

**EMPIRE STATION COMPLEX
COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP**
DATE/TIME: May 18, 2021 / 4:00pm EST
SUBJECT:
**Through-Running at Empire
Station Complex & Penn
Expansion**
WEEK #: 4
MEETING LEADER: MTA (with NJT & Amtrak)

The following minutes prepared by Empire State Development (ESD) are a summary of the meeting and are intended to capture only the main points made in the meeting. Discrepancies should be reported to Gabriella Green at ESD **within three (3) calendar days** of distribution of this document.

PARTICIPANTS:

NAME	ORGANIZATION / AGENCY	NAME	ORGANIZATION / AGENCY
Hon. Gale Brewer	Manhattan Borough President	Eugene Sinigalliano	Resident Representative
Robert Atterbury	U.S. Congressman Jerrold Nadler	Alfred Cerullo	Grand Central Partnership
Robert Gottheim	U.S. Congressman Jerrold Nadler	Basha Gerhards	Real Estate Board of New York
Shelby Garner	U.S. Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney	Jessica Walker	Manhattan Chamber of Commerce
Betsy Schmid	U.S. Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney	Rachel Weinberger	Regional Plan Association
Dario Quinsac	NYS Senator Robert Jackson	Tom Wright	Regional Plan Association
Maia Berlow	NYS Senator Brad Hoylman	Wendy Hilliard	Women's Sports Foundation
Jacob Priley	NYS Senator Brad Hoylman	Liam Blank	Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Wendi Paster	NYS Assemblyman Richard Gottfried	Felicia Park-Rogers	Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Matt Tighe	NYS Assemblyman Richard Gottfried	Karim Ahmed	ReThinkNYC
Lizette Chaparro	Manhattan Borough President's Office	Barry Caro	ReThinkNYC
Laurie Hardjowirogo	NYC Councilman Corey Johnson	Sam Turvey	ReThinkNYC
Kevin Finnegan	Labor lawyer, formerly 1199 32BJ	Simeon Bankoff	Historic Districts Council
Kyle Bragg	32BJ	Tokumbo	New School
Denis Johnston	32BJ	Shobowale	
Marrissa Williams	32BJ	Marilyn Taylor	University of Pennsylvania
Gary LaBarbera	Building & Construction Trades Council of NY	Larry Lennon	MTA
Santos Rodriguez	Building & Construction Trades Council of NY	Peter Matusewitch	MTA
Brook Jackson	Partnership for New York City	Juliette Michaelson	MTA
Elizabeth Goldstein	The Municipal Art Society of NY	Robert Paley	MTA
Christine Berthet	Community Board 4	William Schwartz	MTA
Paul Devlin	Community Board 4	Petra Messick	Amtrak
Vikki Barbero	Community Board 5	Ryan Morson	Amtrak
Layla Law-Gisiko	Community Board 5	Craig Schulz	Amtrak
EJ Kalafarski	Community Board 5	Sharon Tepper	Amtrak
Clayton Smith	Community Board 5	Jennifer Sta. Ines	NYC DOT
Julia Campanelli	Hell's Kitchen Block Association	Edith Hsu-Chen	NYC Department of Planning
		Jeremy Colangelo-Bryan	NJ Transit

NAME	ORGANIZATION / AGENCY	NAME	ORGANIZATION / AGENCY
Todd DiScala	NJ Transit		
Joseph Quinty	NJ Transit		
Sofia Berger	WSP		
Tom Rousakis	Ernst & Young		
Judy Kessler	Vornado		
Carl Weisbrod	Vornado (Consultant)		
Audrey Wilson	Vornado		
Monique Dorroh	FX Collaborative		
Jack Robbins	FX Collaborative		
John Schuyler	FX Collaborative		
Toby Snyder	FX Collaborative		
Amy Shell	FX Collaborative		
Terence Cho	ESD		
Gabriella Green	ESD		
Holly Leicht	ESD		
Marion Phillips	ESD		
Francisco Polanco	ESD		
Angel Santana	ESD		
Rachel Shatz	ESD		
Noura von Briesen	ESD		

Location: Zoom

Item #	Description / Discussion
1.	<u>INTRODUCTORY REMARKS AND HOUSEKEEPING</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction by Marion Phillips, Senior VP of Community Relations at ESD, who reminded all attendees to list their full name and affiliation in the Zoom Participant List. • Marion also reminded CACWG members dialing in by phone to alert Angel Santana, Assistant VP of Community Relations at ESD, in order to be admitted to the meeting. In addition, CACWG members who are inviting staff members from their organizations for the first time should also alert Angel. • Marion asked that CACWG members ask their questions while speaking rather than write them in the Zoom Chat window. • Gabriella Green, CACWG Facilitator, informed CACWG members that ESD has posted follow-up materials to Huddle including (meeting subfolder in parentheses): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Information on Open Meetings Law inapplicability to CACs (CACWG #1) ➤ Responses to follow-up transportation questions (CACWG #2) ➤ Meeting minutes (CACWG #3) ➤ Updated Gateway presentation from Amtrak with Hudson Tunnel track map (CACWG #3)
2.	<u>MTA PRESENTATION: POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THROUGH-RUNNING</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction by Peter Matusewitch, VP at MTA Construction & Development and Project CEO for the Penn Station Master Plan (PSMP), a partnership among Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), NJ Transit (NJT), and Amtrak (the “Railroads”) with services provided by WSP and FX Collaborative. • The Railroads have studied through-running for many years and have published white papers and other reports on the feasibility of through-running at Penn Station. The Railroads have also studied examples of through-running in many cities in the U.S. and around the world, including London and Paris. • Through-running trains run through a station in one direction and continue in the same direction to the next station. Through-running stations differ from terminals (like Grand Central), where trains enter a station and then leave on the same track in the opposite direction. • Through-running brings two primary benefits:

- Increases throughput at the station(s) by eliminating crossing conflicts between trains running in and those running out, which reduces dwell times. When dwell times are shorter, more trains can use a station, which is critical during peak periods.
 - A “crossing conflict” is a conflict between inbound and outbound trains that occurs when two trains cross paths going in opposite directions, and one of the trains has to yield and wait for the other train to pass.
 - “Throughput” is the number of trains that can use a station during a peak period.
 - “Dwell time” is the duration of time that a train must stay at a platform while passengers disembark and new passengers board.
- Improves regional mobility by connecting communities beyond central business districts with one-seat rides.
 - A key observation of through-running in other cities is that it requires multiple central stations, e.g., London’s through-running network uses five central stations and Paris’s uses four.

3. MTA PRESENTATION: CURRENT PENN STATION RIDERSHIP AND FUTURE RIDERSHIP GROWTH

- The existing Penn Station (“Existing Penn” or “Penn Station”) was built in the 1960s to handle 200,000 trips per day. Today, it handles about 450,000 railroad trips per day and is at maximum capacity. Roughly, 1,300 train moves occur at Penn Station daily, and it is the center of the Northeast Corridor (NEC), the busiest rail corridor in the U.S.
- With Amtrak shifting to Moynihan Train Hall (Moynihan) as its primary boarding location, Penn Station is now almost entirely a commuter station.
 - Long Island Railroad (LIRR) is the largest commuter rail operation in the U.S. and the largest current user of Penn Station by ridership. Currently, LIRR accounts for 52% of daily railroad trips in Penn Station.
 - NJT is the third-largest commuter rail operation in the U.S. and is expecting the largest growth in ridership of the railroads at Penn Station. Currently, NJT accounts for 41% of daily railroad trips in Penn Station but is projected to be the largest user of Penn Station in the near future.
 - Metro-North Railroad’s (Metro-North) New Haven Line will begin using Penn Station when the Penn Station Access project is complete.
- The need for more rail capacity at Penn Station is driven by expected large increases in ridership. By 2038, ridership at Penn Station is expected to reach 890,000 daily trips, a 40% increase from today.
 - Most importantly, this ridership growth is concentrated in the AM and PM peak two-hour periods. By 2038, in the AM peak period, daily ridership is projected to almost double from 65,000 trips per day to 120,000 trips per day.
- To handle the future capacity needs and provide operational flexibility, the Railroads are planning for an expansion of Penn Station (“Penn Expansion”) that will include up to twelve new tracks and six new platforms.

4. MTA PRESENTATION: PRIOR STUDIES AND ANALYSES OF THROUGH-RUNNING AT EMPIRE STATION COMPLEX

- A necessary condition to through-running at Penn Station and along the NEC is regional integration of commuter railroads and some form of cross-regional service. Several proposals for regional integration have been developed, including that in the Regional Plan Association’s (RPA) [Fourth Regional Plan](#). These proposals look at expanding through-running at Penn Station and adding more stations in Manhattan, which the Railroads have also studied.
- A small-scale current example of railroad integration is rail service by NJT for Metro-North customers west of the Hudson River via the NJT Port Jervis and Pascack Valley Lines.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Penn Expansion requires a full review under the federal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The federal NEPA review will require an analysis of alternative plans and locations (“Alternatives Analysis”) for the expansion. Through-running will be studied as part of the Alternatives Analysis. ● Studies of through-running were completed in 2014 by Amtrak and 2021 by the Railroads and their consultant, WSP. The 2021 study set out to answer three questions and reached the following conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Is it feasible to convert Existing Penn and Moynihan to all, or substantially all, through-running? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No. There are too many physical constraints and fatal flaws; the costs would be highly disproportionate to the limited benefits, and the implications for the Moynihan would be untenable. ➤ Would an all through-running regime at Penn Station increase throughput by enough to no longer need to expand the station? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No. Even in the best scenario, the greatest increase in throughput achievable by through-running is about 35%. While a large increase, this is not enough to meet projected 2038 travel demand, and a station expansion is still necessary. ➤ What is the best way to achieve through-running at Empire Station Complex (“ESC”) to support the goal of improved regional mobility? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Through-running is difficult to implement at already-existing and operating stations and rail networks and is therefore ill-suited at Penn Station. However, Penn Station can be reconstructed (“Penn Reconstruction”) so that it functions effectively as a hub-and-spoke model in the near-term to accommodate future ridership growth. ○ An integrated ESC – including the Gateway Program (“Gateway”), Penn Reconstruction, Penn Expansion and existing Moynihan Train Hall - by itself will not solve the tri-state area’s regional transit deficiencies; a next generation of investment will be needed. In the interim, before a new regional vision and a new set of regional transit investments are planned, Penn Expansion can be built in a way to allow for through-running in the future as a part of a next generation of regional integration investments. ● A model for how Penn Station could be expanded and reconstructed is St. Pancras Station in London. Originally a modest commuter station, St. Pancras was expanded from six platform tracks to 15 platform tracks to serve as a terminus for Eurostar service to continental Europe and a through station on the Thameslink regional rail line with transfers between these two services.

5. MTA PRESENTATION: CAPACITY CONSTRAINTS

- Dating back to 1910, the current rail track configuration at Penn Station is incredibly complex and is the result of decades of modifications.
- The first and primary capacity constraint at Penn Station is the tunnel capacity leading into it. The North River Tunnels (NRT) and the East River Tunnels (ERT) are at full or nearly full capacity.
 - The Hudson Tunnel Project, part of Gateway, will provide two additional tunnels that will supplement the NRT and double rail capacity under the Hudson River.
 - Additional tunnels under the East River are a priority for the next generation of investment.
- A second capacity constraint at Penn Station is the interlocking system on the west side of Penn Station (“A Interlocking”) through which all trains from New Jersey must pass. When the Hudson River Tunnel (HRT) is completed and both the NRT and HRT are in operation, the A Interlocking at Existing Penn will also be operating at full or nearly full capacity.
- A third capacity constraint is the relatively small number of tracks. Penn Station has 21 tracks on one level. By comparison, Grand Central has 56 tracks on two levels.
- A fourth capacity constraint is average dwell times. Longer dwell times mean fewer trains can pass through Penn Station. Amtrak’s average dwell time is 22 minutes, and LIRR and NJT’s are six minutes and 12 minutes respectively. For operational reasons, reduction of dwell times by through-running

would be limited, and LIRR's dwell times are already very short. This limits the potential benefit of through-running at Existing Penn, even if it were feasible.

6. MTA PRESENTATION: CONSTRAINTS TO THROUGH-RUNNING

- For those trains that terminate at Penn and then go back in the opposite direction on the same track, the challenge of long dwell times is further exacerbated. Some trains go from revenue-to-non-revenue service, heading to Sunnyside or the West Side Yards, a practice called “deadheading,” while those that continue in revenue-to-revenue service by taking on new passengers and returning on the same track cause crossing conflicts, increasing dwell times, particularly in the AM peak periods.
- Penn Station has a combination of these “turning” trains and through-running trains during the peak periods. During the peak periods, about half of LIRR trains and one-third of NJT trains run through Penn Station and continue to Sunnyside Yards. In addition, all Amtrak trains run through Penn Station during the peak periods, either continuing service along the NEC or deadheading at Sunnyside Yards.
Combined, about half of all trains at Penn Stations are already through-running during the peak periods.
- Current through-running – both by revenue-to-non-revenue (a practice called “drop-and-go”) and revenue-to-revenue – eliminates crossing conflicts and reduces dwell times. However, there is limited if any benefit that can be gained by additional through-running at Existing Penn.
 - “Drop-and-go” through-running service cannot be expanded at Penn Station because of the lack of additional train storage room at West Side or Sunnyside Yards. Currently, there is no opportunity to expand either of these rail yards, so any expansion of “drop-and-go” service would require building a new yard in either New Jersey or Long Island, which would add additional traffic to the already constrained tunnels.
 - Revenue-to-revenue through-running requires platforms about 30 feet wide to enable alighting and boarding from different platforms on opposite sides of the train. Currently, 10 of the 11 platforms are very narrow, ranging from 17 to 22 feet with many obstructions. These narrow platforms cannot accommodate both arriving and departing passengers at the same time. To allow revenue-to-revenue through-running now, Amtrak holds back its departing passengers to allow arriving passengers to clear the platforms and escalators before boarding commences.
 - Amtrak estimated in its 2014 study that converting drop-and-go trains to revenue-to-revenue through-running would actually **decrease** peak period throughput by up to 17% and increase dwell times.
- Of the existing 21 tracks at Penn Station and Moynihan:
 - LIRR and NJT share Tracks 5-16 with Amtrak during the peak periods.
 - LIRR has exclusive use of the five northernmost tracks (Tracks 17-21).
 - It is not possible to do revenue-to-revenue through-running on Tracks 17-21 because Tracks 20 & 21 do not connect to the NRT and because Tracks 17-19 have other operational roadblocks that prevent through-running.
 - NJT has exclusive use of the four southernmost tracks (Tracks 1-4).
 - Tracks 1-4 are stub tracks that do not connect to the East River tunnels. Connecting them to the East River tunnels is not feasible for several reasons. If they were to be converted to through-running, two tracks would have to be eliminated to allow for wider platforms. It is not geometrically possible to connect these 2 tracks to the existing eastbound tunnel under 32nd Street, and even if it was, it would require demolishing a full block east of Penn Station to make the connection.
 - The reason it is not possible for Tracks 1-4 to be extended eastward is the presence of the Sixth Avenue subway. A train on Tracks 1-4 would have to descend at a grade of 2.45% from Penn Station to get underneath the Sixth Ave subway tunnel, but the maximum grade at which NJT trains can safely operate is 2.1%.

- Even if all of these hurdles could somehow be overcome, the ERTs cannot accommodate the additional traffic that even two additional tracks would generate.
- For all these reasons, the Railroads have concluded that through-running on these tracks is not feasible.

7. MTA PRESENTATION: WIDENING PLATFORMS

- Tracks 5-16 are the best candidates for potential revenue-to-revenue through-running. Within Tracks 5-16, the platforms are on average 20 feet wide. As mentioned above, the platforms would need to be widened to about 30 feet to accommodate through-running.
 - Widening the platforms would require eliminating six of these 12 tracks.
 - However, this solution would result in four of the platforms having columns very close to the edge of the platform, which would not meet the ADA requirement that obstructions like columns cannot be less than six feet from the platform edge.
 - In addition, MTA's calculations show that the loss of capacity by eliminating six tracks would largely offset the increased capacity of the remaining six through-running tracks. Assuming an average eight-minute dwell time for the three Railroads combined, there is a slight decline in capacity, and even a more aggressive dwell time reduction would result in only modest improvements in throughput. These results underscore the need for Penn Expansion in order to achieve the capacity increases and operational flexibility needed to handle future demand.
 - Another more intrusive way to widen the platforms would be to entirely move tracks, platforms and columns, which could result in the elimination of one platform and only two tracks, leaving five platforms and 10 tracks.
 - MTA again calculated the level of throughput improvement and found that this method would improve throughput by 35% assuming an eight-minute dwell time. While a significant improvement over the prior option, this option still does not match the level of capacity improvement needed to accommodate projected future growth in rail traffic. Penn Expansion would still be required, while causing massive disruption to train service for years.
 - This option would also require deconstructing and rebuilding parts of Moynihan Train Hall, including virtually the entire West End Concourse, which was just completed at a cost of \$1.6 billion. Rebuilding these facilities so soon after completing them is not a good use of public investment for what would be a temporary and insufficient solution to Penn's capacity problems.
 - The cost to rebuild the platforms, tracks and interlockings and rebuild Moynihan is estimated to be \$3 billion to achieve a 35% improvement, a disproportionate cost for limited benefit.

8. MTA PRESENTATION: CONCLUSION ON THROUGH-RUNNING

- Penn Station simply cannot be converted into an all through-running station, with all westbound trains running on the north side and all east-bound trains running on the south side, given the built environment and other constraints at Existing Penn.
- Through-running will not solve the capacity problems at Penn Station; only Penn Expansion will.
- As mentioned above, the experiences of London and Paris show that multiple stations are necessary to establish a true through-running network. In addition, these rail networks were built largely from scratch and were built specifically as part of a through-running system. They did not convert existing rail lines wholesale to through-running lines.
 - These models underscore the reality that Penn Station cannot be the sole solution for improving regional mobility in the tri-state area

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- Even beyond the engineering challenges of through-running, to be successful, the Railroads need to undertake a major multiyear planning effort, including market research, operations planning, engineering, and negotiating with labor unions and U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). It would also require agreements to be made among the states and the commuter railroads and Amtrak to establish integration across lines.
- Gateway, including the Hudson Tunnel Project and Penn Expansion and Reconstruction, is expected to cost at least \$40 billion and is expected to be completed in the early 2030s, 20 years after its inception. The cost of regional integration could be just as high or even higher and would take just as long as to complete.
- Empire Station Complex, including Penn Expansion and Penn Reconstruction, needs to be ready to handle the large increase in trains that Gateway will bring. The Railroads are interested in through-running from Penn Expansion and will ensure it is constructed in a way to allow for that in the future.

9. MTA PRESENTATION: PENN EXPANSION UPDATE

- Federal Railroad Authority (FRA) has asked the Railroads to wait until it completes and issues the Hudson Tunnel Project NEPA Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) before beginning any formal consultations or public outreach on Penn Expansion. The FEIS and ROD are currently expected to be released on May 28 of this year.
- A Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Gateway was issued in 2017. This Tier 1 EIS studied Gateway and the impacts of Gateway as a whole. Due to the large scale of Gateway, each individual Gateway project requires the completion of a Tier 2 EIS, which must be consistent with the Tier 1 EIS.
- The Railroads are preparing for a Tier 2 EIS on Penn Expansion, beginning with an Alternatives Evaluation Report that will examine various locations that have been studied. Upon approval from FRA, the Railroads will publish its Alternatives Evaluation Report, open a 30-day public comment period, and hold a public hearing.
- The Railroads are also progressing conceptual engineering and simulations for several different designs for track configurations at Penn Expansion.
- The Alternatives Evaluation Report will screen the alternatives for consistency with the Tier 1 Gateway EIS purpose and goals and the Tier 2 Penn Expansion EIS purpose and goals. If those two standards are met, then rigorous analyses and studies will be done for the EIS to identify a preferred alternative that provides the greatest benefit with the least environmental impacts.
- The preliminary list of alternatives includes:
 - No Build Alternative
 - Other Modes of Transit Alternative
 - Other Stations Alternative
 - Through-Running Service Alternative
 - Northern Penn Station Expansion
 - Under Penn Station Expansion
 - Southern Penn Station Expansion
- The Railroads’ studies suggest that the Southern Penn Station Expansion is the alternative that best meets the goals of Penn Expansion, but this needs to be confirmed through the federal NEPA review process and public comment.
- The Railroads encourage the public to provide feedback and stay involved in the federal NEPA public engagement process for Penn Expansion.

10. Q&A AND COMMENTS

- Marilyn Taylor, UPenn
 - When will the Hudson Tunnel Project ROD be issued?
 - The Hudson Tunnel Project ROD is expected to be issued on May 28, 2021.
 - When will the potential southward Penn Expansion be complete?
 - The Railroads are currently projecting the southward Penn Expansion, if selected as the preferred alternative, to be completed in 2029. Peter Matusewitch also noted that the Penn Reconstruction work does not have to wait for the completion of Penn Expansion.
 - Why is through-running still being considered as an alternative for the Penn Expansion NEPA review if your presentation shows that through-running is not feasible at Penn Station?
 - The EIS process requires that alternatives that potentially minimize environmental impacts be considered. Through-running has that potential, so it has been studied. The railroads have concluded that it would not meet the project's purpose and goals, so that will be documented in the Alternatives Evaluation Report.
 - Peter Matusewitch explained that his presentation makes the argument that while through-running is not feasible at Existing Penn, it is a very viable option that may have real benefits for the region if implemented in the future from the Penn Expansion. The Railroads are designing Penn Expansion in a way to allow for future through-running, which would also require significant additional investments in new tunnels across Manhattan and under the East River, the interlocking systems, and a new regional through-running network.
 - Tom Wright (via Zoom Chat) stated that RPA independently studied the possibility of through-running at Existing Penn for its Fourth Regional Plan and concluded that even with through-running, the region will need all of the future capacity created by Gateway and the Penn Expansion to meet future demand, and that new tracks and platforms are necessary to accommodate this future capacity.
- Felicia Park-Rogers, TSTC (via Zoom Chat)
 - Would the dwell times not be shorter in the second through-running scenario at Existing Penn in which center tracks are moved and platforms widened resulting in a 35% improvement in throughput?
 - In both through-running scenarios at Existing Penn presented, the dwell times would be roughly the same.
- EJ Kalafarski, CB5
 - After HRT and Penn Expansion are completed but before any new East River tunnels are built, will Amtrak continue to operate out of Moynihan, NJT out of Penn Expansion, and LIRR out of Existing Penn?
 - Peter Matusewitch clarified that NJT would continue to use the tracks that it uses now in Existing Penn and be the primary user of Penn Expansion. In addition, LIRR ridership will be split between Existing Penn/Moynihan and Grand Central once East Side Access is completed.
 - If new East River tunnels get built, would NJT (and LIRR) maintain hub-and-spoke operations in Existing Penn and begin through-running in Penn Expansion?
 - All options for hub-and-spoke, through-running, or a hybrid model will be considered in future plans for expanding the regional network. Any future decisions to implement through-running at Penn Expansion will involve all the commuter and inter-city railroads.
 - Is the existing Amtrak through-running capacity on the NEC compatible with high-speed rail or will the new capacity from Penn Expansion assist in the expansion of high-speed rail service?
 - Petra Messick explained that Amtrak will continue to operate out of Moynihan after Penn Expansion is completed, but that a dedicated spine for high-speed rail service is not permitted under the current NEC Future Tier 1 EIS. As described at last week's CACWG, Amtrak is expanding its high-speed rail service primarily through the introduction of new Acela trainsets that will be phased in later in 2021, additional frequencies in the off-peak

- periods, and curve modifications to permit higher speeds on the NEC. For more information, please see the FRA's "[NEC Future Tier I Environmental Impact Statement](#)."
- If NEC is expanded, will the current platforms at Moynihan be a limiting factor to expanding high-speed rail service?
 - The current platform size at Moynihan may limit the expansion of high-speed rail service, however further analysis needs to be done. In the future, Penn Expansion may also be considered for high-speed rail operations.
 - Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer (via Zoom Chat)
 - What was the source of funding for the new tracks built in London as part of the regional network expansion?
 - Tom Wright provided a [link](#) to the breakdown of the funding sources for the regional rail expansion project in London.
 - Karim Ahmed, ReThinkNYC
 - If widening platforms at Existing Penn will bring a 35% improvement at a cost of \$3 billion and Gateway will bring a 50% improvement at a cost of \$40 billion, why is Gateway more favorable from a cost-benefit perspective to increase capacity? Why are we not spending \$43 billion to both widen the platforms and complete Gateway?
 - This is not a valid comparison. Gateway includes many other projects that will bring benefits to areas beyond Penn Station across the entire NEC from Boston to Washington. Most of the \$40 billion Gateway costs will need to be spent anyway to increase trans-Hudson capacity regardless of whether through-running is implemented.
 - The \$3 billion cost to widen the platforms reflects only the costs for work done at Existing Penn and Moynihan and does not include other costs necessary to implement a through-running network. Work such as building the new HRT, making improvements to the NEC and integration of regional train equipment makes the total cost of implementing through-running at Penn station about the same as the entire cost of Gateway.
 - What is the incremental cost to achieve a full through-running regional transit system?
 - To achieve a full through-running regional transit system, additional work on top of Gateway would be needed, such as building an additional tunnel, construction at least two more bridges and another rail yard, rebuilding interlocking systems and integrating different regional rail system equipment. The costs for this work is likely to be of the same order of magnitude as the Gateway program and would be in addition to the \$40 billion cost for Gateway.
 - Layla Law-Gisiko, CB5
 - Is the federal funding for Penn Expansion going to come as a grant from FRA or FTA or an appropriation through U.S. Department of Treasury?
 - At this time, it has not yet been determined how or through what agencies federal funds will be allocated towards Penn Expansion.
 - How are you making plans for the Penn Expansion project to meet the requirements of different federal funding programs?
 - The Railroads are working from the assumption that the 50-25-25 federal/New York/New Jersey split of the costs originally agreed to for Gateway will apply to Penn Expansion. The Railroads are in close consultation with federal agencies and await guidance from them as to the form and amount of any federal funding.
 - Are the Railroads advocating and lobbying for federal funding?
 - The Railroads and state authorities are very focused on advocating for as much federal contributions as possible to the Penn Expansion project. There are many competing

- interests, but the federal agencies are well aware of Penn Station's and Gateway's needs.
- Is FRA the lead agency on the NEPA review?
 - FRA or Federal Transit Administration (“FTA”) will be the lead agency for the federal NEPA review. Regardless of which is the formal lead agency, both will have large roles in the NEPA review.
 - Would MTA be the co-lead NEPA agency and will NJT be a sponsor of the NEPA review?
 - MTA will be the local lead “sponsor” of the NEPA review for Penn Expansion. NJT will be a partner agency or another designation as chosen by the lead federal agency for the NEPA review.
 - Barry Caro, ReThinkNYC
 - What is the estimated cost of Penn Expansion?
 - The estimated cost for both Penn Reconstruction and Penn Expansion is a minimum of \$16 billion. But the Railroads need to do further cost estimate analyses.
 - The 2014 Amtrak white paper on through-running estimated that converting revenue-to-revenue turning trains to through trains would increase capacity at Existing Penn by 12% to 25%. Do the Railroads still agree with this projection and would it make sense for the Railroads to focus on this effort?
 - MTA's estimate of a 35% increase in throughput in the presentation includes converting revenue-to-revenue turning trains as well as drop-and-go trains to revenue-to-revenue through-running. Peter Matusewitch stated that the Railroads still agree with this projection regarding a subset of potential conversions, but all of the fatal flaws associated with converting to all through-running would apply to this subset, with even less benefit for a similar cost.
 - Focusing on converting the revenue-to-revenue turning trains to through-running could result in a net positive effect on capacity. However, that effect would still be far less than the positive effect that Penn Expansion would have on capacity and would not be sufficient to accommodate the future demand expected for NJT ridership.
 - What is the total expected increase in train movements generated by Penn Expansion?
 - Peter Matusewitch stated that he would need more information on what aspect of train operations the question is examining. Specific questions on this topic can be sent to ESD as follow-up.
 - Paul Devlin, CB4
 - Where do Tracks 20 & 21 go once they exit Penn Station?
 - Tracks 20 & 21 go to the east in one direction and to the West Side Yard in the other direction. These tracks cannot go to the NRT due to vertical geometry limitations.
 - How do Amtrak trains get underneath the Sixth Avenue subway tunnel?
 - The tunnels that Amtrak uses to go underneath Manhattan were in place before any of the subway tunnels were built. When the subway tunnels were installed, they were installed above the Amtrak tunnels.
 - Why is it not possible to extend Tracks 1-4 at Penn Station used by NJT to go below the Sixth Avenue subway when the Amtrak tracks already do so?
 - The tracks that are underneath the Sixth Avenue subway have a different vertical profile than Tracks 1 – 4. They start going down while still in Penn Station and therefore get a head start in descending. Tracks 1-4, however, stay level while in Penn Station and couldn't start a descent until they are beyond Penn Station. Also, the Sixth Avenue subway slopes down as it goes south, so Tracks 1 – 4 would have to descend farther than

- the more northern tracks, in a shorter distance. This would require a descending grade of 2.45%, which is prohibitive.
- The best plan seems to be to build the tracks at Penn Expansion at a lower level so that they can go under the subways.
 - The Railroads are in fact planning to build at least some of the tracks at Penn Expansion at a low enough level so that they can go under the subways. This would allow for the possibility of through-running once new tunnels are built under the East River.
 - Have any alternatives to a southward expansion been eliminated?
 - Peter Matusewitch reiterated that no options for Penn Expansion have been ruled out. All reasonable and practicable alternatives for Penn Expansion will be described and analyzed in the Alternatives Evaluation Report which will have its own public engagement process as part of the NEPA review process.
 - Why are Sites 4, 5, and 6 scheduled in the GPP to be completed prior to the completion of the Alternatives Analysis?
 - Any Northern Penn Station Expansion Alternative would largely be below the bed of 34th Street, not under the buildings along it, and would be built deep enough to avoid disturbing existing or new buildings. Development of these sites can proceed at any time.
 - The original ARC project, which was a northern expansion option, proposed an entirely independent station, not integrated with Penn. The Railroads do not believe that a northward expansion would achieve the Penn Expansion goals of operational flexibility and interoperability; allowing for station integration creates synergies that maximize capacity as well as operational flexibility to offset service disruptions and minimize delays.
 - Sam Turvey, ReThinkNYC
 - The Penn Expansion plan may have negative impacts such as demolishing historic resources and overdevelopment and congestion. In addition, there seems to be strong demand for more regional integration to provide customers a better way to access the New York City workforce (i.e., a “one-seat ride”). Given these concerns, is the southern Penn Expansion option the best plan moving forward?
 - Penn Station is at maximum capacity and is handling more than double the number of passengers for which it was designed. The track infrastructure of Penn Station cannot be modified in a way that will meet the goals of the Railroads and handle the increasing ridership in the New York-New Jersey region and along the greater NEC. The Railroads have studied the conditions at and under Penn and the surrounding area exhaustively and believe the best way to create more capacity and operational flexibility is through Penn Expansion, built to permit future investments like through-running and regional integration. The current federal government is willing to spend money on infrastructure at a level not seen since the 1950s, and the Railroads must capitalize on this moment, which may be short lived. Impacts on historic resources will be disclosed and evaluated as part of the NEPA environmental review process. Development above the potential southern expansion is part of the GPP, not the Penn transportation projects, and the impacts of that development are being considered in the GPP EIS and the accompanying public review process.
 - Christine Berthet, CB4
 - Why is it not possible to lower Tracks 1-4 by 25 feet to allow through-running? West 33rd St was raised by 30 feet.
 - In order to achieve through-running on Tracks 1-4, one platform and two tracks would need to be eliminated to get a wider platform, leaving only two tracks that would also need to be lowered. Doing this work for only two tracks (even if combined with other

- work at Penn Station) would result in only marginal throughput gains and does not present a worthwhile investment when compared to the gains in service that Penn Expansion would bring.
- Why don't we plan to add more elevators, escalators and stairs ("Vertical Circulation Elements") at Penn Station to decrease dwell times?
 - The Penn Station Master Plan calls for 30-31 new Vertical Circulation Elements in Penn Station. This is the maximum number of Vertical Circulation Elements that can be added to the existing platforms at Penn Station. These new stairs, escalators and elevators will enable the Railroads to evacuate people to safety in conformance with the federal standard of four minutes, a standard which Penn Station has never met.
 - The eight-minute dwell time assumption used to calculate the potential gains in service from through-running accounts for any decreases in dwell time due to these new Vertical Circulation Elements.
 - Studies show that a large portion of NJT commuters from New Jersey are traveling east after arriving at Penn Station. To relieve some of the pedestrian congestion already in the Penn Station area and future congestion that ESD's EIS predicts, through-running by NJT trains from Penn Expansion to a new station on the east side of Manhattan should be included in the current Penn Expansion plans.
 - The Railroads are planning Penn Expansion to allow for future through-running connections and agree that another station farther east may be desirable. This is not part of the current Penn Expansion project.
 - Felicia Park-Rogers, TSTC
 - Tri-State Transportation Campaign strongly advocates for an integrated regional rail system that will evolve with the shifts and changes in ridership and that will promote more social equity and spread more opportunities for jobs across regional populations.
 - What public and community benefits will be part of the development on the blocks south of Penn Station?
 - The public and community benefits of the above-ground development on the Penn Expansion blocks will be discussed in future CACWG Meetings.
 - Should the Penn Expansion plan include more projects such as additional tunnels and infrastructure to become a full through-running station given the strong federal and presidential support for increased spending on infrastructure and expansion of rail service?
 - While the amount of federal funding earmarked for transit and infrastructure projects envisions large transformational projects, the federal government will be spreading the infrastructure funding across numerous projects throughout the U.S.
 - The federal infrastructure bill is likely to be passed by U.S. Congress in August 2021 and most of the funds will be earmarked for projects that are ready now for funding. Incorporating more components into the Penn Expansion would take additional planning time well beyond August, and the Railroads would miss the window for funding the Penn Expansion in this the federal infrastructure bill. Additional eastward expansion would likely be a priority for future transportation investment.
 - Eugene Sinigalliano, Resident Representative
 - It is important to remember that the southward expansion of Penn Station has not been approved as the preferred alternative to expand Penn Station.
 - This is accurate – the work that the Railroads have done to study the potential southward expansion of Penn Station is anticipatory based on engineering analysis to date. The federal NEPA review process allows project sponsors to do anticipatory work in order to study the feasibility of a project. If the southward Penn Expansion is not

approved through the federal NEPA process as the preferred alternative, the Railroads will abandon the plan to expand southward and select a different option, but expansion is necessary at some location.

- Wouldn't the Northern or the Underneath Alternatives be less disruptive to residents or businesses in terms of construction impacts and displacement?
 - The Northern and Underneath Alternatives involve tunneling work which would have less visible and audible above-ground construction impacts in this neighborhood. However, these alternatives would still have construction impacts that would be shifted elsewhere and may be less than, equal to or even greater than construction impacts generated by the Southern Penn Station Expansion Alternative. As part of the NEPA review process, MTA will quantify and disclose the construction impacts for all alternatives that progress for further study in the EIS.
 - The NEPA review process will also study the number of displaced residents and businesses in assessing the impacts of the Penn Expansion alternatives that progress for further study in the EIS.
- What is the cost for each of the Penn Expansion alternatives and who will pay for the acquisition of any property?
 - Cost is not a factor in the screening of alternatives in the Alternatives Evaluation Report. Costs will be estimated for those alternatives that progress into the EIS. The Railroads are assuming that the costs for Penn Expansion will be split 50-25-25 among federal, New York and New Jersey funding sources. Those funding sources will pay for the costs for any acquisition of any property for Penn Expansion.
- Layla Law-Gisiko, CB5
 - One of the alternatives evaluated in the Alternatives Analysis for the Access to the Region's Core (ARC) project proposed a direct link to Grand Central for NJT from a new station north of Penn Station. Will this proposal be part of the Alternatives Analysis for Penn Expansion?
 - A direct link for NJT to Grand Central is not part of any of the Alternatives being considered. It is unlikely that the inclusion of a direct link to Grand Central would change the viability of the Northern Expansion Alternative because it would not support the goal of operational flexibility in an integrated, unified Penn Station. The Northern Expansion Alternative proposes a separate station in a separate facility with no rail or operational connection to Penn Station, and this would not meet the goal of operational flexibility that the Railroads desire in order to provide optimal rail service and accommodate future ridership increases.
 - Community Board 5 supports the goals of Penn Expansion but urges the Railroads and agencies to think creatively about ways to avoid impacts to the local community and not place an undue burden on the surrounding community.

11. CONCLUSION

- Marion Phillips told CACWG members that they can send follow-up questions via email to ESD, and ESD will post answers.