



CITY OF NEW YORK

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Ms. Rebecca Reyes-Alicea
USDOT
Federal Railroad Administration
Office of Railroad Policy & Development
Mail Stop 20
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Draft EIS for Northeast Corridor Future (NEC Future)

Manhattan Community Board 4 is pleased to comment on the NEC FUTURE Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Tier I DEIS examines the feasibility of improved passenger rail service along the Northeast Corridor, looking at how several potential alternatives would impact mobility, the environment and economic growth across the entire corridor.

We understand that the proposed project will be for two additional tunnels to increase Amtrak capacity. We request that one of the alternatives discussed in the EIS include the study of an alternative that also includes two Cross Hudson facilities, but with differing capacities:

- One going to Penn station to increase Amtrak's traffic by 5 trains hourly, increase the number of NJ transit commuter trains and provide redundancy with the current tunnel, as currently contemplated.
- A second one to connect the # 7 line from 33rd Street and 11th Avenue (its current terminus) and the Lautenberg Station in Secaucus, NJ to provide 30 trains per hour and reduce 200 buses per hour in the Lincoln Tunnel and on City streets. In Secaucus, NJ transit would build a multimodal facility to transfer bus riders to the # 7 subway line. In New York, the 10th Avenue and West 41st station would be added to reduce congestion at Grand Central Station.

We make this recommendation because the current two Amtrak tunnel proposal, although ambitious, does not address the current commuter delays, traffic congestion and assorted air pollution caused by the enormous volume of buses lining up in NYC streets to deliver and pick up 342,481 passengers daily at the Port Authority bus terminal, more than twice the 164,098 New Jersey Transit rail passengers delivered and picked up at Penn station.¹

¹ Hub bound travel 2012, NYMTC

This situation is a major burden to current and future residents, particularly who live in MCB4 boundaries. The negative impacts of this commuter congestion include higher rates of pedestrian injuries and fatalities, increased asthma rates, and decreased quality of life.

It will also hinder the economic development of Hudson Yards and the city in general by increasing commuter congestion and delays. It should be noted that bus traffic has grown 23 %² in the last 10 years. The result is Lincoln Tunnel traffic that exceeds reasonable capacity.

In parallel the strongest job development in the last 5 years has taken place outside of the borough of Manhattan, highlighting the need to bring workers to various locations in and outside of Manhattan more easily accomplished by a subway versus bus link³

When deciding on such a massive investment in our future, all options should be considered, whether they rely on rail, buses, subway or ferry. We cannot afford to miss the opportunity to find the best alternative to respond to the reality of our market conditions. We urge the Federal Railroad Administration to undertake the study of this alternative as part of the Tier I EIS for the Northeast Corridor.

Sincerely yours,



Christine Berthet
Chair



Jay Marcus
Co-Chair, Transportation
Planning Committee



Ernest Modarelli
Co-Chair, Transportation
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² NYMTC 2012 Hub Bound Travel

³ NYMTC 2012 Hub Bound Travel