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Press Release

April 26, 2019

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

### Next Phase of L Project Construction Starts Tonight – Much of Tunnel Construction Work is Well Underway

*New and Improved Plan Keeps Service Uninterrupted for 90 Percent of L Customers, Drastically Reduces Demolition, Provides Enhanced Structural Integrity Through Innovative Methods, and Cuts Costs*

*MTA Encourages Riders To Take Advantage Of Robust Alternative Service Options – Additional Subway & Bus Service Available*

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that the next phase of the L project will begin tonight, April 26, as planned. The improved construction plan and schedule will avoid a complete shutdown of service and maintain regular weekday and peak hour service for 90% of the line's customers, as weekday and peak hour service are unchanged. The project will also minimize construction-related disruption to riders and communities near the work sites while yielding cost savings due to the revised work plan in which total demolition of a concrete structure called the bench wall has been reduced by 99 percent, and provide robust alternate subway and bus service to New Yorkers throughout construction.

MTA New York City Transit previously planned to close the entire L train tunnel to demolish and reconstruct the tunnel's infrastructure, which had been badly damaged by Superstorm Sandy. The current plan employs new construction methods and technology that have been used effectively in transit systems around the world and several industries, however never before integrated in a similar project in the United States. The methods proposed by the top faculty of two leading engineering schools, Columbia and Cornell Universities allow NYC Transit to operate subway service in the tunnel throughout the work so that the bulk of L customers can continue their regular weekday commutes between Manhattan and Brooklyn, including during the busiest times of subway service.

The new and improved L Project provides a number of improvements and benefits, including:
















- Keeping the L train's Canarsie tunnel open throughout the course of the construction project, providing service to more than 275,000 L customers between Manhattan and Brooklyn, including morning and evening peak periods.
- Eliminating the removal and replacement 35,000 feet of bench wall and the installation of 126,000 feet of power cable and 176,000 feet of communications cable inside the bench wall. Instead, the bench wall will be secured by heavy-duty fiber-reinforced polymer used to carry heavy loads on bridges, and cables specially wrapped for fire resistance will be suspended on the side of the tunnel rather than burying them inside the concrete bench wall. This will allow greater access for staff inspection or future upgrades, and will physically raise these critical components to mitigate the effects of potential flooding.
- A fiber optic-based "smart sensor" system will be installed in the tunnel, allowing for continuous monitoring of the structure's integrity.
- With the new bench wall approach, the only demolition being carried out will be the removal of a separate wall duct contained long disused ConEd power cables, and the trimming and removal of manholes and their concrete flares, which will allow trains to move faster due to increased clearance.
- All previously planned upgrades to the pump system, power infrastructure, and tracks remain, while the project reduces demolition of the Canarsie tunnel's bench wall by 99 percent. This will significantly decrease the amount of debris and demolition materials that need to be removed from the site. Despite this reduction, the contractor will engage in rigorous dust control activities, including:
  - using tools with HEPA filter vacuum attachments and hoods to capture dust at the source;
  - using air scrubbers with HEPA filters to capture airborne dust;
  - installing temporary containment barriers to keep dust from spreading into the tunnel or into public areas; and
  - using water misting and tools with water hose attachments to precipitate dust for containment and collection by wet vacuums.
- The new approach will provide \$10 million in savings, while maintaining penalties for delays and incentives for early completion.
- The reduced amount of construction in the new project has allowed much of the needed work to already be underway. In addition to already having replaced both sets of tracks in the tunnel's two tubes, one of two pipes that carry pumped water out of the tunnel has been replaced. Two new such pipes will be added for additional storm resiliency.
- The MTA has also applied its own in-house innovation to the new project. The MTA team overseeing the construction, after trying different methods during planned track outages in January and February, developed a way for the fiber-reinforced polymer to be pre-fabricated offsite instead of in-place in the tunnel, further reducing the amount of work needed to be done on nights and weekends.
- When successfully completed, these innovative construction methods can be applied to other projects, and revolutionize the way all MTA agencies plan future rehabilitation and construction projects.

The L Project began in July 2017 with limited disruption to train service during preparatory, maintenance, and station improvement projects designed to fortify alternate service plans. Much of the project's construction, and related work, is underway. These projects included capacity and accessibility improvements at 14 subway stations, track maintenance on nearby subway lines, including the L line, and the construction of three new power substations that will enable NYC Transit to operate more trains once the L Project is complete.

During this next phase of the project, service will be:

- Exactly the same during the day on weekdays and rush hours.
- Reduced in both directions between Manhattan and Brooklyn on weeknights and weekends, running every 20 minutes (normal service was always every 20 minutes between 1:30 and 5 a.m., so service during that time period is unchanged).
- Every 10 minutes in both directions within Brooklyn on weeknights from 10pm to 1:30 a.m. and on weekends from 6 a.m. to 1:30 a.m., thanks to the creativity of NYC Transit planners who developed a way to turn trains within the borough.

To avoid crowds and have faster journeys on weekends and weekday evenings, NYC Transit is encouraging customers to take advantage of extensive and robust options in its alternative service plan. These options include:

- Enhanced subway service on ,  and  lines on weeknights and weekends, including extended  service.
- Enhanced bus service on 14th Street, including additional weeknight and weekend M14A bus service that will be extended to connect with the Delancey/Essex St station for links to , , and  train service. NYC Transit will launch Select Bus Service on 14th Street this summer to provide faster bus service for Manhattan crosstown customers.
- A new weeknight and weekend bus service, called Williamsburg Link, will operate on two routes as the B92 and the B91. They connect with subway stations at Bedford Av, Metropolitan Av-Lorimer St, Marcy Av and Hewes St. The Williamsburg Link buses began service on Thursday night, April 25.
- Free subway transfers to make connections easier between Livonia St  and Junius St , and from Broadway  to Hewes St   or Lorimer St  .
- A [dedicated website on the L project](#), with trip planning tools, information on the project and travel guides for  stations from 8 Av to Lorimer St.
- A [weekly email newsletter on the L project](#) to keep customers and affected communities informed about the progress of the work and a way to reach Transit staff with feedback or questions.
- For more information, visit <https://new.mta.info/l-project>.

This new phase of the L Project is expected to take 15 to 18 months, with penalties and incentives to encourage timely completion. Hundreds of NYC Transit, MTA and NYPD personnel will be out this weekend along the L line and where alternate service is being provided, in order to help customers as they get accustomed to the new service patterns. Officials will constantly monitor the new service and work closely with partners such as NYPD and NYCDOT in order to ensure good operations.