for Long Island economically."

LIRR President Helena Williams said: "We are inviting the public to review the proposal and talk to our experts who will be on hand at both information centers. Double Track will bring half hourly service to the Ronkonkoma Branch, improve reliability, spur economic activity, provide hundreds of construction jobs and improve LIRR's connection to MacArthur Airport. We're excited to get this project underway."

Ridership on the LIRR's Ronkonkoma Branch is 44,700 each weekday and has doubled over the last 25 years, growing in popularity since the line was electrified in 1988. But with just one track along most of the 18 mile route between Ronkonkoma and Farmingdale, the LIRR can operate only a limited number of trains and lacks operational flexibility in the event of a disruption. If one train becomes disabled, all other trains (east and west) have no way around the problem.

Once completed, Double Track will have immediate benefits for LIRR customers by allowing for half hourly off peak service in both directions. It also will allow for long term improvements to LIRR service when the East Side Access project is completed. This will offer LIRR customers direct access to Grand Central Terminal and the East Side of Manhattan beginning in 2019.

U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) said: "A second track will reduce commuting times, facilitate the flow of workers into and out of Long Island, spur the growth of MacArthur Airport and create a job creation corridor right down the center of the Island. When you look at the amount of time saved and the number of people it affects, it is clear that this is one of the most important public transportation projects in the entire country."

State Senator Charles J. Fuschillo (R-Merrick), chairman of the State Senate Transportation Committee, said: "The second track project brings tremendous benefits: jobs, economic development for Long Island, and improved service for LIRR riders. That's why we fought so hard to make sure work starts now. Accelerating this project will allow that to happen and ensure that a project which has long been a dream finally becomes a reality."

Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone said: "The Double Track project is a win for Long Island and will promote economic development in both Suffolk and Nassau Counties. Long Island faces many transportation challenges. However, the acceleration of the Double Track project will open up new opportunities for transportation as well as transit oriented development, which is economically beneficial to the Long Island region. Projects like Wyandanch Rising, the Ronkonkoma Hub and the Rt. 110 corridor all stand to benefit from Double Track."

Ronkonkoma Info Center Open through Saturday

The Double Track Information Center at Ronkonkoma Station, located opposite the station ticket office, will be open through Saturday, January 19, staffed by LIRR representatives ready to discuss details of Double Track. The plan is to add 12.6 miles of new track in two phases so that the LIRR can provide double track service over the entire 17.9 mile stretch between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma. The route includes LIRR stations at Farmingdale, Pinelawn, Wyandanch, Deer Park, Brentwood, Central Islip and Ronkonkoma. It will also make feasible the possibility of a new Republic Station at Route 110 to serve the major business corridor in East Farmingdale.

The first phase includes an environmental review and, after completion of that review, a design of the entire project and construction of a four mile segment between Ronkonkoma and Central Islip. This phase is already completely funded and tentatively scheduled for completion by late 2016. Phase two – which requires \$297 million and is not yet funded - will stretch a second track from Central Islip all the way to Farmingdale by the end of 2018.

Farmingdale Info Center Opens Wednesday, January 23

The other Double Track Information Center will open at Farmingdale Station on Wednesday, January 23 and remain open through Saturday, January 26. MTA Long Island Rail Road is seeking public input to consider any issues of interest or concern to the communities that border the project. The Double Track Information Centers will be open on the following days and hours:

Ronkonkoma Double Track Information Center Hours

Wednesday, January 16 – 12 PM to 8 PM

Thursday, January 17 – 6 AM to 8 PM

Friday, January 18 – 6 AM to 2 PM

Saturday, January 19 – 10 AM to 2 PM

Farmingdale Double Track Information Center Hours

Wednesday, January 23 – 10 PM to 8 PM

Thursday, January 24 – 7 AM to 7 PM

Friday, January 25 – 7 AM to 3 PM

Saturday, January 26 – 10 AM to 2 PM

Double Track Information Can Be Found Online Too

Interested members of the public who cannot travel to either the Ronkonkoma or Farmingdale Public Information Centers can find details about the Double Track Project at the MTA LIRR website www.mta.info/lirr.

MTA LIRR has selected the international design and engineering firm AECOM to help plan and carry out the Double Track Project. Among AECOM's mass transit projects include the High Speed Rail Terminus in Hong Kong, which is connecting to China's high-speed rail network.

"We're excited to team with LIRR to help improve Long Island's most important mass transit infrastructure," said Julie D'Orazio, P.E., vice president and leader of AECOM's transit practice in the northeastern United States.

LIRR President Williams said: "Construction of an uninterrupted second track between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma has been part of the LIRR's vision for decades. The time to move ahead with Double Track is now. There's never been a better opportunity to alleviate crowded trains, help prevent delays, increase off peak service and create jobs."

What Other Officials Are Saying about Benefits of Double Track Project

"The announcement of \$138 million in accelerated funding to build the second track project is a huge win for Long Islanders. The impact of this important return on our investment will boost our region's strength, and specifically our economy. This will create jobs, improve our tax base, and make Long Island a better place to work and raise a family." - State Senator Lee Zeldin

"Double track will support development of the Wyandanch Rising project. It will also provide boundless economic opportunities for the East Farmingdale/Route 110 Corridor and the region as a whole." - Babylon Town Supervisor Rich Schaffer

"Islip residents who commute to work in Manhattan every day, families who enjoy visiting New York City and travelers heading to/from LI MacArthur Airport are looking for better mass transit. A more robust LIRR allows our seniors to participate in life on Long Island and gives young people a reason to stay." - Islip Town Supervisor Tom Croci

"The Double Track Project will vastly improve the on-time performance of the LIRR and residents who use the railroad will certainly feel the impact on a day-to-day basis. Just as important, it will create a much needed boost to the local economy by providing construction jobs for many years to come. I pledge my full support behind getting this project on track and started now." - Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine

"The Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council (LIRRCC) views construction of a second track between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma as a critical project for the Long Island economy. The second track will make travel more convenient, increase capacity significantly, and dramatically reduce the impact of train breakdowns and other incidents in this part of the railroad. This project is vital to users of the LIRR and is long overdue." - Mark Epstein, Chairman, Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council

"A second track will reduce commuting times, facilitate the flow of workers into and out of Long Island, spur the growth of MacArthur Airport and create a job creation corridor right down the center of the Island. When you look at the amount of time saved and the number of people it affects, it is clear that this is one of the most important public transportation projects in the entire country." - U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY)

"The second track project brings tremendous benefits: jobs, economic development for Long Island, and improved service for LIRR riders. That's why we fought so hard to make sure work starts now. Accelerating this project will allow that to happen and ensure that a project which has long been a dream finally becomes a reality." - State Senator Charles J. Fuschillo (R-Merrick), chairman of the State Senate Transportation Committee

"The Double Track project is a win for Long Island and will promote economic development in both Suffolk and Nassau Counties. Long Island faces many transportation challenges. However, the acceleration of the Double Track project will open up new opportunities for transportation

as well as transit oriented development, which is economically beneficial to the Long Island region. Projects like Wyandanch Rising, the Ronkonkoma Hub and the Rt. 110 corridor all stand to benefit from Double Track." - Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone

"The announcement of \$138 million in accelerated funding to build the second track project is a huge win for Long Islanders. The impact of this important return on our investment will boost our region's strength, and specifically our economy. This will create jobs, improve our tax base, and make Long Island a better place to work and raise a family." - State Senator Lee Zeldin

"Double track will support development of the Wyandanch Rising project. It will also provide boundless economic opportunities for the East Farmingdale/Route 110 Corridor and the region as a whole." - Babylon Town Supervisor Rich Schaffer

"Islip residents who commute to work in Manhattan every day, families who enjoy visiting New York City and travelers heading to/from LI MacArthur Airport are looking for better mass transit. A more robust LIRR allows our seniors to participate in life on Long Island and gives young people a reason to stay." - Islip Town Supervisor Tom Croci

"The Double Track Project will vastly improve the on-time performance of the LIRR and residents who use the railroad will certainly feel the impact on a day-to-day basis. Just as important, it will create a much needed boost to the local economy by providing construction jobs for many years to come. I pledge my full support behind getting this project on track and started now." - Brookhaven Town Supervisor Ed Romaine

"The Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council (LIRRCC) views construction of a second track between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma as a critical project for the Long Island economy. The second track will make travel more convenient, increase capacity significantly, and dramatically reduce the impact of train breakdowns and other incidents in this part of the railroad. This project is vital to users of the LIRR and is long overdue." - Mark Epstein, Chairman, Long Island Rail Road Commuter Council