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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

Five Subway Stations in Upper Manhattan to Receive New Elevators

Work to Begin in Early January

MTA New York City Transit today announced the long-term schedule for major elevator replacement projects at five separate “deep” stations in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan, with the first set to begin in January at the 168 St station on the **1** line. The 168 **A** **C** station will be unaffected by the project.

The work will replace the existing elevators and upgrade communications, security and fire alarm systems. The projects mark the first time that the elevators and component systems at the stations have been replaced in their entirety. MTA personnel began community board and elected official outreach during the summer, and met again with Community Board 12 earlier this month where they presented travel alternatives during the first project. The other stations set to undergo elevator replacement work include the 181 St **A** station, the 191 St **1** station, the 190 St **A** station and the 181 St **1** station.

“Replacing these elevators is long overdue and critical for reliable access to these unique ‘deep stations,’ and we’ve put together a schedule that takes care not to cause unnecessary inconvenience for customers,” said MTA New York City Transit President Andy Byford. “We thank our customers for their patience during this extraordinary work and hope they take advantage of the enhanced bus service and additional free transfers we’ve arranged for the duration of the projects.”

The stations have endured a great deal of water intrusion and decay over the years, which has meaningfully reduced the reliability of these elevators. Three of the stations are more than a century old, and many of the elevator components are nearly a century old. Because of these factors and the fact that these stations are located so far beneath the ground, the work is very complicated and can’t be done just during overnight hours. The work will require two full station closures of about one year each, on a schedule that has been staggered to minimize disruption.

When completed, the elevator doors at 168 St **1** will open at both the front and rear sides at the lower mezzanine level. The rear passageway behind the elevators at the lower mezzanine level will be reopened in order to improve customer flow.

The overall scope of work also includes improvements to the current emergency stairs, including a lighting upgrade, concrete repair and the installation of new handrails.

During construction, M5 bus service in the area will be enhanced. Customers may use the free MetroCard transfer on the M3, M4 or M5 buses between 157th and 168th streets. Customers are encouraged to use the 168 St **A** **C** service, which will remain available while work is being done on the **1** line portion of the station. Customers may transfer between the **1** and the **A** **B** **C** **D** lines at the 59 St-Columbus Circle station. There will also be temporary free out-of-system transfer between the **1** at 215 St or 207 St and the Inwood-207 St **A** station. **1** trains will begin bypassing the 168 St station on Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019.

In accordance with new MTA Board policy, three-legged transfers will be available on a limited basis so that customers avoid paying two fares due to the station closure. For example, a rider from the Bronx wishing to get to the **A** line may take the Bx10, transfer to the Bx7 and then swipe into the **A** station at Inwood-207 St on one fare (bus to bus to train). Going northbound, a customer may take a bus to the **1** train, and then transfer at 157 St to the M5 and ride to 168 St on one fare (bus to train to bus).

The **1** line part of the 168 St station is 112 years old. It is on the National Register of Historic Places along with 181 St **1**, 181 St **A** and the 190 St **A** stations. Some of the oldest components in these elevators and the accompanying machine rooms are more than 90 years old. The replacement of the deep station elevators at 168 St on the **1** line, 191 St and 181 St on the **A** line is a \$61 million contract that was awarded to Skanska USA. The contract for the two additional stations – 181 St and 190 St on the **A** line – is expected to be awarded by the end of the year.

US Congressman Adriano Espaillat (District 13) said: “I commend the MTA on its progress to begin the long overdue renovations at 168 St subway station, a main mode of commuter transportation to the Columbia University Medical Center and surrounding area. It remains critical that our city infrastructure systems are safe, secure and reliable. The upcoming renovation will force the station to close for nearly a year, however our city and surrounding communities will benefit tremendously once the station is complete.”

NYC Council Transportation Chair Ydanis Rodriguez (District 10) said: “The 168 St station plays an important role as a transportation hub with heavy usage by residents, patients at NY Hospital, families, and students who pass through the station on a regular basis. It is the number one station in terms of complaints about old infrastructure and accessibility issues. I often hear from constituents and transportation

advocates about replacing the 100-year-old elevator to better accommodate the amount of riders that the 168 St station serves. The new elevators will be a much-needed addition and I am committed to working with the MTA to continuing to explore how we can make the 168 St **1** station accessible for all. The update to the elevators and ancillary facilities will be a great improvement for the community."

NYS Assembly Member Al Taylor (District 71) said: "I am pleased that so many critical repairs will finally be made to the 168 St **1** station to make it safer and bring it up-to-date with the latest technological innovations. The replacement of these elevators are critical improvements to the 168 St **1** station and I look forward to exploring further possibilities with the MTA to further enhance the accessibility of this station."

Station	Dates of Construction
168 Street 1 Station	January 5, 2019 – January 2020 (No 1 service at station. A and C trains will continue to serve the station.)
181 St A station	October 2019 – October 2020 (Station will remain open with trains stopping and non-elevator entrances available for use. Elevator entrances will be closed.)
191 St 1 station	February 2020 – February 2021 (Station will remain open with trains stopping and non-elevator entrances available for use. Elevator entrances will be closed.)
190 St A station	November 2020 - October 2021 (Station will remain open with trains stopping and non-elevator entrances available for use. Elevator entrances will be closed.)
181 St 1 station	March 2021 – February 2022 (Trains will bypass station. Station will be closed.)

In the coming days, customer service personnel will staff a Help Desk at the 168 St **1** station on the line to assist customers who may have questions about the changes. Personnel will be on hand at the following times:

Thursday, December 20 from 3 PM to 7 PM.

Friday, December 21 from 3 PM to 7 PM.

Monday December 24 from 3 PM to 7 PM.