

- Commuter Rail: a railroad that takes people from less populated suburban areas into more populated city centers and vice versa
- Main Line: the principle route along a railroad, typically consisting stations serving of the most populated areas on a route
- Branch Line: a route that splits off from the Main Line at a certain point in order to serve less important stations

**Commuter Rail** tends to run at a lower frequency than Subways while at the same time being largely confined to one region (in our case New York) unlike Intercity Rail. Like many intercity rail systems, **Commuter Rail** tend to run alongside freight services. Trains typically run from suburban areas to more populated city centers, unlike subways which tend to take you from populated area to populated area

Proposed in the 1950s and opening on January 25, 2023, the main goal of this project was to create a **branch line** extending off of the LIRR's **main line** in Queens to the Grand Central Madison station right under the Grand Central Terminal. In order to make this happen, a long tunnel to connect to the pre-existing 63rd street tunnel along with 2 caverns to house the stations where made in Manhattan, this was done via tunnel boring machines and controlled explosions. Within the tunnels an 8 track station was built along with storage tracks that extend to 38th street. On the Queens end, similar tactics were used in order to build a tunnel under Northern Boulevard, however they also had a narrow gauge railway built in order to facilitate the transport of construction materials across the construction site. Due to the shape of the Construction site resembling a Q, it earned the nickname Q-tip. Furthermore these tunnels had 2 extra entrances

built in order to accommodate Amtrak services that would otherwise need to go on the same track as the LIRR trains.

Why did the East Side Access Project take so long?

Various issues such as the 1975 New York City fiscal crisis, disagreements with Amtrak and Covid-19 impacted the speed at which it could be built

Why did they build new lines instead of using the subway tracks the MTA already owns?

They attempted this but later decided against it in August 1966 because the LIRR trains were too large to use the subway tracks

Was there any pushback from the public for this project?

Initially, it was planned to terminate in the Turtle Bay neighborhood, which was changed in response to the negative response from its residents