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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

### MTA Announces Second Public Meeting on Reconstruction of L Line's Canarsie Tunnel

#### ***Manhattan Meeting will Follow Previously Announced Brooklyn Meeting; Robust Community Engagement on Construction Options and Alternate Service Plans***

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced a second public meeting to discuss future reconstruction work on the Canarsie Tunnel, which carries the  train under the East River between Brooklyn and Manhattan.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, May 12 at 5:30 p.m. at the Salvation Army Theatre at 120 West 14th Street in Manhattan.

MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas F. Prendergast and MTA New York City Transit President Veronique "Ronnie" Hakim made the announcement in conjunction with elected officials representing 14<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan, including U.S. Representative Carolyn B. Maloney, New York State Senators Brad Hoylman and Liz Krueger, New York State Assembly members Brian Kavanagh, Deborah J. Glick and Richard N. Gottfried, New York City Council Members Rosie Mendez, Dan Garodnick and Corey Johnson and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer.

"Superstorm Sandy caused unprecedented damage to our infrastructure and the Canarsie Tunnel likely suffered the greatest damage of all," President Hakim said. "A project as impactful as this one requires extensive engagement with all of the communities that will be affected. With the announcements of this Manhattan public meeting and the previously announced Brooklyn meeting, we have officially launched the effort to solicit feedback from the public on potential construction options and ideas for alternative service to mitigate impacts on  train riders."

Any 24/7 closure of the Canarsie Tunnel's two tubes is unlikely to begin before January of 2019, leaving ample time for both the selection of a construction plan and the development of service alternatives. At the same time, procurement of design and construction services for the project must begin to move forward this year to ensure that hundreds of millions of federal dollars that have been secured by Rep. Maloney, Rep. Nadler and the entire New York Congressional delegation are not lost.

MTA New York City Transit is weighing the operational and engineering impacts of multiple proposals for rebuilding the Canarsie Tunnel's two tubes. The public meetings will include an in-depth discussion of the potential construction approaches currently under consideration. They will also include an open house at which community members can discuss their concerns with MTA staff; a presentation from MTA and NYC Transit leadership and technical staff; and a question and answer period.

The first meeting, announced Monday, will be held on Thursday, May 5 at 6 p.m. at the Marcy Avenue Armory in Brooklyn. Following the meetings, MTA will continue an aggressive community engagement process – meeting with residents, businesses, community boards, merchant groups and civic associations in Brooklyn and Manhattan communities along the L line.

"I am thrilled we now have a concrete commitment for a meeting in Manhattan about the impact of the  train tunnel reconstruction, following the May 5 Brooklyn meeting," Congresswoman Maloney said. "The plan should take into account the needs and concerns of the people impacted on both ends of the line, as residents and business in Brooklyn and Manhattan have different priorities, concerns and circumstances."

"As the City and State work to rebuild the Canarsie tunnel, which suffered extensive damage during Hurricane Sandy, it's essential that the MTA engage communities that will be disproportionately affected by its closure," Senator Hoylman said. "These public meetings are a good first step in that process. I want to thank MTA Chairman Prendergast and MTA NYC Transit President Hakim for committing to an open and inclusive process, and look forward to working with my colleagues to help ensure proper community input."

"With interruptions in service still well over a year away, I am pleased to see that the MTA is engaging with our communities and their elected representatives now, while there is still time to address the serious concerns this project raises," Assembly Member Kavanagh said. "I hope that this marks the start of a process that will allow the MTA to do the work needed to ensure the trains run safely and efficiently, while doing everything possible to minimize the negative impacts of the project on riders and our neighborhoods, and providing effective alternative transit options."

"I am pleased that the MTA is communicating with the local neighborhoods which would be affected by any shut down of the  train. Thousands of residents and businesses in both Manhattan and Brooklyn would be affected adversely by this potential multi-year lack of service," Assembly Member Glick said. "I look forward to working with the MTA, the community and other elected officials to ensure that appropriate and effective alternatives to service are implemented."

"Public notification and community consultation are essential for any infrastructure project, particularly one entailing the full reconstruction of a subway tunnel on one of New York's busiest subway lines," Assembly Member Gottfried said. "I look forward to working with the MTA, elected officials, and local leaders and residents to mitigate the project's impact on riders and to ensure that the concerns of communities affected by the project are taken into consideration every step of the way."

"The need for repairs to the Canarsie tunnel is real and pressing," Borough President Brewer said. "But any closure must be done with robust community engagement and equally robust bus and ferry service alternatives for the New Yorkers who rely on the **L** train for their livelihoods. I thank the MTA for starting its conversation with the affected communities now, and hope the MTA's leadership will take to heart what they hear from residents and business owners."

"I applaud the MTA for holding public hearings on the reconstruction of the **L** line's Canarsie Tunnel. Many constituents in Council District 2 use the **L** train to travel to Brooklyn, as well as crosstown on 14th Street," Council Member Mendez said. "The public deserves an opportunity to have their concerns addressed and the MTA is providing an opportunity for that to happen."

"We are going to need a high level of engagement between the MTA and commuters to navigate this project," Council Member Garodnick said. "I appreciate that the MTA is having these meetings to share its plans, and look forward to a robust public discussion."

"I am encouraged that the MTA is conducting this community outreach," Council Member Johnson said. "Robust community outreach and public input are an essential part of public works projects, especially projects of this scope. I look forward to working with the MTA and the community to ensure that any repair work is done with as little impact as possible."

The Canarsie Tunnel suffered extensive damage to tracks, signals, switches, power cables, signal cables, communication cables, lighting, cable ducts and bench walls throughout a 7,100-foot-long flooded section of both tubes. Bench walls throughout those sections must be rehabilitated to protect the structural integrity of the tubes.

During this rehabilitation process, the MTA will also make significant improvements to stations and tunnel segments closest to the under-river section. New stairs and elevators will be installed at the Bedford Av station in Brooklyn and the 1 Av station in Manhattan, and three new electric substations will be installed, providing more power to operate additional trains during rush hours.

MTA New York City Transit has taken several steps to ensure the Canarsie Tunnel remain reliable until permanent repairs can be performed. The agency is inspecting the tunnel's walls more frequently, and has installed redundant power cables to ensure the pumping system will operate without interruption.

The Canarsie Tunnel was one of nine underwater tunnels that flooded during Superstorm Sandy, all of which required extensive rehabilitation and repair. Some of that work has been accomplished during night and weekend closures, while the **R** line's Montague Tunnel under the East River was closed for more than a year and the **G** line tunnel under Newtown Creek was closed for two months, both for complete renovations.