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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

MTA Board to Vote On \$24.9M Contract to Build Great Neck Pocket Track & Replace 115-Year-Old Colonial Road Bridge

2-Year Project Is Key Component of LIRR's East Side Access Readiness Plan

The Long Island Committee of the MTA Board today approved an initial \$24.9 million contract for the extension of a pocket track east of the Long Island Rail Road's Great Neck Station and the replacement of the 115-year-old Colonial Road Bridge, a three-year project and key component of the LIRR's East Side Access Readiness Plan.

The contract now goes to the full MTA Board which is scheduled to take up the matter at its meeting on Wednesday. The project is scheduled for completion in 2017 with the pocket track to cost an estimated \$25.2 million and the new bridge \$19.9 million for a total estimated cost of \$45.1 million. The balance of the budget represents the cost of work that will be done by LIRR employees in the construction of the pocket track including utility relocation and power, signal, and switch installation.

The LIRR is asking the MTA Board to award the contract to Railroad Construction Company, Inc. of Paterson, N.J., following a competitive process in which six firms submitted bids in response to a request for proposals issued in January. LIRR officials said Railroad Construction Company, a firm that has served rail industry since 1926, offered the best technical plan and the lowest price.

"These infrastructure improvements will enable the LIRR to provide safe and reliable service on the Port Washington Branch for many years to come and give us the operational flexibility to provide better train service, especially when the East Side Access project is complete," said LIRR President Patrick A. Nowakowski.

The new pocket track will extend an existing storage track to accommodate an additional 12 car train. Once complete, it will enable the LIRR to increase the number of trains it can turn at Great Neck, provide better rush hour service as well as seat availability from Great Neck and stations west of Great Neck.

The Colonial Road Bridge, built in 1897, crosses over the LIRR track a half mile east of Great Neck Station in the Village of Thomaston. Maintenance of the bridge is the sole responsibility of the LIRR, whose engineering staff determined the structure is at the end of its useful life.

The new bridge will meet New York State Department of Transportation standards, which means wider travel vehicular travel lanes and improved pedestrian sidewalk. The project will also involve the construction of a new drainage system at track level that will eliminate a flooding problem that often hampers train service and include a retaining wall and landscaping which together will act as a sound barrier between the LIRR Right of Way and the local neighborhood.

East Side Access, scheduled for completion in 2022, will enable Long Islanders to ride the LIRR to Grand Central Terminal and the East Side of Manhattan for the first time, saving customers who work on the East Side as much as 20 minutes commuting time in each direction. The Great Neck Pocket Track and new Colonial Road Bridge is part of the East Side Access Readiness Plan, five major infrastructure improvements the LIRR is planning in Queens, Nassau and Suffolk in support of future train service at Grand Central.

The other projects are: Jamaica Capacity Improvements (\$301 million), Mid-Suffolk Train Storage Yard (\$76.6 million) Massapequa Pocket Track (\$19.6 million) and Port Washington Yard Track Extension (\$12.1 million.)