

Heights Train Entrances: Relocations, Reductions & Closures

By Craig McGuire

Brooklyn Borough President Howard Golden recently lashed out at a Metropolitan Transportation Authority proposal that would affect straphangers in downtown Brooklyn.

The MTA proposes to close, relocate, or reduce the hours of operation of entrances and/or token booths at 11 subway stations in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens.

In Brooklyn, the Court Street-Borough Hall station and the Atlantic Avenue-Pacific Street station would be affected by the plan.

The changes are part of MTA New York City Transit's Station Rehabilitation Program, and as the proposal document reads, "would typically relocate, reduce, or remove station access in order to serve customers better, increase security, and increase station operating efficiency. The changes would typically reduce service at auxiliary entrances when lightly used and increase service at busy entrances."

Golden attacked the changes proposed for the Court Street station in testimony presented to the MTA at a community information meeting held at Brooklyn Borough Hall.

"I am concerned about the security of the estimated 100 people you indicate will have to walk 1,100 feet each night from the Clinton and Montague entrance to the entrance at Cadman Plaza and Montague Street. These riders will have to walk this long

stretch of street between midnight and 6 a.m., past the several ATM machines located there," said Golden.

"Before you close your subway entrance and ask that they walk this street in the dead of night, you must take measures to provide for their security," he stated.

Proposed changes at the Borough Hall-Court Street station include operation of the entrance and elevator at the Clinton Street end of

the Court Street station only when the token booth is staffed.

The president of the New York Straphangers Campaign, Joe Rappaport, called the MTA proposal a "mixed loaf."

"The Borough Hall station has long been in need of increased hours at the token booth on the north end, which would be accomplished under this proposal, but it would be better if it was opened all of the time,"

said Rappaport. "Riders are getting something, but unfortunately it is not enough."

Golden said, "I am also concerned about the passengers using the connecting passageway between the IRT and the BMT. The additional five hours of elevator service means that more riders will use the elevator at later hours... as well as early in the morning."

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**proposes cutting non-
construction budget places the removal
of a truly scary station on the chopping
block," said Gene Russianoff, staff
attorney for the Straphangers Campaign.**

The entrance would be closed completely when the token booth closes at midnight, eliminating the high-entrance and exit turnstiles.

According to MTA figures, approximately 400 customers would benefit from the four-hour increased service in the evening and approximately 100 in the morning.

The MTA proposal argues, "This action will increase reliability of station entry at Clinton Street, due to increased booth hours, and will increase security since customers would use the elevator and street entrances only when the token booth there is staffed."

Yet, Golden testified, "I am concerned about the

Court Street by \$44,500 annually.

Atlantic Avenue Station Changes

The proposal also calls for changes to the Atlantic Avenue-Pacific Street Station, which would decrease station operating costs at that location by approximately \$42,000 per year. The plan would remove the gate between the Brighton D and Q routes and the IRT routes 2,3,4, and 5 lines, combining the paid-zone and free-zone portions into one double-width paid-zone passageway, and close one stairwell permanently, and close another two during off-peak hours.

The proposal would decrease station operating

or Passenger Security

costs at that location by \$42,000 per year.

Calling the proposed changes to the Atlantic Avenue station a "decent change," Gene Russianoff, the staff attorney for the Straphangers Campaign, said, "The removal of the gate would help reduce problems caused by crowding there, but what is really needed is a massive overhaul of the station."

"Unfortunately, the \$750 million Giuliani pro-

poses cutting from the MTA station construction budget places the renovation of a truly scary station on the chopping block."

According to the MTA proposal, "Based on comments received from customers, community organizations and elected officials, the proposals will be revised and appropriate and alternate recommendations will be forwarded to the MTA board for its review this summer."