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New Hudson Yards Subway Station Opens on NYC's Far West Side 7 train now runs to West 34th Street and 11th Avenue

By Andrew Tangel



People make their way into the newly opened Hudson Yards subway station of the No. 7 train on Sunday. PHOTO: CLAUDIO PAPAPIETRO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

The 7 train made its maiden voyage out of Manhattan's new Hudson Yards station on Sunday, New York City's first new subway stop in more than 25 years.

Throngs of subway riders streamed into the new station near West 34th Street and 11th Avenue for the train, which departed for regular service shortly after 1 p.m.

Its extension to Manhattan's far West Side also marks a shift in how local transportation projects are funded.

The \$2.4 billion station was the result of a funding plan in which the nearby Hudson Yards development effectively

paid for transit improvements deemed crucial for its success.

"You would have seen virtually no commercial development, and you would have seen less residential development and much less hotel development" without a new subway station, said Dan Doctoroff, former deputy to Michael Bloomberg, who launched the plan when he was mayor.



Passengers on the 7 train as it departed from the new 34th Street-Hudson Yards station. PHOTO: CLAUDIO PAPAPIETRO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

To pay for the new subway station, a city-created entity issued bonds backed by the future tax revenue expected to be generated by Hudson Yards, a development that is set to eventually encompass more than 17 million square feet of commercial and residential space.

Construction projects by the state-run Metropolitan Transportation Authority often rely on a mix of city, state and federal funding. In the end, the new Hudson Yards station's price tag was paid almost entirely by the city. The MTA paid \$53 million for early engineering and planning work.

The city so far has paid \$358 million in interest on the bonds used to finance the station's construction, a City Hall spokesman said. But the city expects the Hudson Yards development to yield an additional \$37 billion in tax revenue through 2050.

MTA Chairman Tom Prendergast said a similar funding strategy could be replicated for other MTA projects, including later phases of the continuing work on the Second Avenue subway line.

But it wouldn't solve all of the MTA's problems, Mr. Prendergast said in an interview Sunday. "There's no one funding solution," he said. "It's a quilt of them."

At the 7 station's opening Sunday, a fight over transit funding loomed over an otherwise festive ribbon-cutting ceremony that included a train ride for dignitaries and the media.



The subway station, the first new one to open in New York City in more than 25 years, includes a mosaic by Xenobia Bailey, 'Funktional Vibrations,' on its ceiling. PHOTO: CLAUDIO PAPAPIETRO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

A few minutes into his public remarks, Mr. Prendergast repeated his call for additional city funding to pay for the MTA's capital-spending plan.

“We don’t want to put projects on hold,” he said. “We need to move. We need to respond to the growth that the city is seeing.”

Mayor Bill de Blasio, who declared Sunday a “great new day for New York City,” nonetheless maintained the city’s own negotiating stance: City residents already pay most of the MTA’s expenses through taxes, fares and tolls.

“We are doing our share,” he said. “We want to see the federal government step up. We want to see the state government step up.”

Transportation experts see plenty of room for innovations in ways to finance projects in an era of tight government budgets.

“There’s no question that the current system is broken,” said Lee Sander, chairman of the Regional Plan Association, a civic group, and a former MTA chief. “We’re not meeting the needs of the region.”

Riders seemed to relish the city’s new subway stop. It features the longest and highest escalators in the New York City Transit system, according to the MTA, as well as two unusual inclined elevators.

The subway’s 469th station, it is the first without columns on its platform, which is among the widest and longest in the system.

“It’s nice to have something new,” said Pamela Parlapiano, who lives nearby and said she was likely to use the station instead of walking across town to the 4, 5 and 6 lines along Lexington Avenue.

While she admired the station’s artwork, she predicted a street artist’s touch might be needed to make the stop feel more authentic. “It’ll need a little graffiti for it to be New York,” she said.