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Press Release

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[NYC Transit](#)

IMMEDIATE

Surge of 'Excited' Feedback for Jay St-MetroTech Accessible Station Lab

Customers Can Continue to Provide Real-Time Feedback Through Jan. 17

MTA New York City Transit encourages customers to continue to provide feedback about station accessibility features being tested at the Accessible Station Lab at the Jay St-MetroTech [A C F R](#) station in Brooklyn. Initial feedback from customers and advocates affirms that many of the pilot features have great potential to make subway stations more accessible for riders of all abilities.

Community engagement is a critical part of the Station Lab. NYCT conducted at least 30 tours and received hundreds of survey responses since the October launch of the "living lab" at this busy station in downtown Brooklyn. NYCT encourages customers to continue providing direct feedback [at the following link](#), which will allow NYCT to evaluate the performance of the pilot. Surveys will be accepted through Jan. 17, 2020, although customers are always encouraged to provide feedback about station accessibility and other topics through the Customer Feedback form [online here](#). In addition, those working with a community or advocacy group can request a tour of the lab through Jan. 17, by emailing accessibility@nyct.com.

The program at Jay St-MetroTech is testing more than a dozen new features such as smartphone apps for wayfinding, floor treatments, braille and tactile maps, digital signage and other tools for in-station navigation. Most of the features will remain in the station through early 2020.

"It's really encouraging to not only see so many customers test the features as they travel through the station, but to ask questions and provide comments as well," said **Alex Elegudin, NYCT Senior Advisor for Systemwide Accessibility**. "We welcome the honest feedback and look forward to receiving results that will help us determine what features to incorporate into future accessibility projects."

"The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD) is excited to partner with the MTA on initiatives such as the Accessible Station Lab, which represents what the future of an accessible subway system could look like based on feedback from, and the needs of, New Yorkers and visitors with disabilities," said **MOPD Commissioner Victor Calise**. "These features greatly improve the transit experience of people with mobility, hearing, vision, and intellectual/developmental disabilities. When expanded to more stations, they can be true game-changers for making the subway system more accessible."

Feedback from Disability Advocates:

Gian Carlo Pedulla, Supervisor, Educational Vision Services said: "I am excited to see what NYC Transit has done with the Accessible Station Lab because they are utilizing a multitude of high-tech and low-tech options designed to provide everyone access to the same information and resources. This will hopefully facilitate a safer, more efficient, and viable means of transportation for people of all abilities, who must utilize a range of methods and techniques for travel. The more advanced apps that are being tested as well as the increased braille signage are exciting features because they provide me, a blind traveler, with instant access to visual information about my environment."

Sharada Veerubhotla, Teacher, LaVelle School for the Blind said: "On December 12, students from our school, the Lavelle School for the Blind, had an opportunity to visit the Accessible Station Lab and test out the features. Along with being blind, all of our students have varying degrees of additional disabilities. It was exciting to see so many students attempting to use the subway for the first time, or the first time in years. One of the young men, 19, who is blind and has Tourette's, last visited the subway in 2010. He was able to use one of the wayfinding apps to travel from the mezzanine to the R platform. A few of the other students who have low vision were able to use the Accessible Boarding Area Floor Marker to more easily locate the Accessible Boarding Area, which is important for low vision travelers to safely navigate the subway system. I had an opportunity to use NaviLens, and as a person with a visual disability, I was able to orient myself as well as to gain important information regarding the arrivals and departures of trains. Our tour showed how the features being tested at the Lab can make the subway system more accessible to New Yorkers, like me and my students, with visual and other disabilities."

Marco Damiani, CEO, AHRC New York City said: "The Accessible Station Lab at Jay Street-MetroTech is an impressive initiative that shows how new features and technology can improve the commuting experience for people of all abilities. People from AHRC New York City programs, including our self-advocates that have attended a tour of the Station Lab, have spoken positively about the integration of helpful smart phone applications, the color-coded directional markings in the station, and effective signage for people with visual

impairments. While there is still much to be done, we believe that the features being tested at the Station Lab represent a positive step towards ensuring that New York City's transit systems are fully accessible for all travelers."

As this proof of concept demonstrates, accelerating accessibility is a top priority for NYCT. The 2020-2024 Capital Plan includes a historic commitment of more than \$5 billion to make an additional 70 subway stations ADA accessible, ensuring customers will be no farther than two stops from an accessible station anywhere in the system. The MTA has also made it a priority to improve communication with customers on the real-time status of elevators and escalators, improve audio and visual access to information throughout the system, and explore new approaches to priority and courtesy seating on buses.

Features being tested in the pilot program include:

- *Physical Wayfinding Features*
 - **Tactile Guideways**: Blue guidance tiles with raised bars or domes throughout the main mezzanine and supporting braille signage at decision points. NYCT is testing different guideway materials including hard plastic and rubber to determine which customers prefer
 - **Tape Guideways**: Three different brightly colored tape guideways on the floor to indicate accessible and transfer paths, especially helpful for those with cognitive disabilities and forms of vision loss; plus six **Boarding Area floor markers** that indicate the Accessible Boarding Area on each platform
 - **Stair Warnings**: Yellow warning strips with truncated domes at top of stairs and colored tape at bottom of stairs on each of the stations' 50 staircases
 - **Touch Graphic Maps**: Interactive tablet map on the main mezzanine showing station environment; plus tactile/braille line map on the R platform

- *Five New Wayfinding Apps*
 - **Waymap**: Uses beacons at entrances, exits and around key features to guide users through station; uses audio and "smart routing" for those who are blind or low vision; available in multiple languages
 - **NaviLens & NaviLens GO**: More than 100 unique, QR-style codes - on signage throughout station - to turn signs into audio that provide wayfinding, train arrival, and trip planning. *NaviLens GO* uses same codes to create virtual arrows to help guide users
 - **AIRA**: Service that connects users to trained live agents who provide digital descriptions to guide users to their destinations using smart phone camera
 - **Magnus Cards**: Geared toward people with cognitive disabilities, each card deck provides step-by-step visual, audio and text instructions for navigating the station, using MetroCards, train rides and transfers and reading station maps and signs
 - **Click & Go Wayfinding**: Large tactile station environment maps on mezzanines, dozens of pre-scripted audio routes provided via app with beacons for additional information and digital low-vision maps of routes throughout the station

- **New Customer Information Centers (CICs)**: Testing includes new ways to display escalator and elevator outage information to screens
- **Accessible Pathway and Alternate Route Signage**: 15 new diagrams that map alternate routes in the event of an elevator outage; and highlight the accessible path of travel from street to each platform
- **Hearing Loop at Bowling Green**: A hearing induction loop on the platform can help customers who use hearing aids or cochlear implants understand station announcements like train arrivals and Public Service Announcements. This feature is being tested at the Bowling Green station in lower Manhattan

The full list of vendors participating in the project as well as a [link to the customer feedback survey](#) is available on the MTA website: mta.info/accessibility/stationlab