

April 18, 2001

Mr. Peter Kalikow
Chairman
Metropolitan Transportation Authority
347 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Re: F and G Train Re-Routing & New V Train Routing

Dear Mr. Kalikow,

The Queens Civic Congress, representing 99 civic associations throughout the Borough of Queens, wishes to protest the planned new V train routing and the re-routing of the F and G trains. We would like to document our rationale and offer a suggestion that would meet the rigid premises outlined below.

Basic Mass Transportation Premises of the Queens Civic Congress:

*A plan to improve service to one community should not result in the diminishment of services to another community.

*A new train line should enhance, but not curtail services to existing train lines.

*A plan should encourage people to use mass transit and not create obstacles that would instead encourage existing riders to take their cars. G TRAIN: We Recommend MTA Rescind Court Square Termination Plan.

We are happy to hear that you are rethinking the original plan to eliminate the current G train route between Court Square and Forest Hills. The G train, which serves northern Brooklyn and central Queens, has seen a 33% increase in ridership in recent years. The plan to terminate the G train at Court Square will add travel time for riders and thus encourage them to abandon the line in favor of autos. A further inconvenience to riders making the connection to the E and F trains at Court Square requires climbing a full set of stairs, walking a city block underground and descending another set of stairs. During rush hour, the overcrowding of the platforms by these transfers will become very dangerous.

F TRAIN: We Recommend MTA Rescind Re-routing Plan.

The negative consequences of the F train rerouting are dire. Many riders from a variety of Queens neighborhoods would be inconvenienced and disenfranchised by re-routing the F train to 63rd Street. For example:

*Many passengers are destined to Queens Plaza and 23rd Street/Ely Avenue because of three important and growing facilities in that neighborhood: the Queens Atrium Corporate Center, LaGuardia Community College and the Citibank Building.

*Thousands of other F train passengers need to go to Manhattan's revitalized east side via the 6 train on Lexington Avenue.

*Thousands of other F train riders access the 8th Avenue E train for the west side and World Trade Center via the 5th Avenue/53rd Station.

*Routing these F train riders via 63rd Street forces them to transfer at the Roosevelt Avenue Station for V or E trains to continue their journey. The Roosevelt Avenue Station is already overcrowded and dangerous due to the transfer with the 7 train. Additional transfers of V and E trains will cause life-threatening conditions there. As a further inconvenience, F train riders east of Van Wyck Boulevard will end up with no express service between Jamaica and Forest Hills and will lose a single seat ride to Long Island City and the eastside of Manhattan. We believe that a free transfer at 63rd Street to the Lexington Avenue line will most likely not be well utilized because it involves a four-block outdoor walk to 59th Street.

*These changes would clearly diminish service to many and discourage subway ridership. We are puzzled why such a plan would be brought forward.

V TRAIN: We Recommend MTA Run V as Express from Queens to Manhattan via 63 Street Tunnel to Brooklyn:

*Our recommendation is to operate the new V train as an express from 179 Street to Union Turnpike / 71st Ave / Roosevelt Ave and then to / 21st Street-Queensbridge, then travel through the 63rd Street Tunnel, with a stop at the Roosevelt Island. Once in Manhattan, travel west on 63rd Street with a stop at Lexington Avenue, then south on 7th Avenue with stops at 57th Street, 49th Street and 42nd Street. At which point, switch over to express track via Broadway N and R line with stops at 34th Street, 14th Street, Canal Street and continue on as a Brooklyn Express.

*The 63rd Street Tunnel connection is supposed to provide a 20% increase in subway service between Queens and Manhattan along the Queens Boulevard line and allow more E and F trains to run. V trains running express along with E and F trains should yield a similar increase in capacity, reduce congestion and improve ridership. Running the V train in Manhattan along Broadway which is almost parallel to the Lexington Avenue line will encourage riders who normally transfer to the 4, 5 and 6 train to stay on. We submit that the plan to run both V and F trains together along 6th Avenue does not serve any purpose.

We would like to emphasize the importance of maintaining all existing services to E, F, G & R trains while introducing a new V trains that will reduce overcrowding on the Queens Boulevard Lines and provide new alternatives to Queens riders from a wide variety of neighborhoods.

The executive and transportation committees of the Queens Civic Congress would appreciate an opportunity to discuss this proposal with responsible staff as soon as possible. Please contact me at (718) 802-5476 to arrange this meeting.

Sincerely,
Tina Chan, Vice-President
Chairwoman / Transportation Committee
Queens Civic Congress