

**GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

July 12, 2021

Public Comments Received as of 5pm on July 11, 2021

*The public is encouraged to submit public comments via the comment form on
www.GatewayProgram.org.*

*Comments received prior to the end of the meeting will be distributed to the Board, posted on
the GDC website, and recorded in the public record.*

Name	Bruce Hain
Organization	Individual
Comment Topic	CONCERNS ABOUT THE EXISTING TUNNEL AND THE ADVISABILITY OF CURRENT PLANS
<p>Core samples from the 2014 study of the six Penn Station tunnels show that deterioration of the inbound Hudson tunnel, the South Tube, had progressed further than that in the other five tunnels - with the samples taken probably in 2013, the year after the tunnels were inundated owing to the negligence of those charged with their stewardship, by Hurricane Sandy.</p> <p>It is often said by engineers that deterioration of reinforced concrete structures involving salt water, where spalls and exposed re-bar are present, ""progresses exponentially"" - and we have just witnessed a saddening and completely avoidable reminder of this veritable maxim of engineering parlance.</p> <p>The warmed-over ARC Tunnel replacement, or supplement, for the current Penn Station tunnels, possesses a number characteristics of the decadent-age planning machinations though which its design emerged, involving the now-usual dithering and full-stop direction reversals seen with the East Side Access Project and many others.</p> <p>It is questionable whether the proposed action has been devised and revised with well-meaning intent, given its sharp curves and steep grades, involving a lateral alignment that is four tenths of a mile longer than the existing tunnel, and the necessity for a program of ground stabilization on the Manhattan side expected, optimistically, to last one and a half years.</p> <p>A properly aligned replacement/supplement would be nearly a full mile shorter than what is now planned. And the location of the currently planned tunnel might very likely preclude any attempt to expeditiously demolish and rebuild the existing one, with its superior alignment, causing a situation in which the condemned tunnel sits wasting away while decades more of paid dithering and speculation ensues.</p> <p>Given its superior alignment and the relative ease of demolishing and rebuilding it to modern standards, as against current plans, that scenario would seem to be the correct and prudent way of proceeding at this point.</p> <p>In any case your commenter is not convinced that the London Bridge Consultants, or Governor Cuomo, have had the last word concerning tunnel restoration - and importantly, a feasible and safe timeline for getting that work done. It is now questionable whether indeed it can be effectively done at all.</p> <p>That no plan has yet been adopted, and given the state of the tunnel during the governor's 2018 video tour of it - now four years ago - things would seem to indicate there is no workable plan for restoring it. Your commenter hopes to be fully informed as to details of the plans to be adopted - as</p>	

well as the likelihood of their lasting success - prior to the second groundbreaking for this new tunnel - and will be actively seeking your input in that regard."

Name	Brian Fritsch
Organization	Build Gateway Now Coalition
Comment Topic	Support for the Gateway Program
<p>"Hello, I'm Brian Fritsch, Campaign Manager for the Build Gateway Now Coalition. Build Gateway Now is a coalition of over 45 civic, labor, business, and elected groups united by a single tenet - the Gateway Program is the nation's most urgent infrastructure project.</p> <p>We are thrilled the Hudson Tunnel project is finally in a position to move forward. With the long-awaited Record of Decision (ROD) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) completed, significant barriers facing the project have been cleared. As we continue our pandemic recovery, we can't afford one more delay.</p> <p>To that end, we were especially pleased Secretary Buttigieg joined Senators Schumer and Booker as well as many Congressmembers from New York and New Jersey for a tour of the Hudson Tunnel last week. It was fantastic to hear about the commitment the Biden Administration has made to this project. They clearly understand its urgency-- given both the underlying age of the infrastructure and the impacts of climate change on our transportation systems-- highlighted by significant delays caused by Tropical Storm Elsa late last week.</p> <p>With the clarification from the U.S. DOT earlier this year that federal loans can be used to pay for the local share of the project cost, we hope the Hudson Tunnel project will soon meet or exceed the threshold for an improved rating in the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) process. The Build Gateway Now Coalition sent a letter to the States of New York and New Jersey, urging them to meet the July 30th deadline for identifying how they will support their local shares of the project cost. We also urge the other project partners--Amtrak, the Port Authority of NY and NJ, and U.S. DOT-- to do the same, so we can reach a full funding agreement for the project that will allow construction to begin in earnest. If New York and New Jersey do not state how they'll contribute their share by the end of this month, it could mean Gateway will be significantly delayed yet again for another year.</p> <p>Recent public ridership numbers also underscore the need for the Gateway Program to move forward. While weekday rail ridership on NJ Transit hovered at around 20% - 25% of pre-COVID levels for several months, it has now increased to approximately 50%. Weekend ridership has rebounded even more strongly, at approximately 80% of pre-COVID levels.</p> <p>We urge the Federal Delegations of New York and New Jersey to pass legislation that will fund rail programs of regional and national economic significance. As outlined in an earlier letter to U.S. DOT the current federal funding sources available for infrastructure rebuilding are too limited in their scope. We know what a profoundly positive impact the Gateway Program will have on the regional and national economy, considering the Hudson Tunnel project alone will add over 70,000 construction jobs and create over \$19 billion in economic activity. Now is the time to act.</p>	

Many thanks to the members of the Gateway Development Commission for your continued service, and for the opportunity to submit our public comment to you today. We look forward to continuing to move the Gateway Program forward to promote equitable and sustainable transportation for all."

Name	Peter Kiernan
Organization	Venable LLP
Comment Topic	Contracting and Project Management
<p>"This comment is submitted by the nationally acclaimed Construction Law Group of Venable LLP.</p> <p>It is vital to complete the Gateway Project efficiently and cost effectively. To maintain schedule, cost and project integrity, recent mega project experience in the United States offers lessons that should be heeded:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There are several contractual methods from which to select. Each has significant and distinguishing advantages. It is important to acknowledge that there is not a contractual mechanism in the world that can shift all risk from the owner to the contractor consortium. Designers and builders are not financiers.2. It is paramount to have effective project controls. Risk cannot be wholly shifted and the need for an owner to develop and understand necessary project data in real time never abates. Comprehensive data production and contemporaneous analyses thereof permits the anticipation of problems and the resolution of them as they arise, not after their effects are being disputed.3. Change orders are inevitable. Key to successful project management is collaborative negotiation of change orders centered on fully developed data and orderly exposition of all relevant interpretations. Litigation is a blunt and inefficient instrument, and threats of litigation create rather than solve problems. Deferring litigation to a project's end forsakes the ability to affect schedule positively and only can adjust cost negatively.4. Trade offs between cost and schedule often are necessary as events occur and conditions change. But such trade offs can be avoided or minimized if there are commitments to address issues contemporaneously and in good faith. A means to that end is to have balanced dispute resolution processes in the contract.5. Great care should be devoted to the preparation of the contract. The drafters should be very involved in every stage of the contract's implementation.6. Procurement documents also need careful attention. Ideally, the drafters and implementers of the contract(s) also should be contributors to the preparation of the procurement documents."	

Name	Maurice Wills
Organization	Individual
Comment Topic	Funding for projects
<p>"I would like to take this opportunity to thank President Biden and Transportation Secretary Buttigieg for recognizing how important these projects to not only the New York Metropolitan region, but the whole Northeastern United States..</p> <p>Funding for the Portal Bridge, and Gateway Tunnel must be made available for this very important rail corridor. The more we wait, the more expensive these projects will become. The previous administration has delayed these projects for three years These projects must not be delayed any further . These projects will provide plenty of construction jobs, and will help the economy ."</p>	

Name	Laura Colacurcio
Organization	Association for a Better New York (ABNY)
Comment Topic	Gateway Program
<p>The Association for a Better New York (ABNY) remains steadfast in its support for the Gateway Program. We must build on the momentum and public support for this essential project fostered as a result of U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg’s visit to the aging Hudson River Tunnels last month. Along with Senators Schumer and Booker, Secretary Buttigieg demonstrated confidence in the project’s ability to catalyze economic activity and transform the northeast corridor. We are eager for the Gateway Program to commence to provide for an equitable and inclusive recovery for the New York City region and improve the reliability and quality of life for commuters, travelers, and all who utilize this critical regional rail link. With commuter rail ridership rebounding and centers of economic activity experiencing a resurgence, the time is now to move this project forward to ensure the competitiveness and vitality of New York City and the region.</p>	

Name	Henry Ickes
Organization	Individual
Comment Topic	Sub-Hudson (North) River rail traffic level
<p>"In case you missed Amtrak's recent announcement of their projection for rail passenger service between now and 2035, I commend to you their fact sheet at https://www.amtrakconnectsus.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Amtrak-Connects-US-Fact-Sheet-2021-04-16-1.pdf</p> <p>They're looking to add service between New York City and both Allentown and Scranton, PA. There's a decent possibility that NJ Transit may jump on those coat-tails, as well. In case you run into folks who downplay the traffic levels into NYP, this might come in handy . . ."</p>	

Name	Linden Wallner
Organization	Individual
Comment Topic	The Hudson Tunnel Project
While I am thrilled that the Record of Decision was approved for The Hudson Tunnel Project, I believe that The GDC should consider moving forward on building the 3rd segment of the Concrete Casing in addition to the approach tracks between Secaucus and the Tunnel portal. These two sections of The Hudson Tunnel Project could be completed in a relatively short period of time.	

Name	Leon Zaharis
Organization	Individual
Comment Topic	What tunneling and tunnel construction method has been chosen?
Has/have the final tunnel depths been decided upon and if so what tunneling method has been chosen??	

Name	Earl Stephenson
Organization	Homeland Construction Services, Inc.
Comment Topic	Construction Contracting Employment for MBE, SBE
<p>Hello, my name is Earl Stephenson from NJ. I was an SBE/MBE NJ Transit spokesman for minority participation for NJ/NY Tunnel Project that was on the table. Unfortunately, Governor Christie took it off the table and the dream laid dormant for years. I would love to become a spokesman again for this project and would love some information when smaller contractors can get some information so we can be involved in this process. I look forward to hearing from someone. My contact information is e.step12@verizon.net, or 732-245-2677.</p>	

Name	Charles Eigner
Organization	Retired
Comment Topic	about time
yes its about time to start.PLEASE USE UNION HELP	