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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Announces Bridge & Road Closures as Railroad's \$45M Colonial Road Improvement Project Gets Underway

Infrastructure Investment Promises Improved Train Service and a Safer Bridge

The Long Island Rail Road's \$45 million Colonial Road Improvement Project gets underway in earnest with the closing of Colonial Road Bridge on vehicular traffic on Monday, March 30 as contractors prepare to demolish the 115-year old bridge that spans the tracks in the Village of Thomaston near the LIRR's Great Neck Station.

Colonial Road is scheduled to be closed for one year while the LIRR builds a new bridge, makes significant improvements to drainage problems at track level by building a new retaining wall and extends an existing pocket track to improve operational flexibility.

LIRR President Patrick Nowakowski said: "The improvements will not only provide the community with a safer bridge, the extended pocket track will enable the LIRR to turn trains faster and provide better rush hour service from Great Neck and stations west of Great Neck on the busy Port Washington Branch."

State Senator Jack M. Martins said: "Replacing the Colonial Road Bridge will benefit the entire Great Neck community. The LIRR is not just improving roadway safety and enhancing service for riders; it is doing so in a way which addresses residents' quality of life concerns after listening to extensive community input. I'm pleased to see this project moving forward and thank the LIRR for being responsive to the community's wishes."

Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel said: "Despite the inconvenience of the closing of Colonial Road to vehicular traffic, the need for infrastructure improvement, especially bridge reconstruction, is critical to the safety of a community. As bridges across the nation are deteriorating and not meeting safety standards because of lack of funding, the Colonial Road Improvement Project stands apart. There will be a new state of the art bridge, improvements to drainage problems, and better LIRR train service from Great Neck." Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano said, "The replacement of the Colonial Road Bridge will benefit the Great Neck community in several ways. The drainage improvements will address the flooding issue that has hurt train service in the past. That work combined with the extended pocket track will mean faster and more reliable service. And finally, residents will be getting a new, safer bridge to replace one that is at the end of its useful life."

North Hempstead Town Supervisor Judi Bosworth said: "We appreciate the LIRR's investment in the sorely needed repair of the century-old Colonial Road Bridge, an important thoroughfare into the heart of Great Neck. We look forward to the LIRR's continuing updates as this project progresses."

Village of Thomaston Mayor Steven Weinberg said: "While the closing of the bridge and the construction will impact our Village and disturb our residents, we look forward to continuing the dialog with the LIRR to perform the work as quickly as possible, minimizing the disturbance to our community and for the LIRR to continue to be responsive to the needs of our residents and the Village. We look forward to the new bridge which will be a major improvement in the transportation infrastructure that goes through our Village."

The entire project is scheduled for completion by the end of 2018. The LIRR's construction plan was developed in close consultation with Village of Thomaston and local residents as well as neighboring villages in the Great Neck area, the Town of North Hempstead and Nassau County as well as the New York State Department of Transportation. The Railroad has briefed residents and local officials at numerous meetings over the last three years.

The LIRR notified residents that while the majority of the work will take place on weekdays during off-peak daytime hours, there will be continuous day and overnight work over the weekend of June 19-22 to demolish the existing bridge and over two weekends in the fall when the new bridge is to be installed. The task will require the Railroad to suspend train service and provide buses to carry customers past the work areas where excavators, dump trucks, drill rigs, cranes, concrete trucks and other construction equipment will be in operation. The LIRR will issue detailed alternative service information as the dates draw closer.

Earlier this month, the Railroad distributed a two-page community newsletter that explained construction plans phase-by-phase as well as related community impact. The update included a detailed map of the detour route worked out with local officials for motorists who normally travel on Colonial Road and use the bridge to get to Great Neck Station.

Nowakowski said: "The new bridge will be constructed to keep the existing Colonial Road alignment and all traffic signs and traffic notification will be in place in advance of closure to help make sure motorists are steered to alternative routes. He added the Railroad would make He added that the Railroad would "make every effort to minimize our construction presence by limiting the movement and parking of construction equipment vehicles in residential areas and by minimizing noise and vibration."

Full details about the Colonial Road Improvement Project can be found on the MTA LIRR website at <http://web.mta.info/lirr/colonialroad/index.htm> and at the Village of Thomaston website www.villageofthomaston.org.

