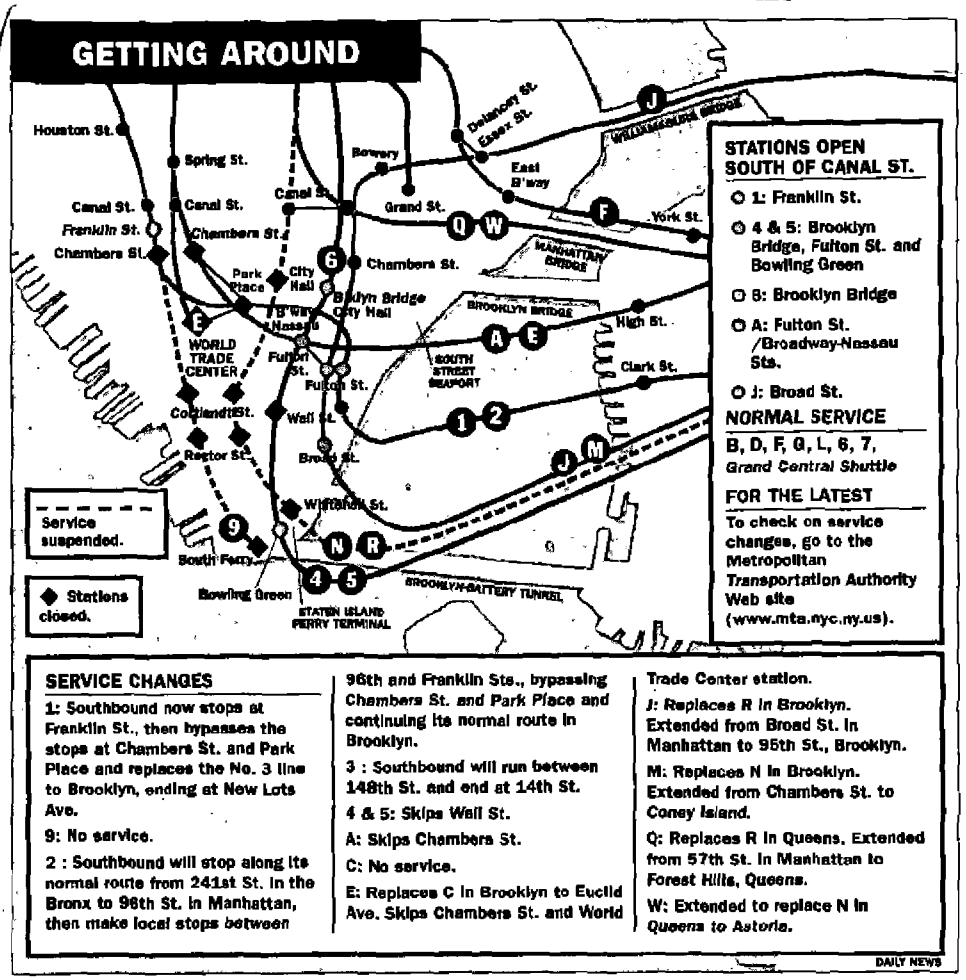
NYC 9/11 Public Portal Document

DAILY NEWS, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2001



TA chief finds N, R tunnel OK, eyes partial return of service

By PETE DONOHUE
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

The N and R train tunnel near the destroyed World Trade Center appears to be in good shape, prompting transit officials to begin considering a partial restoration of service.

Transit Authority President Lawrence Reuter walked the N and R tracks near the Trade Center yesterday to get a firsthand look at the tunnel and infrastructure, and was encouraged by the lack of damage, officials said.

Reuter, TA engineers and track workers trekked from the N and R City Hall station down to the Cortlandt St. station.

Officials could not say when service — halted since the twin towers disaster — might resume. But they said restored service could involve passing through, but not stopping at, the Cortlandt St. station, which is near the center of the rescue and recovery area.

"He's much more optimistic now, having seen it firsthand," TA spokesman Al O'Leary said of Reuter. "He was pleased to see the N and R tunnel is in good shape."

Gene Russianoff, an attorney for the Straphangers Campaign advocates group, said, "It's another sign on how resilient the subways and New York is."

'Solid wall of debris'

Earlier, officials said they were concerned the tunnels might need more structural support.

However, officials were not optimistic about a portion of the 1 and 9 line near the Trade Center.

Reuter walked the No. 1 tracks from Rector St. toward the Cortlandt St. station and found "a solid wall of debris," O'Leary said.

A beam pierced the tunnel through the center of the tracks. "It's like someone shot a beam like an arrow," O'Leary said.

In the N and R tunnels, engineers installed vibration-recording devices to determine whether the work of rescuers above ground, including the rumbling of multi-ton dump trucks filled with debris, is affecting the structural integrity of the tunnels below Church St., authorities said.

"If we can come to a conclusion that the tunnel structure will support the work of the rescue efforts, we can then talk to the city about resuming service," O'Leary said. "We have to get some good data on what the heavy equipment is doing to the ceiling of the tunnel."

Reuter said that even if the tunnel is structurally sound, the TA won't run trains without the okay of city rescue coordinators.

The loss of all N and R service forced a major revision to the subway map, including running No. 1 trains — which usually end their route at South Ferry — into Brooklyn.

The Transportation Department also set up ferry service between Brooklyn and Manhattan, and yesterday increased the number of boats running.

Brief

By PETE DONOHUE and GREG WILSON
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

After several days of riding their brakes, commuters are getting a break: The Brooklyn Bridge will be partially reopened for this morning's rush hour.

Two city-bound lanes will be reopened, though all cars will be directed north on the FDR Drive as they enter Manhattan.

With most of the streets of lower Manhattan closed to cars, the Jewish holiday Rosh Hashanah helped provide drivers with two days of almost bearable commuting into Manhattan.

But the area's roadways could again resemble parking lots today if too many workers get behind the wheel.

"It's insane," said Paul Flores, 28, whose commute from Riverdale down the West Side Highway to the Church St. cigar store he manages has doubled to more than two hours.

"Now I have to get off at 59th St. . . . and wiggle



DELAYS Police officers do spot checks at

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respite from gridlock

Lanes on B'klyn Bridge to open

through all that local traffic," he said.

Mayor Giuliani said, "Public transportation makes an awful lot of sense, rather than trying to use an automobile, because *things, I think, are going to be quite* crowded."

On Monday, when the city's workforce largely headed back to work, some commuters hit three-hour-plus delays at the Lincoln Tunnel.

New safeguards

Security is tightened at all Hudson and East River crossings in the aftermath of the attack, and vehicles are being spot-searched.

Yesterday, a bomb threat briefly prompted the Port Authority to close the Lincoln Tunnel.

Compounding traffic problems in and out of Manhattan, streets south of Canal remain closed to traffic, and portions of the FDR and West Side Highway are reserved for emergency vehicles.

Worried officials hope the gridlock in Manhattan and exasperating bridge and tunnel delays this week will steer more drivers to subways, buses, ferries and the railroad.

Several commuters said they've gotten the mass transit message.

Stockbroker Anthony Donotrio, 33, used to get in his car outside his Beechhurst, Queens, house at 6 a.m. Driving in, he'd drink some coffee and listen to Howard Stern, typically getting to his Wall Street office by 7 a.m.

These days, he's taking the Long Island Rail Road. Though he actually saves about 10 minutes, he misses his morning *routine.*

"It's actually been pretty pleasant," he said, "but I still miss my coffee and listening to Howard Stern."

Detours ahead

City Transportation Commissioner Iris Weinshall said the city has suspended alternate-side-of-the-street parking rules indefinitely to encourage drivers whose cars are already parked in Manhattan to leave them where they are.

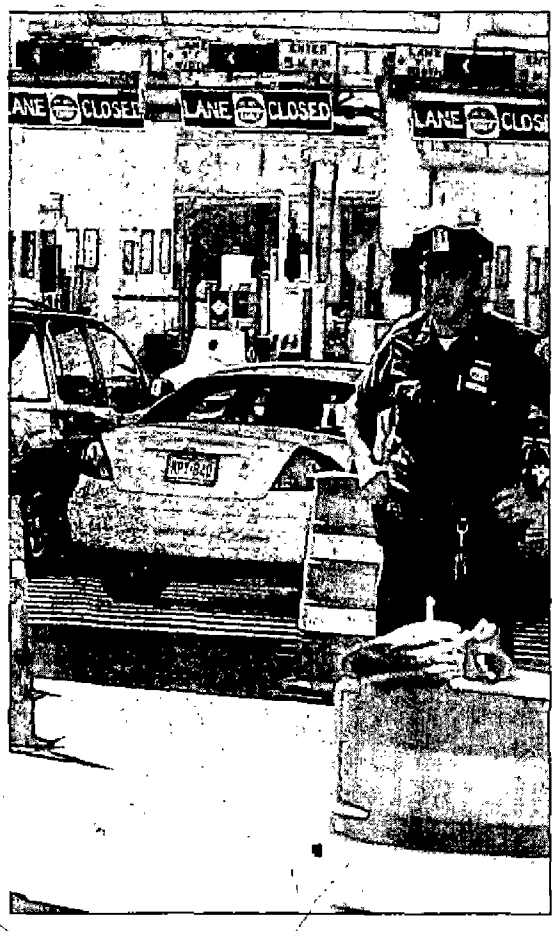
"We want cars to sit still," Weinshall said. "We want to give people the option to take public transportation."

But getting to and from work for most commuters in post-disaster New York presents challenges. Patrick Huffer, 32, of Astoria, Queens, has seen his 50-minute commute grow to an hour and 15 minutes.

Huffer usually takes the N train to his computer programming job in lower Manhattan, but said yesterday he had to battle his way on a crowded W car.

"It's *frustrating but there's nothing I* can do about it," he said, puffing on a cigarette — and noting he was 30 minutes late to work. "There aren't enough trains and they're packed," he said.

Subways may be crowded but they're still pretty reliable, said Gene Russianoff, attorney for the Straphangers Campaign.



Midtown Tunnel following World Trade Center attacks. JOHN ROCA DAILY NEWS

GETTING AROUND

FERRY SERVICE

■ Staten Island ferry
Service to Whitehall Terminal every 20 minutes from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Other times, every 30 minutes.

■ Special Brooklyn service
From the Brooklyn Army Terminal in Sunset Park, Pier 4 at 58th St. and First Ave., to Whitehall Terminal in Manhattan. Boats run *every half-hour from 6 a.m. to 9* a.m., and at 10 a.m. In the evening, ferries return from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 every half-hour; 500 parking spots available.

■ Private ferries
Normal service rerouted to Pier 11, near Wall St. and the South Street Seaport, from World Financial Center pier.

LOCAL BUSES

Service suspended south of Canal St. except for the M103 to Chatham Square and the M15 to South Ferry.

EXPRESS BUSES

Most *running from Brooklyn,* Queens and Staten Island except the X3, X25 and X90/92. All end downtown at Water and Pearl Sts.

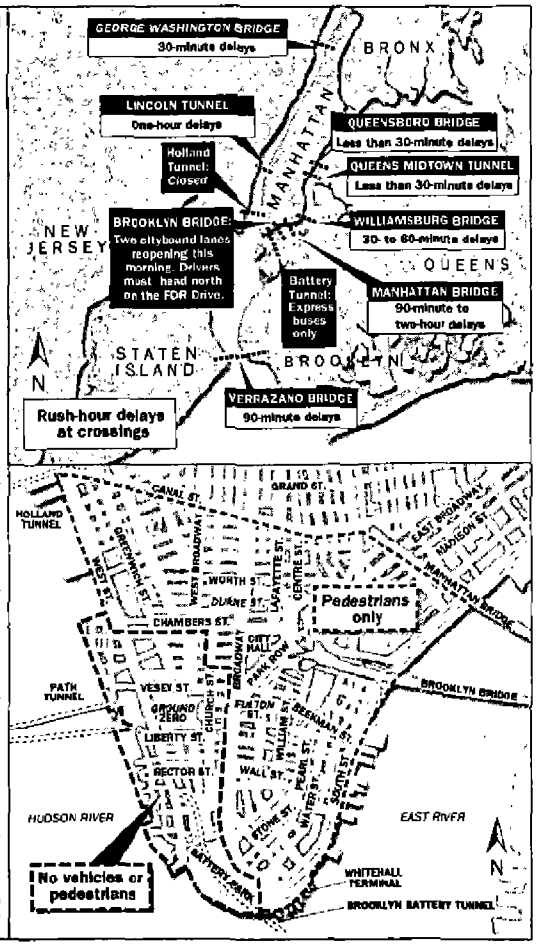
TRAINS

- *Metro-North:* Normal service.
- LIRR: Normal service.
- NJ Transit: Normal service.
- PATH: Normal service, except WTC line suspended.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

City Transportation Department:
(718) CALL-DOT.

SOURCES: Metropolitan Transportation Authority, city DOT, Daily News interviews.


GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE
30-minute delays
BRONX
LINCOLN TUNNEL
One-hour delays
Holland Tunnel: Closed
MANHATTAN
QUEENSBORO BRIDGE
Less than 30-minute delays
QUEENS MIDTOWN TUNNEL
Less than 30-minute delays
NEW JERSEY
BROOKLYN BRIDGE
Two eastbound lanes reopening this morning. Drivers must head north on the FDR Drive.
WILLIAMSBURG BRIDGE
30- to 60-minute delays
QUEENS
Battery Tunnel: Express buses only
MANHATTAN BRIDGE
90-minute to two-hour delays
STATEN ISLAND
BROOKLYN
VERRAZANO BRIDGE
90-minute delays
Rush-hour delays at crossings
HOLLAND TUNNEL
CANAL ST.
GRAND ST.
EAST BROADWAY
RIVINGTON ST.
MANHATTAN BRIDGE
WEST BROADWAY
GREENWICH ST.
WOOSTER ST.
WOOSTER ST.
WOOSTER