



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor New York, NY 10036
tel: 212-736-4536 fax: 212-947-9512
www.nyc.gov/mcb4

DELORES RUBIN

Chair

Jesse Bodine

District Manager

August 10, 2017

Joseph J. Lhota

Chair

MTA New York City Transit

2 Broadway

New York, NY 10004

Veronique Hakim

President

MTA New York City Transit

2 Broadway

New York, NY 10004

Luis Sanchez

Manhattan Borough Commissioner

NYC Department of Transportation

59 Maiden Lane, 37th Floor

New York, NY 10038

Re: L Train Update

Dear Chair Lhota, President Hakim, and Commissioner Sanchez,

Manhattan Community Board 4 (CB4) thanks the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) for attending the June 2017 CB4 Transportation Planning Committee and updating the community on their plans for the planned L subway train closure from Bedford Avenue to Eighth Avenue. CB4 would like to highlight the following updates and answers to previous questions, while providing comments and recommendations regarding outstanding issues.

We request that the MTA and the DOT address our community's most urgent concerns:

- A traffic mitigation plan for residents of adjacent streets

- A pedestrian improvements plan on 14th Street (bulb-outs, sidewalk widening, protected crossings etc.)
- An extension to the route of the SBS 14 to Eighth Avenue, the destination of thousands of workers who live in Brooklyn
- Improvements to the Eighth Avenue station during the down time

CB4 has the following comments:

- The community was pleased to learn that the closure, which was originally planned to last 18-months, is now only planned to last 15 months.
- CB4 was pleased to learn that through their outreach, MTA & DOT have recognized that buses need dedicated lanes and multiple options, including ferries and simple, direct inter-borough bus routing, should be provided; connections to subways should be available; bike lanes should be physically separated; and street treatments should take emergency vehicles and delivery access needs into consideration. However, Manhattan residents fear traffic spillover on narrow, mostly residential side streets.
- The community was pleased to learn that in response to CB4's inquiry at an earlier presentation on the planned L train closure, MTA confirmed that the connection between the 1,2,3, F, and M trains at 14th Street will be maintained at all times during the planned shutdown.
- In response to your "Draft Concept Plan: 14th Street SBS Bus Routing":
 - The community urges MTA & DOT to extend the planned SBS route west of Eighth Avenue. Many riders which are already being inconvenienced and forced to use additional transportation modes work, live, or play in the Meatpacking District, Chelsea Market, Chelsea Piers, and other attractions.
 - In addition, the existing M14A and M14D should have off-board fare collection. In an attempt to boost bus speeds CB4 would encourage all-door boarding and proof-of-payment across all city routes, however, CB4 finds it especially confusing to have bus stops along 14th Street where some buses are SBS and some use traditional MTA fare payment methods.
- In response to your "Draft Concept Plan: Ferry":
 - CB4 is pleased to learn that the temporary ferry service between N. 6th Street and E. 20th Street will be integrated into the M14 SBS & M23 SBS systems. However, CB4 is concerned that M14A & M14D riders may not have their transfer included in the system.
 - CB4 is pleased to learn that MTA & DOT are considering running the ferry at high frequencies and until midnight on Sunday-Thursday evening and until 2am on Friday & Saturday evenings. CB4 would encourage MTA to consider Thursday evening hours be extended to match Friday & Saturday evenings and, if there is demand, consider longer hours on all nights.
 - CB4 would urge MTA & DOT to consider a temporary direct ferry service between N. 6th Street and Pier 11 Wall Street. This direct service would be significantly faster than existing NYC ferry service and provide affected travelers with connections to multiple subway lines in lower

Manhattan. Depending on the make-up of enhanced bus service, costumers commuting between the west side and Williamsburg may find it considerably faster to take a subway and ferry rather than bus and ferry. Furthermore, those that are transferring to/from the ferry and M14/23SBS's to the subway would see even more time and modal savings.

- In response to your “Draft Concept Plan: Bike Improvements”:
 - CB4 reiterates its request for crosstown protected bike lanes and is pleased to learn DOT is in the process for designing these. CB4 awaits a specific timeline for implementation and installation.
- In response to your “Draft Concept Plan: Subway”
 - The MTA stated that they are considering routing some northbound M trains to the Second Avenue line. The community is pleased at the potential for additional service options, however, it urges the MTA to consider an additional letter service designation, such as V. While there are some MTA services, such as the A train, that have multiple terminuses, CB4 is unaware of any subway lines that split with terminuses in separate boroughs. CB4 considers it potentially very confusing for riders at 14th and 23rd Streets to see a northbound M train and not know if it was headed toward the Upper East Side or Forest Hills, Queens.
- CB4 reiterates the following requests and suggestions which have thus far been unanswered or unaddressed¹:
 - We note that some improvements are proposed to the stations in Brooklyn and on the East side. The MTA will have unimpeded access to more than three route miles of track and six stations for 15 months. During that time, there will be no trains and no riders to contend with, a situation that would expedite repairs and improvements to the system.
 - The Regional Plan Association has studied needed improvements and we support their recommendations for our district:
 - All stations should be rehabilitated and brought to a state of good repair
 - Increase passenger flow, capacity, and efficiency by reconfiguring the transfer to Eighth Avenue Station/IND line, with direct connections to the southern end of the Eighth Avenue A, C and E platforms, and provide a western ADA-accessible entrance to the street between Eighth and Ninth Avenues
 - Reopen the pedestrian underpass between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, a long standing request of CB4
 - Make Sixth and Eighth Avenues Stations ADA accessible
 - Increase capacity by rebuilding the Eighth Avenue Station in Manhattan, which limits severely the number of trains running on

¹ http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb4/downloads/pdf/archives/july-august/31_trans_letter_to_mta_re_l_train_tunnel_closure.pdf
http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb4/downloads/pdf/agendas/2014_06/18%20TRANS%20to%20MTA%20re%20Underpass%20W%2014th%20and%207th%20Ave.pdf

the line: rebuild the L train's terminal, creating space for train storage and turning trains

- Improve Seventh Avenue Station: Circulation: Improve corridor to Seventh Avenue IRT station. Widen stairs from platform to PATH/IND transfer.
- CB4 urges the MTA to take advantage of the line closure to effect long needed station improvements on the west side.
- Additionally, as part of this plan, the MTA should work with DOT, NYCEDC and other appropriate agencies to consider adding west side ferry stops as soon as possible in advance of the L train shut down. Ferry service has proven to be an efficient form of commuter transportation and significantly more popular than the City anticipated, considering the rezonings and increased development that has occurred over the past ten years. West 15th Street, West Chelsea, Hudson Yards, Eleventh Avenue, the Javits Center, and Piers 57 and 76 have all undergone major development projects making them destinations for commuters from all parts of the city. While this service should run up and down the west side, stops in Community District 4 should include Pier 57, Javits Center/Pier 76, and a pier around Clinton Cove.

We look forward to working with MTA and DOT to review the detailed plan, the necessary local mitigation envisioned for the duration of the project, and the improvements proposed for the west side stations.

Sincerely,



Delores Rubin
Chair
Manhattan Community
Board 4



Christine Berthet
Co-Chair,
Transportation Planning
Committee



Yoni Bokser
Co-Chair,
Transportation Planning
Committee