



## New York City Transit

July 18, 2022

Jeffrey LeFrancois  
Chair-Manhattan Community Board #4  
424 West 33rd Street Suite #580  
New York, NY 10001

### **Re: West 28th Street Substation; Accessibility at 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Station (C/E lines)**

Dear Mr. LeFrancois:

This is in response to your July 1, 2022, letter regarding the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) West 28<sup>th</sup> Street Substation Project and accessibility at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Subway Station (C/E lines).

#### **I. West 28th Street Substation Project**

The MTA appreciates your input on the West 28<sup>th</sup> Street Substation Project, which will require approximately 24 months of ground level construction work and 15 months of below ground work being undertaken to provide additional power to serve an increase in capacity that the new signaling system, Communications-Based Train Control (CBTC), will enable. We are installing CBTC along the 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Subway Line between 59th Street and High Street in Brooklyn. Once activated, it will allow the MTA to safely run more trains closer together with increased reliability.

As you know, the MTA issued an Invitation for Bid (IFB) for the substation project on June 21, 2022. As we continue to move forward, we welcome your input and are committed to working with MCB4 and the residents of Penn South on the execution of this project with as little disruption to the surrounding community, as possible. We have reviewed the key requests identified in your July 1st letter and responded to each item below:

- ***The Board requests that we take “Exceptional measures for sound elimination as the construction is right in the middle of a very quiet and very residential district.”***

The MTA is committed to implementing the appropriate means of sound mitigation for this project, our plan for which can be shared with MCB4 and Penn South once a contractor is selected and the exact nature of the means and methods of construction are determined. Our commitment to noise mitigation measures will continue through the entirety of the project. We will monitor the impact that construction noise is having on the surrounding community and respond when necessary and feasible to correct any disruptions experienced by residents of the district.

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- ***“Noisy activity and Construction time limited to the hours 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the week and none during the weekend.”***

The New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) stipulates the work hours for this project; however, it is the MTA’s intent for this project to work only one shift above ground during business hours, which are typically weekdays from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Additionally, MTA will limit all noise producing construction work to between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

- ***“No encroachment on the Penn South parks and gardens: MTA construction site will be adjacent to a new building being erected just to the north of the excavation.”***

The MTA does not intend to need access to Penn South parks and gardens for this project and will consult with Penn South Management if such access were to become necessary. The MTA is also committed to working closely with Penn South management to ensure proper coordination is in place to allow for as little impediment as possible of any other construction project in the nearby vicinity.

- ***“Pedestrians’ detour on Eighth Avenue to be located to the west of the bike lane instead of the east.”***

The MTA is in discussions with the DOT to locate the pedestrian detour to the west side of the bike lane. All street and pedestrian impacts or mitigation efforts must be coordinated with DOT oversight.

## **II. Accessibility at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Subway Station (C/E lines)**

In your July 21<sup>st</sup> letter you also requested information regarding the MTA’s timeline for the implementation of accessibility enhancements at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Station on the 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Subway line.

The MTA is committed to improving transit access for everyone, including customers with disabilities, people traveling with children in strollers, seniors, and others who benefit from elevators, ramps and other features that make it easier to navigate the MTA system.

MTA’s approved 2020 –2024 Capital Program includes a historic \$5.2 billion for accessibility improvements, and once completed will ensure that all customers are no more than two stations away from an accessible station. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Station is one stop in both directions from an accessible station. 34<sup>th</sup> Street Penn Station has elevators located on the SE corner of 34<sup>th</sup> Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and on the NW corner of 34<sup>th</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Additionally, the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Station has an elevator located on the NW corner of W14<sup>th</sup> Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Currently, the MTA does not have the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Station slated for an accessibility enhancement; however, the MTA is committed to adding accessibility features to 95% of the currently inaccessible subway stations by 2055. The priority level of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Station for receiving accessibility enhancements will be determined as part of the planning process for future capital programs, which considers input from stakeholders and the community.

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For your awareness, the MTA selects stations for accessibility upgrades based on the following factors:

- Coverage
- Destinations
- Ridership
- Demographics
- Transfers
- Constructability and Cost

More information on this process is available at <https://new.mta.info/accessibility/selecting-subway-stations-for-upgrades>. Information on how you can further advocate for the accessibility enhancement of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Subway Station is available online at <https://new.mta.info/accessibility>.

Once again, the MTA is committed to working with you on both the West 28<sup>th</sup> Street Substation Project and the accessibility enhancement of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Station. If you have any additional comments or concerns on these issues or any MTA related matter please reach out to Ernest Modarelli, Assistant Director of Government and Community Relations, at (347) 266 –4205 or by email at [ernest.modarelli@mtahq.org](mailto:ernest.modarelli@mtahq.org).

Sincerely,



Luke DePalma  
Senior Director, Government & Community Relations

cc: Richard Davey, President, MTA New York City Transit  
Jamie Torres-Springer, President, MTA Construction and Development  
Dana Hecht, SVP Infrastructure, MTA C&D  
Sean Fitzpatrick, MTA C&D, Office of the President  
Will Schwartz, MTA State & Local Government Affairs  
Penn South Board & Management  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NYS Senate  
Hon. Richard Gottfried, NYS Assembly  
Hon. Erik Bottcher, NYC Council Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President