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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

### LIRR to Lengthen Platforms at Forest Hills and Kew Gardens

#### *Expected to Reduce Crowding During Boarding at Both Stations and Reduce Delays as Customers Board and Exit Trains More Easily*

Long Island Rail Road President Phillip Eng today announced that the LIRR plans to lengthen the platforms at Forest Hills and Kew Gardens by 50 percent, to accommodate six cars of a train, from the current four.

Both stations have two side platforms north and south of the tracks. The railroad will extend both platforms at Forest Hills and both platforms at Kew Gardens 200 feet westward using steel scaffolding structures supporting fiberglass decking.

“We’re committed to improving conditions for our Queens customers, and this will make boarding and exiting trains less congested, faster, and more pleasant at both stations,” said LIRR President Phillip Eng. “We’re taking a new, expedited approach, making improvements quickly to current needs with lower cost yet sturdy materials, while we evaluate a longer-term, permanent solution.”

“With the high ridership at these stations, we are experiencing train delays as customers must walk from car to car to be able to reach a door at a platform,” Eng continued. “Because these two stations are at a busy section of the railroad, those delays can cause trains behind to be delayed as well. Longer platforms should speed up our main line service for all customers traveling between Penn Station and Jamaica.”

Generally, the first four cars of LIRR trains currently stop at both platforms. This change will allow the first six cars to meet the platform at both stations. LIRR trains can be up to 12 cars long.

Preparation work at both sites is scheduled to begin the week of July 23. All work will be performed by LIRR personnel. Staff are analyzing the project to identify a completion date and cost.

Any temporary construction-related changes at either station will be announced closer to the start of construction work.

Forest Hills and Kew Gardens are the 51st and 56th busiest of the LIRR’s 124 stations, respectively, with average weekday ridership at Forest Hills of 1,967 passengers and 1,778 at Kew Gardens. Forest Hills has become a popular destination in recent years for LIRR customers attending concerts at Forest Hills Stadium.

#### QUOTE SHEET

**U.S. Rep. Grace Meng said:** “I thank the LIRR and its President Phillip Eng for continuing to invest in LIRR stations in my district. It is critical that we maintain and upgrade key infrastructure in our borough, and lengthening the platforms at the Forest Hills and Kew Gardens stations will go a long way towards reducing crowding and decreasing delays. I look forward to continuing to work with the LIRR on improving conditions that will benefit my constituents.”

**Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. said:** “It is great to see that the Long Island Rail Road is taking active measures to safely help speed up trips for the thousands of residents that use the LIRR on a daily basis in Forest Hills and Kew Gardens. By extending the platforms at these two stations, passengers will have an easier egress off of the train, reducing delays and making a better trip for everyone. I look forward to seeing the final results once construction is finished.”

**Senator Leroy Comrie said:** “For too long, the needs of Queens residents were put on the back burner by the Long Island Rail Road. I commend President Eng for working to change this by demonstrating a commitment to improving Rail Road access and service within our borough. I look forward to continuing to work with him and our partners at the LIRR to increase ridership and improve service in my district and throughout Queens.”

**Assembly Member Daniel Rosenthal said:** “This plan is a step in the right direction towards making our commutes safer and faster. The extension of the platforms comes as a welcome addition for our Kew Gardens and Forest Hills communities. I commend President Eng on making proactive investments in Queens.”

**Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi said:** “Extending the platforms at Forest Hills and Kew Gardens train stations will benefit commuters by enabling more comfortable, efficient, and dependable LIRR service, and reduce delays that affect the system as a whole. Thank you to the Long Island Rail Road and LIRR President Phillip Eng for making these accommodations to better serve riders in our communities.”

**Council Member Karen Koslowitz said:** “The Kew Gardens and Forest Hills stations, because they can only accommodate the length of four railroad cars, present difficulties for commuters. I am gratified that the LIRR will be addressing this issue by extending the platforms of these two stations to provide for six cars.”