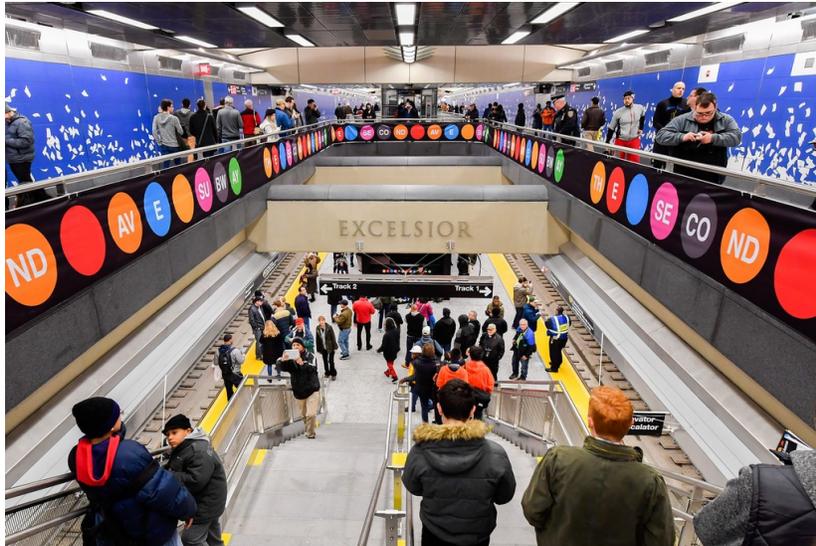




Nearly 100 years later, the Second Avenue Subway officially opens!

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Today history is made, as January 1, 2017 marks the official public opening of the long-awaited Second Avenue Subway. The New York City transit endeavor has been in the works for nearly a century, and finally after countless delays and an eye-popping \$4 billion bill, straphangers on the far Upper East Side will have access to three brand new stations at 72nd, 86th and 96th Streets.

Just before midnight yesterday evening, Governor Cuomo, MTA CEO Thomas F. Prendergast, city and state pols, members of President Obama's Cabinet, local community members, and many of the workers who helped build the new line's massive underground tunnels and stations, took the line's inaugural ride.

The ride took nearly an hour with celebratory stops at each of the new stations. Guests also had the opportunity to take in the \$4.5 million worth of tiled public art from Chuck Close, Sarah Sze, Vik Muniz, and Jean Shin adorning the stations.

At the event, Cuomo touted the "on-time arrival" of the subway, and what is the system's first major expansion in more than 50 years. The project was, in fact, first discussed in 1919 as part of a massive expansion of what would become the Independent Subway System, but the Great Depression halted plans. Indeed, budgetary shortfalls would become a hallmark of the Second Avenue Subway, as the project would be kicked up

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and then squashed over the decades as the city fell in and out of fiscal crises. Not until 2007 would we see the development of a financially secure construction plan (largely supported by bonds) that would lead to the opening of the first phase today.

In many ways, the governor is using the on-time opening of the line as a benchmark for the other infrastructure overhauls he unveiled this year. “We needed to show people that government works and we can still do big things and great things and we can still get them done,” he said at the inaugural event. “Not just for the MTA, but we have airports that we have to build at the La Guardia and JFK. We have a new Penn Station that we have to build. We have roads and bridges that we have to build. We have a new convention center that we have to build. And it’s not just what we have to build—we’re New York. We shouldn’t settle for second best on anything.”

Cuomo also applauded those who worked on the planning and the construction of the new line, “They really, really made a superhuman effort to get this done on time.”

As far as constructing the Second Avenue Subway’s remaining 13 stations go, no timeline has been unveiled, but the MTA estimates the second phase—an additional three stations at 106th, 116th and 125th Streets—will cost about \$6 billion. The city is said to be mulling ways to reduce this estimate and speed up construction. “We always do a looking-back exercise to see could we have done something better,” MTA Chairment Thomas F. Prendergast told the Journal.

Until then, New Yorkers will at the very least have three sparkling new stations to enjoy. From **January 2 until January 8**, service on the Second Avenue Subway will begin at **6 a.m. and run until 10 p.m.** Then, **starting on Jan. 9, service will operate around-the-clock.** Trains will run every six minutes during peak hours.

“By the numbers,” as shared by the MTA:

Workers excavated 583,600 cubic yards of rock & 460,300 cubic yards of soil (more than half the Empire State Building by volume)

Cubic yards of concrete used in construction: 261,038

Pounds of rebar used in construction: 48.9 million

Pounds of structural steel used in construction: 40.7 million

The new line features 35 new escalators, 12 new elevators, and 22 new stairways

The new line features 200,000 square feet of floor tiles, 130,000 square feet of ceiling tiles, and 692,000 square feet of wall tiles

Number of doors: 1,014

Number of light fixtures: 10,264

Number of floor drains: 712

Number of plumbing and bathroom fixtures: 264

Images and video courtesy of Gov. Cuomo’s office