

# L Project Changes: What You Need to Know

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On January 3, 2019, Governor Cuomo invited deans and faculty from the engineering schools from Columbia University and Cornell University to present a recommendation for part of the L Project. Specifically, they looked at the tunnel rehabilitation piece of the project, and shared a revised approach that would allow for two-way service to continue on the **L** during the tunnel repairs—a huge win for many of our customers and local communities.

As we review the details, we are working on a revised plan, with safety as the top priority. While we're focused on the details of implementation over the next few weeks, we will be working with our federal partners and local city agencies.

In the meantime, here are the highlights of what we know now:

## What *is* actually changing from the original L Project?

The major headline is that the recommendation includes an approach that would allow for two-way service to continue on the **L** during the tunnel repairs. But the L Project is about more than the tunnel. You can think of the L Project in three parts:

- 1 Tunnel rehabilitation work
- 2 Capacity and accessibility improvements
- 3 Additional capital projects related to the **L**

The announcement and recommendation was focused on the tunnel rehabilitation. The recommendation would be a change to how we execute the repairs. With safety as our top priority, we are reviewing the details and considering changes to our plan, including how the new approach will impact the other concurrent projects. We will share more information in the coming weeks.

## So what *isn't* changing about the L Project?

### I was excited about the elevators and reopened stairways!

Us, too. Here's the list of what's already been completed, and at this time, what will continue:

#### Completed:

**Reopened stair at Flushing Av Station:** More direct access to the station for customers—AKA a shorter walk! It also doubled the number of people who can get in and out of this station with the added turnstiles.

**Reopened stair at Hewes St Station:** Same benefits as the Flushing Av Station above—shorter walk for some customers, and new turnstiles and stairs which doubled the number of people who can get in and out.

**Opened three new staircases at Bedford Av Station:** Of the four planned, we've already opened three of these new staircases. Once completed, there will be eight total staircases at Bedford Av Station.

**Rehabilitated the existing track switches at 3 Av Station:** This was work that needed to be done, and we completed it already.

#### Continue:

**Repair Superstorm Sandy damage:** Our objective was to make the tunnel safe for operations in the long-term and it still is. We are evaluating our plans and the new recommendations to meet this objective.

**Make the tunnel more resilient:** Another objective of the plan was to minimize and prevent damage from the entry of water into the system from major storms, and that isn't changing. The new recommendation offers ideas to further enhance this. We are evaluating how our plans and the new recommendations will meet this objective.

**More **L** train service:** We are still building the three additional substations, which are the power sources for our trains. By adding three, we will be able to run more trains per hour in peak times, making better use of the communications-based train control (CBTC) signaling system's capabilities.

**Three new accessible **L** platforms:** The Bedford Av and 1 Av station elevators are already under way. The 14 St/6 Av (**L** platform) Station accessibility upgrade will also still happen as an extension of the L Project.

**Six stations getting more reopened or reconstructed staircases or more turnstiles:** We're still doing work at Marcy Av (**J M Z**), Metropolitan Av-Lorimer St (**G L**), Broadway Junction (on the **J Z** side of the station), Court Sq (**E G M 7**), Nassau Av (**G**) and 14 St-Union Sq to improve capacity, in addition to the two already completed projects.

**More capacity at Bedford Av Station:** The mezzanine extension and four total staircases being added will allow us to double capacity at this station (in addition to the elevators).

**More capacity at 1 Av Station:** A new entrance at the Avenue A end — meaning two new stairways on either side of 14th Street — will help more people get in and out of the station faster (in addition to the new elevators).

**Rehabilitating existing track switches south of Bedford Av:** Like the track switches we've already repaired near 3 Av Station, this was work that needed to be done.

**Improvements at 14 St-Union Sq  Station Union Square:** An escalator and stair renovation contract has been awarded and is being planned within this revised approach.

## How would the recommendations impact the project timing — I know the tunnel closure was originally set to start on April 27, 2019?

We actually broke ground for the L Project in July 2017. The completed work to date was primarily for the capacity and accessibility projects we designed in tandem with the tunnel work to make the most of the closure.

We will have more specifics on what work will be happening, when and where as we consider revisions to our plan. The bottom line is that safety is our top priority, and will remain so as we plan the project.

## If you're not closing down service totally, will there still be alternate service available?

For most people, it would be great news if the  wouldn't need to fully close for 15 months between Bedford Av and 8 Av. But we know some of our customers primarily use the  during the weekend and overnight hours when there could be the most impact to service. So, while we might not need the full scale of transportation options we had initially planned, we will still provide an appropriate plan that accommodates 100 percent of impacted  customers, just as the original one did.

We're looking at a revised service plan and will share more details in the coming weeks.

## If the underground tunnel rehabilitation work is changing, will this change the above-ground construction work?

As mentioned, we are still moving forward with the elevator projects at 1 Av and Bedford Av Stations, as well as the substation work. This is what you're seeing in-progress if you peek into our construction sites there.

However, we're using this opportunity to look at all of our construction work schedules and timelines, so stay tuned over the next few weeks for any potential changes here.

## I know there are a lot of details to be worked out, but how do I stay informed when there is more information about the L Project?

In the short-term, while we update our existing MTA New York City Transit materials like our website, we'll continue issuing the L Project Weekly newsletter with the latest roundup of updates. [You can sign up here.](#) Our website is <https://new.mta.info/l-project>.

And in the meantime, we're still listening to you as we have before. So, while we might not have answers at this moment, we'd love to hear from you. [https://mta-nyc.custhelp.com/app/comments\\_ltrain](https://mta-nyc.custhelp.com/app/comments_ltrain)

Once we have more details, we will continue our commitment to stay connected with you as we had before, including in-person conversations at community board meetings, on station platforms and other venues.

Also, the MTA issued a press release following the Governor's presentation on January 3, 2019. You can check that out here: <http://www.mta.info/press-release/nyc-transit/mta-announces-l-train-shutdown-averted>

