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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR Expansion Project Hits Halfway Point Ahead of Schedule and Under Budget

School Street to Reopen Next Month as Four of Eight Grade Crossings Are Eliminated

[See Summer Accomplishment Photos Including Bridge Replacement and Roadway Opening](#)

With four of eight railroad crossings eliminated and six of seven bridges rebuilt or upgraded, among other accomplishments, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that construction of the LIRR Expansion Project has hit the halfway point, ahead of schedule and under budget. The project, one of the largest transportation infrastructure projects in North America, will introduce 10 miles of new track between Floral Park and Hicksville. It is being managed by the new MTA Construction & Development (C&D) agency created to expedite how the MTA plans and builds projects. Many projects, such as this, are working under the successful design-build model that has fostered innovation and incentivized faster work with less community disruption.

C&D is working quickly and efficiently to get a number of projects done following a successful summer of accomplishments, including the School Street undergrade crossing which is scheduled to open to traffic in November, months before originally scheduled. Final bridge installation, using the innovative box-jacking method, was completed Oct. 5. The eastern portions of the Merillon Avenue Station platforms, in Garden City, will open to commuters this month and temporary station platforms will be demolished.

"This project continues to move forward at a remarkable pace and under budget, and is a model for how the MTA can deliver large infrastructure projects better, faster and cheaper," **said Janno Lieber, President of MTA Construction & Development.** "We're especially proud of the work we are doing to maintain progress throughout the COVID pandemic – communicating and enforcing safe work practices, conducting field inspections remotely by using Go-Pro cameras, providing PPE. In many cases we've taken advantage of low ridership to actually accelerate work during the COVID crisis."

"This critical project has already delivered substantial improvements to our infrastructure that have translated into better service for our customers, and we're excited for all that's to come," **said Phil Eng, President of MTA Long Island Rail Road.** "Providing more reliable, robust, and safe service – with a stellar customer experience – is our goal every day here at the railroad, and each of these individual milestones get us closer to delivering a world-class transportation system for our customers. Projects like these help neighboring communities, foster economic growth, and will ultimately help our region rebound and rebuild during this pandemic."

The installation of elevators at the Floral Park station making it fully ADA compliant is nearing completion and the completion of Carle Place Station is expected this winter. Other work along the Main Line between Floral Park and Hicksville includes:

- A drop off/pick-up roundabout on Stonehinge Lane at Carle Place Station
- Art glass installation on new Carle Place Station buildings
- Exterior renovations and other enhancement work continues at New Hyde Park Station
- Final work on Harrison Avenue Parking Structure in Mineola
- Early work pile driving and preparation for Willis Avenue grade crossing elimination
- Excavation and construction of foundations as part of Mineola Station enhancement and reconstruction
- Elevator installation and final work at Westbury North Parking Structure
- Sound wall construction
- Sidewalks and landscaping installation
- Foundations and utility installation at various substations
- Permanent utility installation work that includes cable relocation
- Testing and commissioning new Nassau 1 interlocking
- Installation of new switches at Nassau 3 Interlocking
- Early work preparation of Denton Ave/Tanners Pond Rd. Bridge replacement
- Regular track inspection and maintenance, rail tie replacement and grade crossing elimination preparatory work along the right-of-way

As the LIRR Expansion Project hit its halfway point, a number of important milestones were reached during the dog days of summer. Despite a national pandemic, notable construction continued with protocols developed to keep workers safe. Among the completed projects was the replacement of the Glen Cove Road bridge. Using a method successfully employed at Nassau Boulevard and Cherry Lane among other locations, the new bridge was built on site and then during a weekend double track service outage on June 29, the old two-bay bridge was removed and replaced with a new three-bay bridge to accommodate the future third track.

Just a couple of months later on August 24, the New Hyde Park Road undergrade crossing was opened ahead of schedule, less than seven months after the roadway was closed. The crossing was the third to be eliminated, following Urban Avenue and Covert Avenue. In an incredible feat of engineering,

the railroad bridge and U-structure was pushed into place during a double track service outage using a series of hydraulic jacks, after being constructed on site.

As the summer came to a close, MTA C&D achieved two more milestones. The steel structure for the Meadowbrook Parkway's third bay was installed on September 18 and the first section of the third track was installed at the Merillon Avenue station.

In all, when the LIRR Expansion Project is completed, eight grade crossings will have been eliminated, seven bridges replaced or expanded, five stations completely rebuilt, 10 miles of a third track installed and infrastructure such as power substations and interlockings built.

For more information about the LIRR Expansion Project, click here: <https://www.amodernli.com/project/thirdtrack/>.