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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Seeks Federal Funds to Increase Capacity on Canarsie L Line

Projects Add Two Trains per Hour; Add Entrances and Elevators at Bedford Av and 1 Av

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is seeking federal funding toward approximately \$300 million in infrastructure improvements for the Canarsie  Line, which runs from Manhattan to the Canarsie section of Brooklyn through neighborhoods that have seen the largest increases in population in New York City.

More than 300,000 customers use the Canarsie  Line on an average weekday, an increase of 98% since 1998. Average weekday entries at the Bedford Av station, the busiest station on the line, have increased by 250%. The line has experienced a 27% increase in ridership since New York City Transit installed Communication-Based Train Control (CBTC) in 2007, a new signal system that increased NYCT's ability to run more trains each hour.

Proposed infrastructure improvements include adding three power substations to allow for two additional trains per hour, a 10% increase in service, which could carry 2,200 additional customers per hour. Other elements include installing elevators at the 1 Av and Bedford Av stations to make them fully compliant with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, and adding new street-level entrances at both stations to make it easier for customers to enter or exit the stations and alleviate platform crowding that can delay trains.

"More than 49,000 customers use the 1 Av and Bedford Av stations on an average weekday, and the stations experience overcrowding during peak periods. The area around the Bedford Av station has been rezoned to allow for almost 10,000 new residential units, and ridership is expected to continue to rise," said New York City Transit President Carmen Bianco. "We have to increase capacity on the Canarsie Line and improve customer flow at stations to meet this increasing demand, and securing federal funding for a project of this magnitude will go a long way toward achieving that goal."

At Bedford Av, plans call for two new 7-foot-wide street stairs on the east side of Bedford Avenue. This would be a 138% increase over current street stair capacity at the station, which currently consists of two 5-foot-wide street stairs. Platform stair capacity at Bedford Av would increase by 38%, with two 7-foot, 6-inch stairs replacing an existing single 12-foot-wide stair).

At the 1 Av station, new fare control areas at Avenue A would double capacity – a 100% increase – up to the street from each platform. The Avenue A entrances would serve 60% of the station's ridership, thus eliminating a 500-foot walk (from First Avenue to Avenue A) for 31,000 weekday customers entering or exiting the station.

To advance the improvements, the MTA will be requesting funding through the Federal Transit Administration's new Core Capacity grant program. Work on the Canarsie improvements is expected to take several years, with construction on the new station entrance at 1 Av to start first. Work on the infrastructure improvements will be coordinated with planned repairs to the Canarsie Tube, which was flooded during Superstorm Sandy. Those repairs include work on tracks, signals, tunnel lighting, cables, pump facilities, duct banks and other equipment required for reliable service through the tube. A schedule for Sandy-related repairs to the tunnel, which connects Manhattan and Brooklyn under the East River, will be determined at a later time.

Partial funding for the Canarsie improvements has been included in the MTA's proposed 2015-2019 Capital Program. Fifty million dollars for the development of the project was previously included in the 2010-2014 Capital Program. The MTA's request for Core Capacity funds is limited to power and vertical circulation improvements that will increase capacity on the  line. The application for federal funds is expected to take several years, and additional reviews will be needed from the Federal Transit Administration before a funding recommendation can be made.

The  line first opened as a segment on June 30, 1924, on a track vestige from a former steam-powered railway built in the 1860s. Its final segment opened on May 30, 1931, and the entire two-track line spans 10.3 route miles between Eighth Avenue in Manhattan and Canarsie-Rockaway Parkway in Brooklyn.