



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) | ▼

Press Release

March 6, 2019

LIRR

IMMEDIATE

MTA Announces Closure of Urban Avenue in New Cassel as Crews Begin to Rebuild Roadway as an Underpass Under LIRR Tracks

Avenue to Reopen in the Fall With Railroad Crossing Removed; MTA to Provide Free Shuttle Bus for Pedestrians Every 30 Minutes

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that Urban Avenue in New Cassel will be temporarily closed on Friday, March 8, between Broadway and Main Street as part of the Long Island Rail Road's Main Line Expansion Project to make the railroad safer and more reliable.

In consultation with the Town of North Hempstead, the MTA is rebuilding the railroad crossing at Urban Avenue as a two-way grade separated underpass with a sidewalk on the west side. Railroad Avenue will bridge over the underpass and remain connected. The MTA expects the crossing reconstruction to be completed in the fall.

"We are working hard to be able to reopen the rebuilt, safer roadway in just a manner of months," said MTA Chief Development Officer Janno Lieber. "The terrible crash in Westbury just last week is a painful reminder of the dangers posed by some grade crossings. Eliminating this railroad crossing and six others between Floral Park and Hicksville will make the area safer for everyone and also improve convenience for drivers and pedestrians."

LIRR President Phillip Eng said: "The Third Track project is a critical piece of our efforts to improve the safety and reliability of the LIRR, along with the more immediate initiatives we're pursuing through the LIRR Forward plan. Replacing this crossing with an underpass with modern 14-foot clearances will have enormous long-term benefits for the LIRR's safety and reliability. This is another measure that will eliminate delays caused by broken gates while improving traffic flow on Urban Avenue. It is a win-win for all."

Once the grade crossing is eliminated, trains will no longer need to blast their horns, and bells from crossing gates will become unnecessary. Currently, crossing gates during rush hours are in the down position up to 35 percent of the time, creating traffic backups and increasing exhaust from vehicles.

For more information about the Urban Avenue underpass construction, please visit this page:
<http://amodernli.com/project/urban-avenue-grade-crossing-elimination/>

Detours have been established to get around the closure in cooperation with the Town of North Hempstead.

Vehicles headed south on Urban Avenue will be redirected west along Prospect Avenue to make a left onto Union Avenue, then a left onto Grand Boulevard to Old Country Road.

Vehicles on Old Country Road wishing to travel north on Urban Avenue will be redirected to Grand Boulevard for a right to Union Avenue, then a right onto Prospect Avenue.

LIRR Expansion project contractor 3TC will provide a free pedestrian shuttle service from the corner of Broadway and Urban Avenue (north of the tracks) to Main Street and Urban Avenue (south of the tracks). The shuttle will run seven days a week, every half hour from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The contractor can be awarded incentives for finishing the project on time or penalized for finishing late.

The LIRR Expansion Project will add a third track from Floral Park to Hicksville, reducing train congestion and delays and enabling true bi-directional service during peak hours. This transformative work includes several related projects, including the construction of additional parking garages and improved station access, retaining and sound attenuation walls, improvements to rail bridges and the removal of the seven street-level railroad crossings in the corridor. Construction is being handled in a way to minimize the impact on daily routines, with extensive mitigation and public outreach efforts being planned in conjunction with local communities.

The LIRR Expansion Project is part of a multibillion-dollar modernization of the Long Island Rail Road, the largest investment the railroad has received in decades. Once the work is complete, the LIRR will have increased its capacity by roughly 50 percent. Together, the upgrades will help transform transportation across the region and provide a reliable, state-of-the-art rail system for Long Islanders.