2nd Avenue Subway Update

1. Regarding residential and commercial relocation, please clarify length of time financial arrangements are made for each tenant?

   Response: As stated in our recent response to Senator Krueger and Assemblyman Grannis' letter and included in our written response to questions sent to us by the Task Force after the September 71 meeting on this issue, eligible residential tenants normally would be entitled to up to $5,250 in rental assistance (the equivalent of $125 per month for 42 months). After completing its survey of tenants who will be displaced and the availability of comparable replacement dwellings, MTA, in consultation with FTA, will determine whether an alternative benefit program under 49 CFR Section 24.404 should be made available to residential tenants who may have difficulty procuring comparable replacement dwellings. Again, a determination as to the specific program to be provided by the MTA will depend upon an accurate survey of residential tenants to be displaced, a review of their leases, and an inventory of their dwellings. As stated at the Community Board 8 meeting on October 28, 2004, the MTA will seek to notify residential tenants of the relocation program applicable to them at least a year before they are required to relocate. As stated in our letter of May 5, 2004 to Community Board 8, for commercial tenants, compensation is limited to moving expenses and compensation for trade fixtures, determined on the basis of "sound value," which under New York law generally constitutes a fixture's reproduction cost less depreciation. This payment is typically made as a lump sum. The amount of MTA/NYCT's offer is based on the fair market value of the trade fixtures as determined by an independent appraisal. As stated at the community board meeting on October 28, 2004, commercial tenants are not entitled to rental assistance

2. Is there any chance the MTA will consider locations other than those originally planned?

   Response: In the course of the development of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and in response to suggestions from property owners, tenants and others, we have considered numerous alternative locations for station entrances, ancillary facilities, spoils shafts and other facilities associated with the Second Avenue Subway. We believe that the locations currently planned best meet the criteria cited in the FEIS for the siting of facilities and are the most suitable for the construction and operation of the new line. At the same time, as we react to additional information obtained during the preliminary engineering process, complete final design of the facilities, and undertake their construction, we will continue to try to minimize to the extent possible the impact on commercial and residential spaces.

3. Please summarize construction-bidding process on the Second Avenue Subway Project.
   What is the timeline for this process?

   Response: The construction of the Second Avenue Subway project will be undertaken in phases, utilizing multiple construction contracts. It is anticipated that the initial phase will have as many as eight major contracts and other smaller contracts that will be issued over the next seven years. The major contracts will be for tunneling, constructing subway stations, designing and installing power, signals, communications and track. The initial tunnel segment will be built utilizing a tunnel boring machine. Award of this contract is anticipated in the spring of 2005.

4. When will relocation proceedings for the tenants of East 69th Street begin?

   Response: The properties on East 69th Street are required in early 2007, and therefore we expect, at this time, to acquire the ground-floor permanent easement at 301 E. 69th Street and to acquire the 1313 and 1315 Second Avenue buildings by mid-2006 at the latest in order to have the spaces vacant by the beginning of 2007. Pre-Acquisition activities such as appraisals will probably commence in 2006.

5. What specifically is scheduled to happen in early 2005 between 91st and 94th Streets on Second Avenue?

   Response: Beginning in mid-2005, there will be construction of the TBM launch box, including utility relocation, construction of secant pile walls, decking, and soil and rock excavation.

6. What are the specific dimensions of the wall being built between 91st and 92nd Streets?

Response: The question presumably refers to the fences to enclose the area of the launch box for the tunnel boring machine (TBM) and the associated construction work area. There are three enclosed areas of 200 feet by 40 feet on each block between 91st and 94th Street on the east side of Second Avenue with breaks for the intersections at 92nd and 93rd Streets. Each will be enclosed with an 8-foot fence. They may be painted plywood or chain-link fence with fabric, or a combination of the two. They are erected to prevent public access to the site and to prevent people and property from being affected by the construction.

7. What effect will the work being done on the 66th Street shaft have on the Manhattan House, which is over 50 years old?

   Response: None.

8. Did anyone survey the Second Avenue area to see who wants or will use this subway?

   Response: Second Avenue Subway ridership projections were based on census data, development projections and current ridership data on existing transit services. A survey was not conducted.

9. What will happen to tenants scheduled for displacement if this project is abandoned in midcourse?

   Response: If a building were no longer required, we would anticipate that tenants would be able to remain in their apartments.

10. Residential relocation at 72nd Street specifically what buildings?

    Response (assuming the question is about plans for the72nd Street station):
    1313 & 1315 Second Avenue (NW comer of 69th); Block 1424, Lots 21 & 22 respectively; and 253-259 E. 72nd Street (NW comer of 72nd); Block 1427, Lot 23.

11. Are there any residential evictions or displacements scheduled for 69th Street between Second and Third Avenues? If yes, approximately when will be evictions begin?

    Response: Current plans do not call for any residential displacement on 69th Street between Second and Third Avenues. As noted in the question above, current plans call for the acquisition of 1313 and 1315 Second Avenue, which are on the northwest comer of 69th Street and Second Avenue. Construction there is not scheduled until 2007

12. Could we meet and speak to previous MTA residential tenants who were relocated in the past?

    Response: Due to privacy and confidentiality concerns, we can not give out personal information of tenants who have been relocated by MTA for past projects.

13. Since the Federal Grant does not have rent stabilization consideration, how will tenants be recompensed for long-term financial hardships?

    Response: As stated in our response to Senator Krueger and Assemblyman Grannis' questions on this issue, eligible residential tenants normally would be entitled to up to $5,250 in rental assistance. After completing its survey of tenants who will be displaced and the availability of comparable replacement dwellings, MTA, in consultation with FTA, will determine whether an alternative benefit program under Section 24.404 should be made available to residential tenants who may have difficulty procuring comparable replacement dwellings. Again, a determination as to the specific program to be provided by the MTA will depend upon an accurate survey of residential tenants to be displaced, a review of their leases, and an inventory of their dwellings.

14. What are the chances that the Second Avenue Subway project will be cancelled as indicated by Mr. Kalikow and Ms. Lappin in the New York Times Article of October 25, 2004?

    Response: The current MTA Capital Program includes $1.05 billion for the Second Avenue Subway project. This will allow us to award the first construction contract in the spring and to begin construction shortly thereafter.

15. Has the MTA looked at the large parcel of land for sale on 73rd Street between Second and First Avenues. The land parcel is 2000 sq ft. and has no built structures on it. It is close to Second Avenue and would make a good spot for an entrance or an egress or ventilation building or all three. People would be just as able to find a subway entrance on 73rd as on 72nd Street.

    Response: The parcel of land is approximately 125 feet long, fronting on to 73" Street, by approximately 16 feet deep. It is approximately 180 feet from Second Avenue. The site is too far from the proposed station control area south of 72nd Street (approx. 480 feet) and is too narrow to accommodate the three escalators required at this location. It is also too far away from the tunnel alignment to act as an effective blast shaft and tunnel ventilation location. The use of this site for Second Avenue facilities is therefore not practicable.

16. Please describe why further north at 75th Street is not a viable alternative for 72nd Street Subway stop?

    Response: Relocating the 72nd Street Station, which is now planned to extend between 69th and 72nd Streets, three blocks north to 75th Street, would create a large gap between the 55th Street Station and the 72nd Street Station and fail to serve the large number of projected riders in the vicinity of 69th Street. Keeping the station in its currently proposed location but moving one or both of the entrances planned at 72nd Street to 75th Street, would necessitate a long subsurface passageway. We generally avoid designing long subsurface passageways as they are viewed as potential safety and security risks by our customers. Additionally, such a corridor at the north end of the station would need to be constructed using cut and cover techniques because the bedrock is lower at 75th Street than at 72nd Street. This would considerably increase disruption to street and pedestrian traffic and to local businesses during construction. Utility diversions would also be needed, further adding to the time and cost of construction. The additional cost of constructing such an entrance would be at least $12 to $35 million (not including potential relocation and underpinning costs).

17. What is the feasibility of relocating the ancillary facility building off the northwest corner of 69th Street to the southeast corner as an alternate?

    Response: Locating the ancillary building in the residential buildings on the southeast corner of 69th Street and Second Avenue was considered. It was rejected as it is further from the end of the station, increasing the length of shafts and emergency exit passageways needed to connect the ancillary facility to the station.

18. Please describe the impact of the Second Avenue Subway construction on my store located at 302 East 86th Street?

    Response: 302 E. 86th Street, according to our records, is located within a building on Block 1548, Lot 49. Current plans will require the demolition of this building, so any businesses in it would need to be relocated by early 2007, under the current schedule.

19. Please explain exactly what will happen between 91st and 92nd Street regarding the venting system to be erected?

    Response: During the construction of the TBM tunnels, the contractor is required by OSHA to provide fresh air for the workers. In order to satisfy this requirement, the contractor will install a temporary ventilation system consisting of flexible duct along the roof of the tunnel. Fans to supply fresh air will be installed in the launch box area at a location selected by the contractor.

During this temporary condition (launch box construction), the equipment hatch located on the southeast corner of 93rd Street will house the temporary street ventilation shafts within the sidewalk (which was bumped out) and the shafts will stand approximately 10 to 15 feet above the sidewalk and will cover a 10 feet by 15 feet area. When the station construction is complete, the permanent ventilation shafts will be within a building located on the east side of Second Avenue between 92nd Street and 93rd Street.

20. When will bulldozers appear on 74th Street and Second Avenue?

    Response: The area near 74th Street and Second Avenue is outside of the limits affected by the construction of the shaft at 72nd Street.

21. When will 74th Street and Second Avenue become a staging area?

    Response: See response to question 20 above.

22. When will the first phase of operation commence for 74 Street and Second Avenue?

    Response: Work on the 72nd Street shaft will begin in mid-2006. As stated above, the work area does not extend as far north as 74th Street.

23. How will the depreciable value of condominium units be covered?

    Response: The Second Avenue Subway project does not anticipate a need to acquire any residential condominiums at this time. If easements in portions of common areas of condominiums need to be acquired, the value of the easement(s) will be appraised and an offer made to the owner of the common area.

24. When does the work on the 66th Street shaft site begin?

    Response: Mid-2006.

25. How will the Second Avenue and 74th Street area be affected by construction related to this project? Please be specific.

    Response: As stated above the 74th Street area is outside the limits of the staging area for the 72nd Street Shaft.

26. How long will the shaft site at 92nd Street be in operation. What is the timeline?

    Response: Work on the Launch box near 92nd Street is expected to begin in mid-2005. Second Avenue will be divided in half so that four lanes of traffic can be maintained throughout the construction period. Work will begin on the west side and last approximately eight months. Work will then shift to the east side of Second Avenue for the remainder of the construction, approximately 38 months.

27. When will 92nd Street work begin?

    Response: Work is expected to begin at 92nd Street Launch Box in mid-2005.

28. Is the MTA's Second Avenue Subway Website up to date?

Response: The material on the website remains relevant. Some presentations and brochures have dated contact addresses and phone numbers, but those have been updated on the main Second Avenue Subway's "Keeping in Touch" page. All presentations made at public meetings are not posted on the Second Avenue Subway website. The site is periodically reviewed to determine what items might be added or deleted.

29. Where exactly is the entrance proposed for 72" Street?

Response: Two entrances are proposed on 72nd Street. One is on the northeast corner of the intersection with Second Avenue and will be located within 305 East 72nd Street. The other will be on the northwest corner of the intersection at the site of 253 to 259 East 72nd Street. This entrance will be combined with an ancillary facility at this location.

30. In early 2005 you will start construction at 72nd Street. What part of the property at 301 East 69th Street will be taken?

Response: Construction in the area of 72nd Street will begin in mid-2006 (not early 2005 as stated in the question) with the construction of the shafts at 691and 72nd Streets. Construction of the 72nd Street station is scheduled to begin in 2007. Temporary construction easements for the shaft construction at 72nd Street will be required for the start construction in mid-2006. Once the shaft is completed, the easement will no longer be required. These easements are below the basement elevation of the building and are needed for temporary rock bolts that will be used to support the shaft walls during construction until the permanent construction is completed. To accommodate an entrance to the 72nd Street station at 301 E. 69th we will need to permanently acquire a portion of the building currently occupied by Patsy's Pizza and part of the laundry room in the building. In any case, no residential tenants in the building will be displaced.

31. Addendum: Why can't the shaft at East 72nd Street be placed on the west side of second avenue, where there will be a vacant lot, instead of on the east side where there is a residential building?

Response: Two shafts are necessary to enable construction of the mined cavern for the 72nd Street station, with mining operations (as opposed to cut- and-cover construction) resulting in greatly minimized surface disruption. When we originally began laying out the shaft locations, we had them located on the west side at each of the mined stations. As we collected utility information, we discovered that there is a large Empire City Subway ductbank holding up to 96 cables running along the west curb line and in the sidewalk that would complicate construction and significantly increase the cost of the utility work, as well as delay the start of construction by as much as two years according to ECS management. The cables within the ductbank would have to be cut and spliced at each shaft with potential risk of loss of telephone and other communication services during the splicing period. There is also a large, 48" water main along the west side of Second Avenue that would have to be relocated around each shaft, which would also result in service disruptions during the construction. The relocation of the ECS ducts and the 48" water main would require cut and cover constructions from 69th to 72nd Streets, which would create a significant adverse impact on the surrounding community that can be avoided by placing the shafts on the east side of Second Avenue.

It should be noted that the proposed entrance at 301 East 69th Street has limited street access from the surface because it is being constructed under existing buildings. Because it is adjacent to the shaft location at 69th Street, the construction can be done from the shaft work area. Access to the work will be from the surface, within the building, and the laydown area will be an extension of the shaft work zone on the east side. Use of the parcel at the northwest corner of 69th Street and Second Avenue is not of sufficient size, and also would not permit adequate space to swing a crane boom, thus rendering that site unusable as the construction shaft site. Finally, locating the shafts on the west side of Second Avenue would impact the operation of the Ml 5 bus route.

The MTA urges anyone with questions regarding Second Avenue Subway project to call the MTA Hotline at 1-646-252-2670. Please be sure to leave a message as this number is checked throughout the day.