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New York's Second Avenue Subway Will Open Jan. 1

New Year's Eve inaugural ride set for project in the works nearly 100 years



A construction worker outside an entrance of the Second Avenue subway line in New York on Dec. 14.
PHOTO: SETH WENIG/ASSOCIATED PRESS

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After nearly a century of planning and construction, the long-gestating [Second Avenue subway](#) has an opening date: Jan. 1.

A ceremonial ride will take place Dec. 31, which had been the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's deadline for the project's opening.

The [subway line's \\$4 billion first phase](#) will run from 63rd Street to 96th Street along Manhattan's East Side. Its three new stations are expected to relieve crowding on the nearby lines along Lexington Avenue.

The new stations are located along Second Avenue at 72nd, 86th and 96th streets. They have been under construction since 2007, though planning for the project as a

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whole dates back to the 1920s.

Additional phases that would include new stations along second Avenue as part of the project are still in the planning stages.

The MTA had initially set a 2013 deadline for the project's first phase before pushing that back.

Up until Monday, the agency had declined to set an opening date for the subway system as its internal watchdogs expressed skepticism about finishing work in time. More recently, the auditors had said [testing could potentially be completed](#) by the end of December, but still expressed caution.

MTA Chairman Thomas Prendergast appeared with New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, at the Museum of Modern Art on Monday for the announcement of the date. Mr. Cuomo and the MTA that he oversees also previewed some the artwork that will be on the display at the new stations.

The MTA [commissioned four artists](#)—Chuck Close, Vik Muniz, Jean Shin and Sarah Sze —to create works in glass, mosaic and tile at the new stations.

The public art project cost \$4.5 million, officials said.

On Monday, the subway project seemed to suffer still one more delay.

Mr. Prendergast had initially said the first train, on the Q line, would leave 96th Street for passenger service at around 6 a.m. on Jan. 1.

But the MTA later bumped that back to noon.