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## Subway Station for 7 Line Opens on Far West Side

By Emma G. Fitzsimmons

In a West Side neighborhood long isolated from the rest of Manhattan, crowds gathered on Sunday for a truly rare sight in New York City: the opening of a new subway station. Train aficionados and local families streamed in, squealing in delight and snapping photos of the city's first new subway station in a quarter century.

As the No. 7 train pulled out of the new Hudson Yards station just after 1 p.m., destined for Times Square, the East Side and finally Queens, it opened a new chapter for the city's subway system and a signal moment for the neighborhood that the station was built to serve — and that not so long ago was a mostly forgotten, largely industrial pocket of an otherwise bustling borough.

In a city that is in so many ways defined by its subway — the 24-line, 660-mile system records more than five million rides a day — the Far West Side had been one of the few places in Manhattan with no claim to a spot on the city's subway map. But that changed on Sunday, as did the subway map (which now includes the 469th station), and long before the official opening, the promise of the subway extension lured new development to the area. Today, cranes dot the skyline near the station as buildings rise nearby, and the station's opening is expected to fuel even more growth.

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Sunday morning, at the station entrance at 34th Street near 11th Avenue, Mayor Bill de Blasio called the opening a “monumental day” for the city. The \$2.4 billion, 1.5-mile link had been a long time coming, he said, but it was worth the wait.

“This extension connects this extraordinary development happening here — a whole new city being created within our city — connects it with thousands of jobs in neighborhoods like Flushing and in central Queens, bringing people from those neighborhoods to the jobs here,” Mr. de Blasio said.

The new station is a product of cooperation among state and local officials, which has proved elusive amid recent quarreling over financing for the [Metropolitan Transportation Authority](#)'s five-year capital plan.

The Bloomberg administration agreed that the city would pay for the project as part of its effort to develop the Hudson Yards site, marking the first time in more than 60 years that the city had paid for a subway extension. But Mr. de Blasio has chafed at calls for the city to assume responsibility for a much bigger share of the financing for the state-run authority.

For ordinary No. 7 line riders, the import of the day was far simpler.

“I love the subway so much,” Christian Aristizabal, a 12-year-old train enthusiast, exclaimed before entering the station to board one of the first trains leaving the platform.

Christian takes the No. 7 train to school in Queens every day, and he was sporting a black hat with a purple No. 7 train logo.

“When I grow up and I have kids, I’ll be like, ‘I remember when I was 12 years old, and I was one of the first people to enter 34th Street-Hudson Yards,’ ” he said.

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The subway system’s expansion through the 20th century shaped many corners of the city, and officials said this extension will transform the Far West Side.

“Just like in the 20th century, when the 7 train created neighborhoods like Long Island City, Sunnyside and Jackson Heights, this extension instantly creates an accessible new neighborhood right here in Manhattan,” the authority’s chairman, Thomas F. Prendergast, said.

delivers riders to Hudson Yards — [a cluster of residential buildings and office towers](#) currently under construction — and to the newly renovated Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, the northern part of the High Line and the Hudson River waterfront. While the authority has rebuilt stations at Fulton Center and South Ferry in Lower Manhattan, the Hudson Yards station is the first addition to the system since 1989.

Officials say the extension will improve service for riders all along the No. 7 line, which runs from Manhattan to Flushing, Queens, because extra tracks were built south of the Hudson Yards station, giving the authority more room to store and turn around trains.

After more than a decade of planning and [a series of construction delays](#), the station and three blocks of parks were finally open to the public. Riders stopped to gawk at two

colorful overhead mosaics and a pair of inclined elevators that are the first diagonal lifts in the subway system.

There were only a few minor hiccups — Senator Chuck Schumer fumbled the ceremonial first swipe as he entered the turnstile with Mr. de Blasio and Mr. Prendergast, and the women's bathroom sprang a leak. The most common complaint from passengers seemed to be the long descent to the train platform, at 125 feet below street level. The Italian-made incline elevators, which have already drawn considerable scrutiny for their role in delaying the opening of the station — will be watched closely in the months ahead. Transit officials in Dallas say their system's incline elevators break down more often than vertical ones.

Some riders lamented that plans to have the extension include a second station, at 41st Street and 10th Avenue, were abandoned years ago. But on Sunday, Mr. Schumer and Daniel L. Doctoroff, the deputy mayor for economic development under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, called for those plans to be revived.

The station opening came three days after a G train derailed in Brooklyn and led to some sparring between Mr. de Blasio's office and Mr. Prendergast over the chairman's call for the city to pay substantially more toward the state-run authority's \$29 billion capital plan. On Sunday, the men were polite to each other, but in his speech at the opening, Mr. de Blasio argued that the city already provided major financing to the system and called on federal and state officials to do more.

In a city where big projects, like the Second Avenue subway, seem to drag on indefinitely, the opening of even a single stop can feel momentous. Officials say the next extension will arrive next year: The first phase of the Second Avenue subway, extending the Q line to 96th Street, is on target for December 2016.

For those who live near Hudson Yards, the opening on Sunday felt like a major breakthrough for the neighborhood. Until now, the closest stop was several long blocks away at Pennsylvania Station.

Yolande Makha, 42, rode one of the first trains out of the station with her 5-year-old son to buy food and spices at a market in Jackson Heights, Queens. She lives near the new station, but the journey to Queens seemed too difficult until now.

"It was so easy for me to go to Jackson Heights today," she said on the ride into Queens.

Among the riders waiting to enter the Hudson Yards station was Ahmasi Lloyd, 71, a self-described "urban railer" who said he had been riding the No. 7 train for 62 years. "I never thought I would see this happen," he said. "I'm just excited to be a part of history."