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Press Release

May 26, 2016

[Metro-North](#)

IMMEDIATE

### Metro-North and Connecticut Department of Transportation Sign 'Partnering Letter'

#### *To Ensure Collaborative Path Forward on Walk Bridge Replacement*

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that Metro-North Railroad and the Connecticut Department of Transportation have signed a "partnering letter" agreeing to a strong, collaborative effort as plans are finalized to replace the Walk railroad bridge – the 120-year-old bridge over the Norwalk River that swings open and closed to accommodate marine traffic below.

The bridge carries all four tracks and is a key link on the New Haven Line – the busiest commuter line in the country – and the entire Northeast corridor between Boston, New York and Washington DC. When it fails to close properly – as has happened in recent years – it causes significant inconvenience to commuters and both commercial and recreational mariners, and disrupts commerce and economic activity. The bridge carries over 165 commuter and freight trains daily.

"This complex project requires meticulous planning and effective communications between the DOT and Metro-North so that everyone has input and consistent information," said CTDOT Commissioner James Redeker. "This will ensure the best and most informed decision-making as the project advances."

"To maintain the ongoing safety and reliability of the New Haven line, replacing the Walk railroad bridge is of paramount importance to both the Connecticut Department of Transportation and Metro-North Railroad," said Joseph Giulietti, President of Metro-North Railroad. "Metro-North is collaborating closely with the Connecticut Department of Transportation to make sure we build a highly reliable structure, while minimizing potential service disruptions."

The [attached](#) letter is written to memorialize "the management approach and working relationships ... that are necessary to advance the Walk Bridge Program," which includes the replacement of three nearby bridges and makes other operational and safety enhancements.

"The extraordinary challenges associated with building the new Walk Bridge ... will require innovative approaches to all aspects of the program from design through construction," the letter states. "With the primary goals being public safety and minimizing impacts on rail customers and the community, CTDOT and MNR will consider any and all reasonable opportunities to accelerate the work program."

"This spirit of innovation must also extend to public outreach. A well-informed and engaged community is more likely to be tolerant of unavoidable negative impacts during construction and more supportive of the overall program," states the letter signed by Redeker and Giulietti.

The letter also spells out schedules of meetings between various parties in order to keep robust communication and informed decision-making at the forefront.

While construction of the Walk Bridge is not scheduled to begin until mid-2018, three advance construction projects are necessary before the bridge replacement project begins.

More on the Walk Bridge Program at [www.walkbridgect.com](http://www.walkbridgect.com)