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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

MTA Officials Announce Opening of New Elevators at Two L Train Stations and Join Accessibility Advocates to Call for Urgently Needed Federal Funding

1 Av and Bedford Av L Stations Now Fully Accessible with New Elevators

Lack of Funding Would Slow Down Completion of Projects Slated in Historic \$5.2 Billion MTA 2020-2024 Capital Plan to Expand Accessibility

Coalition of 13 Advocacy Groups Urge U.S. Senate to Provide Emergency Funding Now

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MTA officials today announced the completion of full ADA accessibility projects at two L train stations – 1 Av in Manhattan and Bedford Av in Brooklyn – while joining accessibility advocates who called upon the federal government to immediately provide desperately needed funding to help secure the MTA's 2020-2024 Capital Plan and bring more accessibility across the system.

Officials have stressed that the MTA needs \$12 billion in federal aid in order to maintain operations through the end of 2021. A coalition of 13 advocacy groups sent a letter to Washington lawmakers today calling on them to make transit funding the “highest priority” in Congress's next Covid-19 relief bill.

“We have fought hard alongside transit advocates to make accessibility a top priority at the MTA and remain committed to doing so,” said **Janno Lieber, President of MTA Construction & Development**, at the announcement at the 1 Av station. “As historic as the 2020-2024 Capital Plan is, I want to be very clear: it can't happen the way we originally envisioned it, unless Congress steps up and provides us with meaningful aid.”

“Accessibility projects should never be put at risk because the federal government fails to meet its moral obligation to fund transit in this time of crisis,” said **NYC Transit Senior Advisor for Systemwide Accessibility Alex Elegudin**. “We urge lawmakers to recognize how critical federal funding is to complete projects like the openings we celebrate today, which have changed the lives of so many people – and we urge them to step up for the future of our system.”

The MTA has completed full station accessibility retrofits, including elevators and a variety of other ADA-compliant features, at four stations in the last two weeks. They include Astoria Blvd on the **N W** line, 86 St on the **R** line in Bay Ridge, and the two **L** stations announced today.

The MTA's 2020-2024 Capital Plan includes an unprecedented investment of \$5.2 billion. Together with four stations charged to the 2015-2019 Plan, this delivers full ADA compliance at 70 more stations, increasing the number of accessible stations by more than 50%. This would guarantee no customer would be more than two stations away from an accessible station.

The MTA remains committed to increasing its number of fully ADA-compliant stations despite financial uncertainty. Without federal funding, such projects in the Capital Plan, scheduled to be complete in five years, could take longer.

Victor Calise, MTA Board Member and Commissioner of the NYC Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, said: “Our message to the White House and our message to Congress is simple: support transit and support it now.”

Joseph Rappaport, Executive Director of the Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled, said: “Without money, you can't do anything. And without bus service, without adequate bus service and railroad service, without reformed Access-A-Ride, we can't do anything; our community can't get to jobs, can't get to school.”

Jose Hernandez, President, NYC Chapter of the United Spinal Association, said: “Our region's transit system is in as severe a funding crisis as it ever has been, and we are concerned that accessibility upgrades may be at risk of not moving forward. We implore Congress not to allow that to happen. Only Congress can step in to prevent catastrophe for the disability community by providing the critically needed funding for transit in the upcoming Covid relief bill.”

Sharifa Abu-Hamda, President of the Civics League for Disability Rights, said: “We often disagree with the MTA, but on the funding question we are entirely united in agreement. Federal funding to bridge its \$14 billion gap is essential so the MTA can do its job to keep the system going and to improve it. We are counting on Congress to make sure our region's transit accessibility upgrades are funded.”

New contract awards in the MTA Capital Plan are on hold because of the financial fallout the MTA is facing due to the Covid-19 crisis. The MTA has requested \$12 billion to get through the end of 2020 and 2021. The MTA is currently losing \$200 million a week in revenue from fares, tolls, subsidies and Covid-related expenses. In 2020 alone the MTA projects \$4.2 billion in fare losses, \$2.1 billion in reduced subsidies, \$880 million in toll losses and \$500 million in increased expenses. Through 2024, the MTA projects fare revenue losses of \$8.5 billion, tax subsidy losses of \$6.9 billion, Covid-related expenses of \$2.5 billion and toll losses of \$1.8 billion through 2024.