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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

### LIRR Expansion Project Forum Draws Interest From More Than 700 Local Women, Minority and Veteran Owned Businesses

**Local Businesses Signed Up to Learn How to Work on Transformational Project to Modernize the LIRR; Proposed Project Would Add 3rd Track to LIRR Main Line, Eliminate 7 Grade Crossings, Enhance Stations, and Add Parking and Sound Barrier Walls**

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) announced today that more than 700 local women, minority and service-disabled veteran owned businesses have registered to participate in a special information and networking session on how they can work on the proposed LIRR Expansion Project.

"The fact that more than 700 local companies have registered for this informational event shows the tremendous amount of interest among local businesses – including those owned by women, minorities and service-disabled veterans – to be involved in the LIRR Expansion Project," said MTA Chief Diversity Officer Michael J. Garner.

The project, if approved, would add a third track to the congested two-track Main Line in Nassau County, among many other commuter and local community benefits. It is a completely different proposal from prior attempts to add a third track to the bottlenecked Main Line – with the track built entirely within the existing LIRR right-of-way, not a single home will need to be relocated for the project. The project's other elements that improve safety and quality of life for customers and local communities in the project corridor include:

- The elimination of all seven grade crossings in the project corridor, to improve safety, reduce traffic congestion and reduce noise from legally mandated train horns and gate bells
- Station upgrades including longer, full-length platforms that reduce boarding time at stations
- The installation of sound barrier walls to reduce noise for homes along the tracks
- The addition of more than 2,000 new parking spots in the project corridor

The project would reduce delays and improve reliability for hundreds of thousands of commuters throughout all of Long Island due to the interconnected nature of the LIRR's 10 branches, officials said in an announcement earlier this week.

The event, being held on March 30 from 8 a.m. to noon at Antun's in Queens Village, helps fulfill Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's directive to raise the bar for recruiting small, local and certified Minority, Women and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (MWDBEs), as well as Service Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOBs), for state projects. The project has contract goals of 30 percent for MWBEs and six percent for SDVOBs.

The project would require many different types of businesses from across different market sectors to participate, including:

- Construction and Landscaping
- Architecture and Engineering
- Professional Services
- General Services
- Materials Suppliers

Since the inception of the MTA's Small Business Mentoring Program (SBMP) for small construction industry contractors, 162 contracts totaling \$230.3 million have been awarded to program participants and 84 small business loans have been approved, totaling \$11.6 million.

The MTA and its agencies provide NYS certified MWBE and MTA certified DBEs with equal access to procurement and contracting opportunities. The MTA Department of Diversity and Civil Rights administers a DBE program that encourages and assists such firms seeking a foothold in the region's vibrant transportation economy.

The event is being held in conjunction with Empire State Development, the umbrella organization for New York's two principal economic development financing entities: The New York State Urban Development Corporation and the Department of Economic Development. In an effort to increase efficiency and enhance the delivery of initiatives, these two agencies have worked together seamlessly since 1995. Their singular mission is the facilitation of business growth and job creation across New York State.

Local businesses wishing to attend the event can learn more about it and register until March 27, at [www.diversityagenda.com/lirrexpansion](http://www.diversityagenda.com/lirrexpansion). Walk-ins are welcome if space capacity has not been reached. Interested businesses can also questions at [info@diversityagenda.com](mailto:info@diversityagenda.com) or by calling (855) 646-2700.