



Queens Civic Congress

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Monday, May 12, 2003

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QUEENS CIVICS QUESTION 2ND AVENUE SUBWAY PLAN

Testimony To the Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Monday, May 12, 2003

Prepared and Presented by James Trent, Treasurer, Queens Civic Congress

The Queens Civic Congress is an umbrella organization representing exactly 100 civic associations throughout the Borough of Queens. In reviewing the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), we come to the conclusion that although the MTA deserves high marks during the last 25 years for improved sanitation, subway station upgrading, the introduction of the MetroCard, and lowered incidents of crime, the MTA has failed miserably on the designing of new routes. We continue to be dismayed by the proposed construction of a major new subway route that seems consciously designed to not only deny access to Queens residents, but is similarly cut off from Brooklyn, and The Bronx.

We continue to oppose the construction of a Second Avenue Subway (SAS) that fails to contain four tracks. No meaningful connection to the other boroughs can happen with two tracks. The MTA's plan for two subway lines north of 63rd Street, but only one line south of 63rd Street where the bulk of the riders would be located, signals to us that the MTA maintains no commitment to a full-length two-track Second Avenue Line, but still clings to its original discredited "stubway" plan. The proposed 14-year construction schedule, three times longer than necessary, may also be slyly crafted to allow for the eventual abandonment of the project before completion. In our platform, the Queens Civic Congress makes clear we support only the original four-borough plan.

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We further believe it is shortsighted to design the SAS to accommodate the trains of only one division. We urge the design in an innovative way to accommodate both Division A and Division B trains for maximum routing flexibility. This can be done either by moving platforms at the stations, or by retractable door saddles and running boards on Division A subway cars. By designing an ambidextrous subway line, it would be possible to allow for the #7 Line Express to enter the Second Avenue Subway at 42nd Street and provide a one seat ride to Queens riders to the southern tip of Manhattan, with the #7 Local continuing to Times Square and the Javits Center. The present design of providing an Upper Eastside one seat ride to Midtown West via the Q Line would not carry nearly as many people as a #7 connection.

In fact, the design of the SAS as outlined in the SDEIS seems to doom the SAS to be the Crosstown G train of the 21st Century: an underutilized operation that takes forever to go nowhere and is not easily accessed. Station spacing in midtown of 14 and 15 blocks, the 100-foot depth in some places, and the lack of express service would cause most riders of the Lexington Avenue Line to stay put, since the Lex would provide superior service and accessibility. Others will continue to use the buses, but with the completion of the SAS, it is likely there will be fewer buses, worsening service for those who will find the SAS not a viable option. We know that the MTA has adopted this bizarre notion that New Yorkers do not need express service since other cities don't provide express subways. New York is not other cities. Our travel times are much longer, our geographical range much wider. Many subway riders must also transfer to and from buses. It is common to spend 1-1/2 to 2 hours to get to work and that's just from Queens. One thing has been abundantly clear during the last 100 years, New Yorkers will stand on an express before they will sit on a local. The northern sections that are already built can still be salvaged by using the existing tunnels for local service, and boring beneath for the express service.

The MTA needs to understand the anger of the Queens riders. Ironically, it seems that "improving" or expanding the system always leads to worse service for us. Let us count the ways:

- 1) The Jamaica Avenue Elevated was demolished and put underground, but the new route is eight blocks shorter than the old and is no longer close to the bus terminal.
- 2) Rerouting the E from Hillside Avenue to Archer Avenue, a re-routing that no one asked for, has cut in half service and route options for both E and F riders.
- 3) Splitting the E from the F resulted in the loss of express service on the F's easternmost leg.

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4) Opening the \$900 million 63rd Street Connector, another line that nobody asked for, perhaps the worst boondoggle in American railroad history, seriously worsened service for E, F and G riders, leaving us a local V train that everyone disdains.

We demand that the MTA not compound these routing errors by moving ahead with the flawed SAS design as outlined in the SDEIS. The QCC will NOT support the current design.

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The entire Queens Civic Congress Platform may be viewed on the internet at:
<http://www.queensciviccongress.org/Platform/02platform.htm>

The next Queens Civic Congress meeting, Monday, May 19, 8:00 p.m. at 80-02 Kew Gardens Road at Union Turnpike and Queens Boulevard, features Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott and Chancellor Joel Klein.

Queens Civic Congress Members

Assoc. of Old Forest Hills Bayside Hills Civic Assoc. Bayswater Civic Assoc. Bay Terrace Community Alliance
Beachside Bungalow Preservation Assoc. Bellaire/Belvill Civic Assoc. Belle Harbor Property Owners Bellerose-
Commonwealth Civic Assoc. Bellerose-Hillside Civic Assoc. Bell Park Manor-Terrace Community Council Bowne
Park Civic Assoc. Briarwood Community Assoc. Cambria Heights Civic Assoc. Cedar Grove Civic Assoc. College
Point Civic Taxpayers Assoc. COMET Creedmoor Civic Assoc. Doug-Bay Manor Civic Assoc. Douglaston Civic
Assoc. Douglas Manor Assoc East Flushing Civic Assoc. Federation of Laurelton Block Associations Floral Park
Community Council Flushing on the Hill Civic Assoc. Flushing Heights Civic Assoc. Flushing Suburban Civic
Assoc. Forest Hills Chamber of Commerce Forest Hills Community & Civic Assoc. Forest Hills Crescents Assoc.
Forest Hills-Van Court Assoc. Fresh Meadows Homeowners Assoc. Georgetown Mews Glen Oaks Village Owners
Greater Whitestone Taxpayers Civic Association Harding Heights Civic Assoc. Harrison Place/Sunnyside Gardens
Hillcrest Estates Civic Assoc. Hilltop Village Co-op #4 Hollis Hills Civic Assoc. Holliswood Civic Assoc. Hollis
Park Gardens Assoc. Holly Civic Assoc. Howard Beach Civic Forum Hunters Point Community Coalition Hyde
Park Gardens Jackson Heights Beautification Group Jamaica Estates Assoc. Jamaica Hill Community Assoc. Joint
Community Council College Point Juniper Park Civic Assoc. Kew Forest Neighborhood Civic Assoc. Kew Gardens
Civic Assoc. Kew Gardens Hills Civic Assoc. Kissena Park Civic Assoc. Little Neck Bay Civic Assoc. Little Neck
Community Assoc. Little Neck Pines Assoc. Locust Manor Neighborhood Civic Assoc. Lost Community Civic
Assoc. Malba Civic Association Middle Village Property Owners Mitchell-Linden Civic Assoc. 97 Place Block
Assoc. Newtown Civic Assoc. North Bellerose Civic Assoc. North Flushing Civic Assoc. North Hills Estates Civic
Assoc. North Queens Homeowners Civic Assoc. North Star Civic Assoc. Oakland Terrace/Gardens Council Off
Broadway Homeowners Ozone Tudor Civic Assoc. Parkway Village Coop. Queens Braddock Civic Assoc. Queens
Colony Civic Assoc. Queens Community Civic Corp. Queens Village Civic Assoc. Ramblersville-Hawtree Civic
Assoc. Richmond Hill Historic Assoc. Ridgewood Property Owners Assoc. Robinwood Property Owners Rockaway
Action Committee Rockaway Beach Civic Assoc. Rocky Hill Civic Assoc. Rosedale Civic Assoc. Royal Ranch
Assoc. Sagamore Douglaston Civic Assoc. Southeast Queens Coalition of Concerned Neighbors Southeast Queens
Federation of Civic Associations South Ozone Park Coalition of Block Associations South Ozone Park West Civic
Assoc. Springfield/Rosedale Community Assoc. Sunnyside Gardens Harrison Place Surrey Estates Civic Assoc.
The Concerned Citizens of Laurelton The Property Civic Assoc. Union Turnpike Merchants Assoc. United Forties
Civic Assoc. United Neighbors Civic Assoc. of Jamaica Utopia Estates Civic Assoc. Utopia Improvement Assoc. Village
Mall at Hillcrest Waldheim Neighborhood Assoc. Wayanda Civic Assoc. West Cunningham Park Civic Assoc.
Westmoreland Assoc. Woodside Community Council