VILLAGE OF SCOTIA

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October Bridge Update

Dear Village of Scotia Residents:

Sunnyside Road Bridge Replacement Project – Status Update

We recognize that there has been some confusion and frustration surrounding the Sunnyside Road Bridge replacement project. We want to clarify how the project reached this point, explain the progress made, and provide an update on what remains before construction can begin. These are the facts and not hearsay.

Bridge Ownership and the Decision to Replace

When the Sunnyside Road Bridge was closed, the bridge structure was owned by the railroad, not the Village of Scotia. While the Village was responsible for maintaining the bridge deck and made repairs over the years, the underlying structure and much of the property remained railroad-owned.

The bridge was closed after the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) identified numerous significant structural deficiencies, commonly referred to as "Red Flags."

At that point, the Village faced two choices: abandon the crossing or pursue replacing the bridge. The railroad was not going to undertake the replacement. However, the Village recognized that this bridge was too important to Scotia and the surrounding communities to remain closed permanently.

After exploring the available options, the Village moved forward with a replacement project and successfully secured federal and state funding that will cover approximately 95% of the final total project cost. The remaining costs will be addressed through additional grants and targeted Village funds. The new bridge with be a shorter single span bridge which will reduce maintenance costs, increase life expectancy and provide a safe bridge for decades to come.

Once completed, the new Sunnyside Road Bridge will be owned by the Village of Scotia.

Project Progress

Replacing a bridge over an active railroad is a complicated process involving extensive engineering, environmental reviews, regulatory approvals, property matters, and coordination among multiple agencies, including CSX, Amtrak, and NYSDOT.

While the process has taken longer than anyone would like, this is the norm and not an exception, however, significant progress has been made.

To date:

- The Design Report has been approved.
- Federal authorization for final design has been obtained.
- Preliminary and advanced design plans have been submitted to and reviewed by CSX, Amtrak, and NYSDOT.
- Comments received during the various review stages have been addressed.
- The 90% design plans, also known as Advanced Detail Plans, were submitted..
- Additional coordination, environmental reviews, and design requirements from CSX and NYSDOT have been completed.

What's Next?

The project is now working through the final details needed to go to bid.

Our goal remains to begin construction in 2027, and the project is currently on schedule to meet that target.

A Message to Our Residents

We understand the frustration surrounding the bridge and we share it.

We know how important the Sunnyside Road Bridge is to our residents, local businesses, commuters, and neighboring communities. We also recognize that years of waiting have tested everyone's patience.

Quite frankly, we wish this process moved faster, too. The Village has not lost sight of the importance or urgency of this project. I can assure you that not a week goes by without us reaching out to the agencies involved, requesting updates, pressing for answers, and pushing for the next steps to be completed.

While we cannot control every agency's review process or timeline, we can control how persistently we advocate for Scotia. That is exactly what we continue to do.

We have secured the funding, completed significant engineering and design work, and moved through many of the major hurdles. We are closer today than we have been at any point since the bridge closed.

Our commitment to this project has not wavered. We will continue pushing until we get this bridge built and this important connection restored.

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and continued support.

Mayor and Village Trustees
Village of Scotia