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Press Release

April 12, 2007

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IMMEDIATE

### Second Avenue Subway Breaks Ground

#### *First Major Subway Expansion in 50 Years Becomes Reality*

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority marked the start of construction on the first phase of the long-awaited Second Avenue Subway at a special groundbreaking ceremony this morning. The ceremony was held at the south end of one of the tunnel segments built for the project in the 1970s, as officials representing the entire MTA family joined elected officials and transit advocates to symbolically clear the way for the project's southern journey. The historic event served as the starting point for a capital project that will bring transportation relief to hundreds of thousands of commuters each day.

"This time it's for real. At long last, we will build the Second Avenue Subway," said MTA Executive Director and CEO Elliot G. Sander. "Second Avenue is the most important mass transit project in the United States. It is critical to support the region's economic growth and environmental health for the next generation."

"Today's groundbreaking is a salute to the many people who have fought for the Second Avenue Subway over the years," said MTA Chairman Peter S. Kalikow. "This day was hard to imagine ten or twenty years ago, but the start of this project highlights the rebirth of the region and the resilience of the great State and City of New York."

First proposed in the 1920s, a new subway line on Second Avenue has been desperately needed since the East Side's elevated train lines were demolished in the 1940's and 1950's. The Lexington Avenue Line has long been the subway system's most congested, and the M15 bus route, which operates along First and Second Avenues, is the busiest in the country, carrying 60,000 customers a day and operating every 90 seconds at the height of the morning and evening rush periods.

Construction of the new subway will ease the pressure on these lines, improving travel conditions for commuters while also increasing their transportation options. Transfer links will be provided for other subway lines, and the MTA Metro-North Railroad at Harlem-125th St. Additionally, the Second Avenue Subway will benefit commuters living far beyond Manhattan, support existing businesses and serve as a catalyst for new development.

The need for the new line has never been greater, with projections for the City's population growth forecasting more than nine million New Yorkers by 2030, and an additional 750,000 new jobs. A state-of-the-art, reliable and efficient mass transit system will be needed to help ease congestion on area streets and roads. The new Second Avenue line will help meet that need.

The line will be constructed in four phases. Using an existing six-block long tunnel segment (running from 99th St. to 105th St.) in combination with new construction, the initial phase will be built from 105th St. to 62nd St. with stations at 96th, 86th, 72nd, and 63rd Sts. The route will join the 63rd St. Line and then head west beneath Central Park before hooking into the Broadway Line at 57th St. and Seventh Avenue. From there it will run to lower Manhattan and Brooklyn along existing tracks.

This first phase will be an extension of Q Line service, which now terminates at 57th St. and 7th Ave. Ridership projections expect weekday usage of more than 200,000 customers when trains begin running in 2013, taking 3,800 daily vehicular trips off of local roads.

Funding for the \$3.8 billion first phase consists of a combination of Federal Transit Administration grants and local funds provided by the New York State Transportation Bond Act and the MTA Capital Program. Specifically, the 2000-2004 Capital Program included \$1.05 billion, the 2005-2009 Capital Program another \$650 million, \$1.3 billion is expected from the federal government and approximately \$875 million will be needed in the 2010 Capital Program.

Customers will access the new stations through a combination of stairways, escalators and, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, elevators from the street to mezzanine levels and from the mezzanine to the platform.

The second phase of the project will send the line north from 105th St. to 125th St. and Park Ave. During this phase of construction the existing tunnel section between 112th and 120th Streets will be utilized. The third phase will head south to Houston St. under Second Avenue. The fourth phase will extend from Houston St. to Hanover Square.

At the conclusion of the final phase the line will run 8.5 miles and be served by 16 stations between 125th St./Park Ave. and the Financial District in Lower Manhattan, providing the first rapid transit alternative to the Lexington Avenue subway since the Manhattan segment of the Third Avenue Elevated ceased operation in 1955.

When the full-length Second Avenue line is completed, the Q train will be joined by the T which will travel the length of the east side.

**Quote Sheet**

Governor Eliot Spitzer: "After decades of delay, the construction of the Second Avenue Subway is the type of bold investment required to broaden the city's diverse infrastructure and, in turn, adds the capacity necessary to support New York City's continued population and economic growth. Just as the construction of New York's original subway facilitated the historic development of the city at the turn of the last century, the Second Avenue Subway will further open up parts of the city to new economic development."

Lieutenant Governor David Paterson: "I see no better way to continue the next one hundred years of the subway system than by expanding the vehicle that made our city possible. This project will help New York face its needs as a growing city and attract new workers and businesses. It took great foresight to construct one of the most crucial public works projects in the city's history and this initiative ensures it remains a vital part of its future."

Senator Charles Schumer: "For far too long, millions of New Yorkers have had to walk a country mile only to squeeze into crowded Lexington Avenue trains. Finally, thanks to a full heaping of federal dollars to start and sustain the Second Avenue Subway, New York will have a world class new line that will boost our economy, alleviate the most crowded line in the nation and improve the lives of New Yorkers for generations to come. I will continue to fight tooth and nail for more than a billion dollars additional FTA funds in the pending full-funding grant agreement."

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton: "The Second Avenue Subway promises not only to alleviate some of the congestion on our transit system but to improve the lives of many New Yorkers. The Second Avenue Subway has been a priority on my transportation agenda since I joined the Senate in 2001. I have long been proud to support its construction because I believe this is the right investment in New York City's transportation infrastructure and I am looking forward to seeing this become a reality. This is a historic step for New York City which will have a very real and beneficial impact on the every day lives of so many New Yorkers, both now and in the future."

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver: "I am proud to have revived the Second Avenue Subway project by securing over \$3 billion in the last two capital plans. These funds will ensure that this much needed project becomes a reality for all New Yorkers. A full build Second Avenue Subway, which I have championed for decades, will improve public transportation for the residents of Lower Manhattan and help alleviate commuter congestion on the Lexington Avenue line."

Federal Transit Administration Administrator James Simpson: "A subway line running the length of Manhattan has been imagined, planned, dreamed of, begun, abandoned, and, now, rediscovered. The Federal Transit Administration is proud to play a part in this long-deferred transit dream and we will continue our important work with MTA to complete the Second Avenue Subway as soon as possible."

Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney: "Ten years ago, when we first started talking about the possibility of building a Second Avenue Subway, people scoffed. I have been championing the project in Congress because it is absolutely crucial for economic growth in our region. We're here today because of an extraordinary collaboration by the state and the federal governments - a willingness by the state - thanks to the leadership of Speaker Silver - to provide substantial funding for the project, the dedication of the MTA and the FTA in addressing the environmental issues and the support by New York's voters of the Transportation Bond Act and the hard work of countless engineers in assessing the feasibility of the project. East Siders and other commuters have great reason to celebrate - the Second Avenue Subway is coming!"

Mayor Michael Bloomberg: "We need to grow capacity and improve service to meet the challenges of the future and get people out of cars and onto mass transit. This is an investment in our future that we can't afford not to make."

City Council Speaker Christine Quinn: "For years, the Second Avenue Subway line has been a lot like the rumors of alligators living in the sewers. Today, we move toward making a project that has been more of an urban legend into a reality. The Second Avenue subway line will ensure our city's infrastructure keeps pace with both population and economic growth. It is a project that will benefit nearly every New Yorker."

Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer: "It's been a long time coming, but we are now finally on the right track for good. The Second Avenue Subway will bring unparalleled economic and quality of life benefits to Manhattanites and will ensure the economic competitiveness of our metropolitan region for decades to come. I'd like to thank Governor Spitzer and his leadership at the MTA, Mayor Bloomberg, Speaker Silver, Congresswoman Maloney, and the many community leaders and transit advocates that took this plan off of the shelf and turned into a reality."