FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 11, 2018

Contact:
Steve Sigmund – ssigmund@gatewayprogram.org; 917-459-7794
Craig Schulz – craig.schulz@amtrak.com; 212-630-6041

# Gateway Program Development Corporation Releases "Mythbusters" Fact Sheets to Set Record Straight on Major Projects

NEWARK – The Gateway Program Development Corporation (GDC) today released a series of fact sheets to emphasize the careful design and planning of the major current Gateway projects, and counter misinformed and impractical alternative ideas regarding the program's major projects and costs.

The "Mythbusters" fact sheets (attached) illustrate how the costs, designs and engineering on the Portal North Bridge and Hudson Tunnel Projects have been carefully developed and the serious downsides of proposals that have been made public without full consideration of these important factors.

Among other facts that are addressed:

- Construction cost estimates for the Portal North Bridge and Hudson Tunnel projects have remained consistent. Any fluctuation in estimates is a result of inflation, which adds as much as 3.5% for every year of delay.
- Replacing the fully-designed and permitted 2.3 mile-long Portal North Bridge project with a 3 or 4 track bridge is not feasible and would not add additional capacity. Even if such a design was feasible, it would counterproductively add years of time, cost and design uncertainty.
- The Hudson Tunnel project must include 2 new tubes to meet the safety, reliability and resiliency needs for which the project is designed.

"GDC welcomes constructive input for how best to deliver these projects as quickly and cost effectively as possible, but we have to set the record straight when there are ill-considered proposals that would send us back to square one," **said Stephen Sigmund, GDC's Chief Public Outreach Officer**. "We cannot allow well-intentioned but unsubstantiated proposals to undermine thoughtful and sensible efforts to construct a modern, reliable 21st Century rail bridge and tunnel connecting New York and New Jersey. In the meantime, we remain stuck with a 107-year-old one-track-in, one-track-out rail system that continues to fail the region and threatens 10% of the nation's Gross Domestic Product."

# attachment #

*The Gateway Program is the most urgent infrastructure program in the country – a comprehensive rail investment program that will improve commuter and intercity services, add needed resiliency and create new capacity for the busiest section of the Northeast Corridor (NEC). The NEC is the most heavily used passenger rail line in the country hosting more than 2,200 train movements and 800,000 passenger trips daily. The Gateway Program Development Corporation (GDC) is a New Jersey not-for-profit entity with Board members representing Amtrak and the States of New York and New Jersey. It was incorporated in 2016 to oversee and effectuate the Gateway Program in coordination with federal and local partner agencies. Follow the GDC on Twitter @GatewayProgNews.*

# THE GATEWAY PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS

The Gateway Program is the most urgent infrastructure priority in the nation. Gateway's first projects -- the Portal North Bridge and Hudson Tunnel Project -- replace a 107-year-old one-track-in, one-track-out system that threatens 10% of the nation's economy -- with a modern, reliable, resilient transportation system. The Portal North Bridge will replace the current, functionally obsolete swing bridge with a new, high-level fixed span. The Hudson Tunnel Project will construct a new two-track tunnel under the Hudson River and rehabilitate the existing century-old tunnel.

Early analysis on the **Hudson Tunnel Project** estimates that this project alone will create more than...

**72,000** ***jobs*** **&** **$19B** ***in economic activity***

## Gateway Program/Immediate Needs

**$1.6** billion
Portal North Bridge
*(in YOE dollars)*

**$11.1** billion
New Hudson River Tunnel
*(in YOE dollars)*

**$1.6** billion
Rehab of Existing Tunnel
*(in YOE dollars)*

*YOE dollars = Year of Expenditure dollars, which are estimates of project cost based on when the money will be spent.*

The **Hudson Tunnel Project** cost estimate is the first estimate the project ever published.

As is typical for projects like this, as the design advances and more engineering and technical information is known, cost estimates will be refined and updated to reflect the most current plan, including updates to the project schedule which could have significant impacts on cost.

**1910:** Year of opening of the current tunnel - by the numbers.

**0** - Commercial plane flights
**22 Cents** - Average hourly wage
**$687** - Average yearly wage
**6%** - Americans with HS diploma
**8%** - Americans with a telephone
**2%** - Americans with electric power
**$400** - Average cost of Model T
**7 Cents** - Average silent movie price
**0** - NY Yankee World Championships

A **Benefit-Cost Analysis** found construction of all elements of the Gateway Program could generate nearly **$4 worth of economic benefit for every $1 spent.**

According to the report, the benefit-cost ratio of the Gateway Program is between 2.2 and 3.9, depending on certain assumptions about the time value of money.

- A benefit-cost ratio that exceeds 1.0 indicates that a project is a wise investment of public funds.
- Benefit-cost ratios in excess of 2.0 can be considered extremely robust.

## Trans-Hudson commuting is vital to the national and regional economy.

- Accommodating 450 trains per day, the 10 miles between Newark, NJ & New York Penn Station is the busiest section of the Northeast Corridor, the most heavily used passenger rail line in North America.
- Failure to build puts 10% of America's Gross Domestic Product at risk.
- 200,000 passenger trips a day rely on Amtrak and NJ Transit trains that use the existing tunnel.
- The existing tunnel connects to routes in 20 states across the U.S.

# THE GATEWAY PROGRAM MYTH BUSTER

## PORTAL NORTH BRIDGE

**INTRO:**
The Portal North Bridge Project replaces a congested, delay-prone, 2.3-mile stretch of the century-old Northeast Corridor with a modern, elevated railroad, including a new, fixed bridge over the Hackensack River to replace the current 100-year-old moveable span. This will result in the elimination of infrastructure-caused delays on this critical section of railroad leading to and from Midtown Manhattan.

**MYTH:**
Gateway's goal of achieving four tracks over the Hackensack River could be accomplished better and cheaper, by replacing only the bridge span (and not the approaches) with a 3-track or 4-track span, or replacing it with another moveable, low-level bridge.

## FACTS

### The Portal North Bridge alignment is designed to optimize rail operations, maximize reliability and efficiency, and reduce delays.

- A new, higher-clearance fixed-span is the most appropriate engineering solution for a crossing that supports 450 trains a day and avoids the maintenance costs and unreliability associated with a moveable span.

### The initial 2-track Portal North Bridge Project adds new capacity by allowing longer, double-decker trains.

- Reduction in delays associated with current moveable span will create additional capacity for NJ TRANSIT to serve Penn Station New York with new, double-decker equipment and longer trains.

### As was made clear during the permitting process for Portal North Bridge, the Coast Guard would NOT approve a fixed low-elevation bridge.

- Maritime and navigation laws are statute and pre-date railways.
- A low-level bridge would likely need to replace the existing bridge on its present alignment, requiring a lengthy disruption to the nation's busiest rail corridor, with serious impacts on the economy.

### A 4-track bridge would not create additional capacity, since the Northeast Corridor remains constricted to 2 tracks on the rest of the route leading to the new tunnel, and Penn Station New York is at capacity until expanded.

- Achieving additional capacity requires the later Gateway projects – with additional costs – to build out Secaucus Junction tracks and expand Penn Station New York tracks.

### A 4-track railroad bridge is NOT structurally feasible, given the size and width of the steel beams that would be needed to support heavy rail traffic on a single structure.

- Railroad bridges are heavier and bulkier than highway bridges because of the weight they must support.

### A redesign of the project would require new engineering and environmental documentation, adding time and cost.

- The full Gateway Program includes building a second, two-track Portal South Bridge, which will expand capacity on this stretch of the railroad, in conjunction with other improvements, such as the expansion of Penn Station New York.

### If it were technically feasible, a single 4-track bridge in both directions would create congestion, severely restricting operational flexibility and efficiency in this key section of the Northeast Corridor.

### The ARC Project determined that two additional tracks could not be added to the north side of Secaucus (next to the NJ Turnpike).

- New tracks to provide more capacity can be more strategically located on the south side of the station (where ARC and now Gateway has proposed them).
- Therefore, a four-track bridge must be able to connect to tracks on both sides of the Northeast Corridor through Secaucus as well as to new tracks on the east side.

### No engineering analysis exists demonstrating that a single four-track structure could be built and provide for adequate alignment of all four tracks to properly tie back into the Northeast Corridor through Secaucus Station to the east or Swift Interlocking to the west.

- The resulting alignment would likely mean severe speed restrictions.

**Bottom line:** The existing bridge must be replaced, or we risk increasing disruption to rail operations and more frequent delays.

# THE GATEWAY PROGRAM MYTH BUSTER
## HUDSON TUNNEL PROJECT

**INTRO:**
The Hudson Tunnel Project provides a safe, reliable, resilient and redundant new two-track tunnel for passengers making 200,000 daily trips, allowing critical rehabilitation of the existing century-old tunnel. The Project will employ rail technology, innovative financing and delivery approaches to ensure it is built as quickly and cost-effectively as possible.

**MYTH:**
Construction of a single, new, one-track tunnel, as opposed to the proposed new two-track tunnel, would reduce construction cost and accomplish the same result.

## FACTS

### Building a single new tube is not practical because it would not comply with critical fire and life safety requirements.

- A single, one-track tube beneath the river would not provide safe exits for passengers in the case of an emergency.
- A two-track tunnel, as proposed for the new Hudson River Tunnel, provides cross passages every 750 feet for the length of the new tunnel, connecting the two separate tubes. With only one tube, there would be no other means to exit in an emergency.

### A single, one-track tube may only save a fraction on construction costs and would put the region back at square one.

- Both tubes of the new Hudson River Tunnel will be constructed simultaneously, allowing the project to be completed efficiently and cost-effectively.
- There is no design or Environmental Impact Statement for boring just one tube. The project would have to "start over" to develop designs and engineering documents and to obtain approvals, adding years of delays and untold costs.

### Building a single, one-track tube would not meet the project's purpose and need – to maintain rail traffic under the Hudson River while the existing tubes of the century-old tunnel are rehabilitated to strengthen resiliency & reliable service on the Northeast Corridor.

- Building a single, one-track tube does not provide sufficient capacity to maintain the existing rail schedule while the two tubes of the existing tunnel are rehabilitated.

### Building a single new tube would foreclose the opportunity to ever use the new tunnel for meaningful additional capacity into an expanded Penn Station New York.

- A single, one-track tube can achieve only a fraction of the capacity provided by a two-track system because of the time required to allow trains to reverse out of the station through the single-track tube.
- Total new train operations will be capped by capacity limitations for returning trains, making for a poor investment of billions in public resources.

### Building only one new tube does not conform to modern safety standards and would not relieve the unacceptable delays, lack of reliability, and risk of drastic service reduction we currently face.

**Bottom Line:** The risk of failure is growing as the 107 year old tunnel ages and deteriorates further. The situation is barely acceptable now; it won't get better by adding uncertainty and foreclosing the opportunity for meaningful new capacity in the future.

*The new Hudson River Tunnel consists of two, single-track tubes, interconnected with cross passages for emergency egress.*