



January 29, 2026

Andy Byford
Special Advisor to the Amtrak Board of Directors

Dear Mr. Byford:

We strongly urge you to publicly release the Request For Proposals (RFP) for the Penn Station redevelopment project.

You are cited in [recent news reports](#) stating “the RFP is not shared publicly” and that its full contents would not see the light of day until after you have selected a master developer for the project. Additionally, you [stated at a Citizens Budget Commission breakfast](#) that you are “talking to the city about how they might play a part” in funding the project, but there are no details about the costs or potential schemes for how the city might pay.

You undoubtedly realize that an opaque bidding process – even if in keeping with past Amtrak procedure – presents a terrible appearance in the context of erratic behavior by the Trump administration regarding funding for regional infrastructure projects like the Gateway Tunnel, and its efforts to “terminate” congestion pricing.

Amtrak’s approach to transparency should be changed in any case. State and local jurisdictions manage to launch and deliver countless projects with far more transparent bidding procedures. The [NYS Office of Information Technology Services](#) includes full RFPs as part of its list of open procurement opportunities, and the NYC Economic Development Corporation has a dedicated [RFP website](#) with easy access to RFPs and other bidding information on its website.

We would like to examine the request-for-proposal documents ourselves, but also seek direct answers to these questions:

1. Who will pay for the project? How much federal money is available now?
2. Why is there a private finance component when federal borrowing could spread the cost of a national infrastructure project across the national tax base?
3. Will user fees paid by NYC-area railroads or their riders be considered?
4. Do project/financing parameters contemplate commercial real estate development outside of the station and/or Amtrak’s property boundaries?
5. How long are the terms of the agreement?

You can't tell elected officials and civic actors that you intend to run a radically transparent process, then practice the opposite. Your credibility with New Yorkers is essential to any progress. Please release the RFP.

Sincerely,

John Kaehny, Executive Director

Jon Orcutt, Senior Policy Fellow

Rachael Fauss, Senior Policy Advisor