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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

### MTA Board Approves Subway and Bus Initiatives for Faster Repairs, Better Stations, Better Service

#### ***New Contract Will Shorten Canarsie Tunnel Closure by 3 Months; Other Contracts to Modernize Train Stations, Add New Buses, Advance Next Phase of 2nd Avenue Subway***

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board on Monday voted on measures to improve service for millions of New Yorkers who use subways and buses, including a contract to shorten the 2019 Canarsie Tunnel closure by 3 months starting in April 2019; begin the next phase of the 2nd Avenue Subway; and to enhance train stations in Queens as part of a large-scale plan to overhaul more than 30 stations in the system in the 2015-19 Capital Program.

"Today's votes will bring convenience and better service to the millions of New Yorkers who use our system every day," said Interim Executive Director Ronnie Hakim. "Improvements include modernized train stations in Astoria and a shorter closure of the Canarsie Tunnel, which will lessen the impact on L train riders as we undertake these necessary Sandy storm repairs."

#### **3-Month Shorter Closure for Canarsie Tunnel**

The Board voted to award an expedited contract to accelerate the rehabilitation of the Canarsie Tunnel, which carries L train riders under the East River, by three months. The contract calls for improvements to two stations and a new substation that will add power to allow more trains to run on the L Line once the tunnel reopens. The work to be completed in 15 months, three months shorter than the previously estimated 18 months.

The joint venture selected to do the \$492 million project is Judlau Contracting and TC Electric. Judlau successfully completed similar work on the Montague Tunnel in 2013 following Superstorm Sandy ahead of schedule. Penalties for any delays call for fines of \$410,000 a day.

The MTA and NYC DOT have engaged in an aggressive community engagement process through town halls and community workshops meeting with residents, businesses, community boards, merchant groups and civic associations in Brooklyn and Manhattan communities along the L Line. The meetings have been successful forums providing information on the Canarsie Tunnel repairs and to solicit community feedback on possible alternate travel options during the planned closure.

#### **Extending the 2nd Avenue Subway to East Harlem**

The Board also voted to award a contract for outreach services for the next phase of the 2nd Avenue Subway project, which advances north to 125th Street and will feature new stations at 106th and 116th Streets.

The \$7.3 million contract, awarded through a competitive procurement process to East Harlem Community Collaborators JV (a joint venture formed by Spectrum Personal Communications and Sam Schwartz Engineering DPC), will lead to the opening of a staffed Community Information Center (CIC) for the project at 69 E. 125th Street this spring. The CIC was previously located on Second Avenue between 84th and 85th Streets.

Spectrum is a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and is a 50-percent partner of East Harlem Community Collaborators. In addition, the joint venture has three DBE subcontractors, including Crystal McKenzie Inc. (CMI), Metropolitan Public Strategies (MPS) and Dakota Print and Premium LLC d/b/a Fuse Printing.

Under the supervision of MTA Capital Construction Public Affairs, the new outreach staff, including Spanish speakers, will develop events and activities for the public; conduct tours, educational events and community meetings; assist in the preparation of presentations for Community Boards and elected officials; and help advise the public about the project schedule and any associated disruptions to services and access. A similar Center and operations were used to great success for Phase 1 of the 2nd Avenue Subway.

On New Year's Day 2017, Governor Cuomo celebrated the successful on-time launch of Phase 1 of Second Avenue Subway by opening three new stations on Second Avenue at 96th, 86th and 72nd Streets, and an expanded 63rd Street and Lexington Avenue station.

Phase 2 preliminary design and engineering work, as well as environmental studies, have already commenced. Once completed, a project schedule and budget will be established.

Since launching on January 1st, Phase 1 of the Second Avenue Subway has reduced weekday ridership in four key stations, 68th Street, 77th Street, 86th Street and 96th Street by an average of 27 percent on weekdays and as much as 46 percent during peak morning rush hours of 8 to 9 a.m., as compared to the same period last year, and has reduced travel time for many Upper East Side customers by 10 minutes or more.

**Newly Enhanced Subway Stations in Queens**

The Board voted to award a \$150 million contract for the second set of stations in Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's ongoing Enhanced Station Initiative (ESI) to create new and dramatically improved subway stations throughout New York. The stations, which are all elevated, are located on the Astoria Line (N & W) in Queens, including the Broadway, 30th Avenue, 36th Avenue, and 39th Avenue stations. They will be renovated using a single-contractor, design-build method to cut construction time and save money.

The station enhancements include:

- Enhanced lighting throughout;
- Improved signage for easier navigation, including digital, real-time service updates at subway entrances, before customers even enter the station;
- Inclusion of amenities, such as countdown clocks, granite floors on the mezzanine level, and new art, as well as security cameras;
- Renovations will also consider the architectural legacy of each station, and remain sensitive to historical elements as the stations undergo redesign;
- As part of the process, the MTA evaluated proposals considering full and partial station closures in order to ensure that renovations are completed as quickly as possible.

Last week, work began on the first group of stations in this initiative, along 4th Avenue in Brooklyn. The stations will be closed in both directions for renovations using a single-contractor design-build method to cut construction time and save money.

High-resolution renderings of the station renovations are available [here](#).

**New, Higher-Capacity Buses**

The Board voted to use the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for the federally funded procurement of up to 53 low-floor, 60-foot articulated buses to replace aging 40-foot buses that have reached the end of their 12-year life cycles. These buses represent an expansion of articulated bus operation in New York City and in some cases, an increase in service in order to meet peak-service demand and ease crowding.

Converting a route to articulated bus operation also has an immediate impact on operating costs. Four 40-foot buses are replaced with three 60-foot articulated buses, resulting in a reduction in operator-related costs, fewer miles being driven, and a need for fewer buses to meet peak-service requirements.

The buses will be outfitted with new features consistent with other new buses recently announced by Governor Cuomo, including improved driver visibility, pedestrian turn warning, Wi-Fi, USB charging ports, automatic passenger counters and digital information screens.