



LINDA B. ROSENTHAL
Assemblymember 67th District

February 23, 2018

Joseph J. Lhota
Chair
Metropolitan Transportation Authority New York City Transit
2 Broadway
New York, NY 10004

Dear Chair Lhota:

I am writing regarding the planned closures of the West 72nd, 86th, 110th and 163rd Street Subway stations on the B and C lines beginning May 7th, June 4th, and April 9th, 2018, respectively. (The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has not published when the 163rd Street station will be closed at the time of writing). Tens of thousands of my constituents and New Yorkers citywide rely on these subway stations to get to and from their destinations. While I am pleased that the MTA plans to make improvements to these stations along the West Side, the MTA's negligent approach to community involvement in the planning process, lack of forethought to mitigate disruption to riders and failure to make provisions for mobility-impaired riders is unacceptable and must be ameliorated.

Tens of thousands of New Yorkers flow through these stations each day, yet the MTA neglected to include the community in the planning process. Had my constituents and other riders been invited to be involved in the process, as has been the case in other communities facing station closures or prolonged service changes, they would have provided valuable input as to their preferred approach to scheduling work on this project. However, my constituents were afforded no such opportunity.

My constituents and I were dismayed to learn (not through the MTA) that the MTA has taken a "business as usual" approach by making no plans to provide extra M10 and other bus service or trains on nearby lines during the closures. My office has instead been told that the MTA will monitor service during the first week of the closures and add additional service only if there is a demonstrated need. Why not anticipate the need? It boggles the mind that the MTA would wait for the disruption to occur before taking any action, particularly in light of the spotlight that has been shined recently on it and its service. The MTA must not take a "wait and see" approach to overcrowding on other lines and buses, but must proactively provide extra services on the IRT trains and M10 and other bus lines. These services must be included in the planning and be publicized immediately.

On behalf of mobility-impaired riders, I was appalled to learn that of \$111,190,000 in construction costs, not one dollar has been dedicated to making the stations more accessible to elderly, disabled or otherwise mobility-impaired riders. While this price tag includes essential structural repairs alongside more cosmetic improvements, when only 23% of subway stations in New York currently have elevators, the MTA must incorporate accessibility modifications into its renovation plans. Wi-Fi and countdown clocks are welcome additions to any station, but elevators are crucial for every station if we plan to keep all New Yorkers moving.

Issuing a public notice buried in the back pages of a newspaper alone is insufficient given the magnitude and duration of these disruptions. The MTA must halt all plans and immediately host the public hearing

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it should have held in advance of these closures. Only after my constituents have had an opportunity to be heard should any plan to implement changes in service be considered final.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. My constituents and I look forward to your response. Should you require any information, please do not hesitate to contact my office at rosenthal@nyassembly.gov or 212-873-6368.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Rosenthal".

Linda B. Rosenthal
Member of Assembly – 67th AD

Cc: Roberta Semer, Chair, Manhattan Community Board 7