

# Governor Directs MTA to Begin Environmental Review Process for Transformative New Transit Line

Would Serve More than 100,000 New Yorkers and Connect to Up to 17 Subway Lines and the Long Island Rail Road, Expanding Access to Jobs and Supporting Economic Development

Travel Time End-to-End Expected to be Less Than 40 Minutes

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced plans to move forward with the Interborough Express as part of her 2022 State of the State. Governor Hochul is directing the MTA to immediately begin the environmental review process for this transformative project, the first step in building this major infrastructure investment that would connect communities in Brooklyn and Queens to as many as 17 subway lines and the Long Island Rail Road.

"It's time to invest in the bold, cutting-edge infrastructure projects that will make a real difference in the lives of everyday New Yorkers," **Governor Hochul said.** "New Yorkers deserve reliable public transit that connects them from work to home and everywhere in between. The Interborough Express would be a transformational addition to Brooklyn and Queens, cutting down on travel time and helping neighborhoods and communities become cleaner, greener and more equitable."

"This project would smartly repurpose existing infrastructure to add mass transit and create access to jobs, education, and opportunity for so many residents of Queens and Brooklyn," **said MTA Acting Chair and CEO Janno Lieber.** "I applaud Governor Hochul's leadership, and we are enthusiastic to

work with her, and Federal and State partners to advance the Interborough concept."

Governor Hochul will direct the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to begin the environmental review process for the Interborough Express. This historic project would use the existing right of way of the Bay Ridge Branch, which is a freight rail line that runs through Brooklyn and Queens, connecting the ethnically and economically diverse neighborhoods of: Sunset Park, Borough Park, Kensington, Midwood, Flatbush, Flatlands, New Lots, Brownsville, East New York, Bushwick, Ridgewood, Middle Village, Maspeth, Elmhurst and Jackson Heights with several new stations in communities not currently served by rail transit.

If adopted, this new service would improve transit and job access to underserved communities along this corridor that is currently home to about 900,000 residents and 260,000 jobs, and with growth expected by at least 41,000 people and 15,000 jobs in the next 25 years. For many residents along this corridor, crossing from neighborhood to neighborhood is slow and tedious because existing subway lines are oriented towards Manhattan, even as many new work opportunities, schools, and services are located in the outer boroughs. The project would provide critical mobility, creating better links for travel to and from Manhattan as well as key connections among neighborhoods, across boroughs, and opening up new opportunities for reverse commuting into Nassau and Suffolk Counties.

Each day, more than 100,000 commuters make daily trips within or across Brooklyn and Queens, often relying on buses that get caught in traffic along a tangled and crowded street network. Results from this historic and necessary step could lead to a new service that would provide end-to-end travel time of less than 40 minutes, although most trips would be along shorter segments of the line. This would provide significant time savings for

interborough Brooklyn and Queens trips compared with existing transit options.

In addition to transit service, the existing Bay Ridge Branch corridor can service cross harbor rail freight and would dramatically reduce truck congestion regionally and expand goods movement facilities, thereby fortifying supply chains still struggling to recover from the pandemic. Transportation planners believe that cross harbor rail freight and passenger service on the Interborough Express can work together in concert, which could be a game-changer for the region. To that end Governor Hochul is also directing the Port Authority to complete environmental review for the Cross Harbor Rail Freight Tunnel.