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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

LIRR's Massapequa Station Is Fully Reopened to the Public After \$20.5 Million Upgrade Paid for by MTA Capital Plan

Project Comes in On-Time, On-Budget & Without Service Interruptions

MTA Long Island Rail Road President Patrick A. Nowakowski presided this morning at a ribbon cutting ceremony officially reopening Massapequa Station following a \$20.5 million rehabilitation project that transformed an aging structure into modern transportation facility.

Nowakowski was joined at the event by local elected officials, community leaders and commuters who have watched patiently over the last two years as the Railroad labored to rebuild the station while continuing to provide normal daily and weekend train service.

"That was no easy task, but the station never closed" said Nowakowski, "We are extremely grateful for the patience and cooperation of our customers, who faced some inconveniences as our work progressed. Our goals were to maintain service while bringing this project in on-time and on-budget. We accomplished all three and the result is that Massapequa has a train station it can be proud of."

Nowakowski added that those goals could not have been achieved without the assistance of the Town of Oyster Bay throughout the construction period.

"We want to thank Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor John Venditto and his team for being a great partner and helping to coordinate and communicate to the riding public the changes in pedestrian flow and parking that were necessary during construction."

New Elevated Platform

The Massapequa Station Improvement Project, funded by Governor Cuomo and the State Legislature through the MTA Capital Plan, got underway in the spring of 2013. It included the replacement of the 12-car elevated platform, station canopy, platform waiting room, staircases, elevator, escalator, lighting, public address system, signage and the installation of a station-wide, video security system. It's the most significant investment by the LIRR since the station was raised from street level in 1953.

MTA Arts & Design

The station's finishing flourishes include permanent public art works commissioned by MTA Arts & Design, showcasing the work of artist Peter Drake, a Long Island native. Drake painted station scenes of an earlier time which were then transformed into a series of 17 laminated glass windows that were used to enclose the waiting room and placed above the stairways as well as images that were turned into a series of mosaic tiles.

Inspired by his father's model train collection, Drake's work depicts a railroad station scene from the early 20th Century populated by town folk similar to the lead figurines that populated his dad's train layout. The largest example of Drake's work, visible from nearby Sunrise Highway, are the hand-painted mosaics on the platform walls featuring more mythic station scenes. The artist's original renderings were fashioned into glasswork by Peters Glass and into mosaic by Mosaika Art & Design.

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony & Praise from Elected Officials

Nowakowski welcomed the numerous local public officials who had long advocated for station improvements to the dedication ceremony and asked them to join him in the ceremonial ribbon cutting in front of Massapequa Station ticket office.

State Senator Michael Venditto (R-Massapequa) said: "The Massapequa LIRR Train Station is a vital link between many members of our community and New York City. I am pleased that we could all work together to secure funding and bring an investment to the Massapequa community of over \$20 million. The new improvements have transformed the Massapequa train station into a modern, safe transportation facility that we can be proud of."

State Senator Kemp Hannon (R-Garden City) said: "The LIRR is to be commended for completing the Massapequa train station rehabilitation project, which came in on-time, on-budget and without service interruptions to the thousands of commuters who use this station daily. Riders, who have shown great cooperation and patience, will now be rewarded with a new elevated platform, waiting room, elevator and escalator, and other renovations. In addition, the LIRR is moving forward with more improvements to assist riders who commute to New York City every day."

Assemblyman Joseph Saladino (R-Massapequa Park) said: "We are thrilled to have this railroad station completed on budget and retrofitted in a state of the art manner. Our community can be proud that their representatives fought for them and delivered this important project. I hope the Long Island Rail Road can continue to upgrade all of our stations to provide riders with the best facilities possible."

Assemblyman Tom McKeivitt (R-East Meadow) said: "This station renovation will improve the experience for those who need the LIRR to commute, as well as enhance the railroad's operations. I am pleased the LIRR is making improvements to help our residents."

Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor John Venditto: "The Town of Oyster Bay commends the LIRR for seeing this much needed Massapequa Train station renovation through to its conclusion in a safe and expeditious manner. This project represents a significant financial investment by the LIRR in Massapequa. The station combines both aesthetics and functionality and will undoubtedly serve our commuters well for years to come."

Also in attendance was Barney Fortunato, Jr., president of Fortunato Sons, the general contractor for the project. Fortunato Sons, which is based in Bohemia, is a fourth generation family enterprise that has now completed over \$75 million worth of construction directly for the Long Island Rail Road during the past two decades.

Massapequa Pocket Track & East Side Access Nowakowski also provided an update on the second LIRR infrastructure improvement underway in Massapequa, the construction of a \$19.6 million pocket track just east of Massapequa Station that will be key to improving train service in the future for the almost 5,000 customers who use the station every weekday and the 60,000 customers at other Babylon Branch stations. The Massapequa Pocket Track, is one of six East Side Access Readiness Projects the LIRR is undertaking at strategic locations on Long Island in support of East Side Access, the \$10.7 billion infrastructure improvement that will enable Long Islanders to travel directly to Grand Central Terminal and the East Side of Manhattan for the first time.

Nowakowski said the Massapequa Pocket Track project is well underway and scheduled for completion in 2017. One of the most visible parts of the pocket track work was the installation of a new railroad bridge over Unqua Creek, part of the Massapequa Preserve, in 2014.

The pocket track could begin paying dividends as soon as it is operational in 2017, providing the LIRR with greater service flexibility along the Babylon Branch. Then, with the expected inauguration of East Side Access service in 2022, the pocket track will allow the LIRR to turn trains for return trips to Penn and Grand Central Terminal without traveling out to Babylon.

"East Side Access promises to be a transformational event in the history of transportation on Long Island," said Nowakowski. "It will cut commuting time by up to 20 minutes in the morning and up to 20 minutes in the evening for Long Islanders who commute to Manhattan's East Side and will ease our traffic flow in and out of Penn Station, making that trip easier as well."