



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Eric T. Schneiderman

MTA Update On 181st Street Station And Service Disruptions

ERIC T. SCHNEIDERMAN August 18, 2009

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As a result of the ceiling collapse at the 181st Street Station in Washington Heights, subway service is still disrupted for commuters in Northern Manhattan and the Bronx. I share your frustration with this major inconvenience, but rest assured that my office has been in regular contact with the MTA to make sure this situation is resolved as quickly and safely as possible.

As part of our discussions, the MTA has agreed to provide daily updates on the status of the repairs as well as service advisories. Below please find a copy of today's update.

MTA NYC Transit Service Advisory

Service Suspended 181st - Dyckman

Repair & Service Update

Repair work to remove debris and any remaining loose brick from the architectural façade of

the ceiling at the 181st Street station is proceeding around the clock, but more work needs to be completed before 1 train service can resume between the 168th Street and Dyckman Street stations.

In order to resume train operation through the 181st Street station, NYC Transit has enlisted the services of a qualified contractor who will build a protective barrier that will stretch across the track bed and platform in the area of the arched portion of the historic ceiling which suffered a partial collapse Sunday evening. The barrier will be about 300' long and 32' wide at the southern half of the station. The shielding will consist of metal decking supported on 120, 12-inch deep steel beams spaced three feet apart on centers across the tracks. The beams will be supported by columns erected adjacent to the platform walls. Temporary lighting will be strung under the shielding.

Once the shielding is in place, the contractor will use it as a work platform to carefully remove any remaining loose bricks. We have a consultant on board to conduct a full investigation and design for restoration. Given the landmark status of the station, the restoration has to be done with sensitivity to preservation requirements.

Preparatory work has begun in anticipation of the arrival of the steel and other components needed to erect the shield. The contractor, under the supervision of NYC Transit's Capital Program Management Department, is moving as expeditiously as possible to complete this work in a safe manner in order to restore service. Unfortunately, this work will take days to complete, and we do not anticipate resuming 1 service until this weekend.

Despite claims to the contrary, NYC Transit is keenly aware that the ceiling was in need of repair and restoration.

Shielding was installed over the bridge and funding was proposed in the MTA Capital Plan amendment submitted in summer of 2008 to address the ceiling condition. A Master Plan for remediation and repair of a significant portion of the ceiling façade was completed in April, and the design process was started this past June by design consultants/Architects John di Domenico & Partners LP. Funding for the work, provided for in the 2005 – 2009 MTA Capital Program, was approved by the State Legislature this past Friday.

Design work is scheduled to be completed by December and the award of a construction contract is planned for early 2010. In addition, there are two other stations (168th Street 1 and 181st Street on the A) with a similar design, but only 168th Street features a brick ceiling. The consultant contract for the 181st Street ceiling will be expanded to include inspection of the 168th Street station as well. It should be noted that all NYC Transit tunnels and elevated structures are inspected on a yearly basis.

Travel Advisories

Customers in Upper Manhattan who can use the A Line at stations between 207th Street and 168th Street are strongly urged to do so in order to avoid overcrowding on the 1 Line during both the morning and evening rush hour periods. Until further notice, 1 train service will continue to operate in two sections, with a FREE shuttle bus in operation between affected stations in Upper Manhattan:

* 1 train service will operate in both directions between South Ferry and 168th St

* FREE Shuttle buses will operate between 168th St and Dyckman St

* 1 train service will operate in both directions between Van Cortlandt Park – 242nd St and

Dyckman St, skipping 207th Street. Customers at 207th Street should use the A for downtown service instead.

* The M3 bus, which operates along St. Nicholas Avenue, will be FARE FREE for northbound customers at 168th Street; in both directions at 181st Street; and, southbound at 191st Street.

Additional Transit personnel will be on hand at both the 168th Street and Dyckman Street stations on the 1 line to assist customers with travel information. This suspension in service will continue to have an impact on wheelchair customers who rely on the 1 train. Those customers are advised to do the following:

* Customers who use wheelchairs seeking Manhattan bound service at 231st Street should call 1-800-834-1173 and make arrangements for a shuttle bus to take them to 207th Street, where they can transfer to the A for downtown service

* Customers who use wheelchairs heading northbound on the 1 should transfer at 72nd Street to the M5 bus to 168th Street. At 168th Street they can transfer to a free shuttle bus that will take them to stops heading northbound. Another option for these customers would be to take the A train to 168th Street where they can transfer to a FREE shuttle bus that will make all 1 station stops heading northbound

* 1 line customers should add additional time to their commute during this outage. We apologize for the inconvenience.