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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

### MTA Announces Plan to Engage with Community on L Train Tunnel Reconstruction Work

#### ***Elected Officials Representing Brooklyn and Manhattan Ensure MTA Will Consult with Residents, Businesses and Others on Construction and Alternatives***

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) has developed a plan to engage in detailed community consultation on how to proceed with necessary repairs for the Canarsie Tubes, which carry the  train under the East River between Brooklyn and Manhattan.

MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas F. Prendergast and MTA New York City Transit President Veronique “Ronnie” Hakim announced the new plan after meeting with a delegation of elected officials led by Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney, representing neighborhoods in both boroughs that will be affected by the construction project. Senator Martin Malavé Dilan, Assemblyman Joseph R. Lentol, and City Council Member Stephen Levin also attended the meeting, where Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams and Senator Daniel Squadron were also represented.

“The Canarsie Tubes were heavily damaged during Superstorm Sandy when they were flooded with 7 million gallons of saltwater, which has eaten away at the metal and concrete materials that make up the tubes’ infrastructure,” Chairman Prendergast said. “We need to bring the Canarsie Tubes to a state of good repair, and we need to work closely with the community and its elected officials to determine the best way to proceed with this work and provide travel alternatives while it occurs.”

“I am thrilled that the MTA has agreed to work with the elected officials and the community to make the  train repairs and upgrades as undistruptive as possible,” said Congresswoman Maloney. “The MTA has been awarded nearly \$5 billion in federal Sandy aid and has prioritized repairs to the flood-damaged 100-year-old Canarsie Tubes. Upgrades to the Bedford Avenue and 1st Avenue stations – two old stations that are inadequate to handle the huge surge in ridership in recent years – are great news for the  train. Our meeting with Chairman Prendergast was productive, and I am very pleased that the MTA has agreed to host community engagement meetings in the near future so that all my constituents who will be affected by the work can be sure that their concerns are heard.”

The MTA will seek to use as much federal Sandy relief funding as possible to perform this work. Congresswoman Maloney was instrumental in obtaining these relief funds and ensuring they can be allocated for rebuilding the Canarsie Tubes. Cost estimates and construction timelines for the project will be developed as planning and design work commences, and no timeline has been established for work to begin on the Canarsie Tube itself.

The MTA has committed to meet regularly with residents, businesses and others affected by the Canarsie Tube work, as well as to consult with elected officials representing the affected areas, before making any decisions about the construction process and service alternatives. Discussions at the meeting made clear that further study of these topics is necessary before any final decisions are made, and that the MTA will take community concerns into account.

MTA New York City Transit is weighing the operational and engineering impacts of different proposals for rebuilding the Canarsie Tubes. This agreement on a framework for community consultation ensures that the MTA will be able to consider those technical issues within the larger context of the concerns expressed by residents, businesses, community boards, merchant groups and civic associations.

“By soliciting input from the affected communities as this process moves forward, we will develop a stronger and more responsive plan for how to accomplish this vital work while respecting the concerns of those who rely on the  train,” President Hakim said. “We share the goal of frequent and reliable  service between Brooklyn and Manhattan, and we will work closely with those who will be most affected by this work.” “As news of a potential long term closure of the  Line spread, riders and businesses rightfully feared the worst. The meeting with New York City Transit and the MTA represents the beginning of a dialogue with the  Line community. I appreciate the MTA’s commitment to working with our offices and recognizing the value of the community’s input before finalizing plans to repair the Canarsie Tube,” said Senator Dilan.

“The impact these repairs will have on the community is detrimental to thousands of riders and hundreds of businesses. However, our number one priority is to ensure everyone’s safety,” said Assemblyman Lentol. “By engaging the community in the planning and a dialogue about the need for the repairs and finding ways we can mitigate some of the difficulties we will face, together we are taking the necessary steps towards an inclusive and transparent process. As many of my colleagues in the legislature know well, some of the finest solutions to problems come from our constituents.”

“The MTA, led by Chairman Prendergast, had a very productive meeting with elected officials from Brooklyn on the situation with the  train. The meeting provided clarity for us on the significant damage to the line from Sandy as well as potential courses of actions. While a timeline and an exact course of action are not yet clear, we are confident that the affected communities will have good and productive dialogue with the MTA moving forward,” said Council Member Levin.

“Brooklynites who live and work along the path of the  train, from Canarsie to Williamsburg, need to be part of a constructive conversation with the MTA on the impending Canarsie Tube repairs,” Borough President Adams said. “The impact of the rehabilitation work will be significant on riders, and they deserve nothing less than a comprehensive mitigation strategy, as well as a transparent dialogue while that strategy is developed. The MTA’s

commitment to community engagement is an important component of the eventual solution to this civic challenge, and I will be working hand-in-hand with residents and business owners to ensure we reach the right destination."

"From full line reviews, to the **R** and **G** train closures, we've found that when community engagement happens, so do results," said Senator Squadron. "It's important to have an open conversation, with all stakeholders at the table, on all options available. That's how we can understand what needs to happen to keep the **L** train on track, and how to mitigate impacts. I thank the MTA for agreeing to this kind of engagement – I'll continue to work with the community and colleagues on a plan that works for riders."

The **L** train carries 225,000 customers through the Canarsie Tubes on an average weekday, and is the main transit route for large sections of the Williamsburg and Bushwick neighborhoods of Brooklyn. Since 1990, ridership at **L** train stations has more than doubled, and ridership at the Bedford Ave station in Brooklyn has more than quadrupled.

The Canarsie Tubes 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 Tubes remain reliable until permanent repairs can be performed. The agency is inspecting the tunnels' duct banks more frequently, and has installed redundant power cables to ensure the pumping system will operate without interruption.

The Canarsie Tubes are one of eight under-river 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** train's Montague Tubes under the East River were closed for more than a year for a complete renovation.