

GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
September 13, 2022

Public Comments for September 13, 2022 Board Meeting

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

Name	Michael Egenton
Organization	NJ Chamber of Commerce
Comment Topic	New Projected Cost and Updated Schedule of Hudson Tunnel Project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce thanks the GDC for releasing such a comprehensive analysis on the cost/schedule projections for the Hudson Tunnel project. • We are encouraged that the Hudson Tunnel project is advancing toward a full funding grant agreement with the US DOT. We recognize that an updated analysis was a necessary step in this process and it was great to see such strong continued support from all the project and political partners. • It is crucial that we reach the full funding grant agreement while we have universal political support for the project. As we have seen in the past, losing any of the major partners could derail the project for years or decades. • It's especially promising that there may be a way to prevent increased financial burden on NY and NJ and have the federal government make up the difference of the increased costs – which are due to pandemic-related inflation and more conservative projections on financing charges – by funds made available through the 2021 Infrastructure Law. • New York and New Jersey are interdependent and economically linked. Hundreds of thousands of commuters travel back-and-forth between our two states. This major infrastructure project is critical to the economic well-being of employers and employees. • This new analysis reminds us that time is of the essence -- projects of this magnitude will only become increasingly expensive and complicated the longer we wait. 	

Name	Sophie Cappello
Organization	Regional Plan Association
Comment Topic	Updated Hudson Tunnel Project Cost/Schedule Analysis
<p>Thank you to the GDC for welcoming public comments today and releasing such a comprehensive analysis of the cost/schedule projections for the Hudson Tunnel project. On the eve of the Tenth anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, which irrevocably damaged the existing North River Tunnel, it's encouraging that the project is advancing toward a full funding grant agreement with the US Department of Transportation. An updated analysis was a necessary step in this process, and it was great to see such strong continued support from all the project and political partners. With these updated projections in hand, we can move forward on the process of securing the FFGA.</p> <p>Despite these increased cost estimates, which are due to pandemic-related inflation and more conservative projections on financing charges, it's especially promising that there may be a way to prevent an increased financial burden on New York and New Jersey, and have the federal government make up the difference with funds made available through the 2021 Infrastructure Law.</p> <p>It is crucial that we reach the full funding grant agreement while we have universal political support for the project. As we've seen in the past, losing any major partners could derail the project for years or decades – something the region, and frankly, the nation, can't afford.</p> <p>We have great political support for the project and we also have strong backing from both New York and New Jersey to get the Gateway Program done. New York and New Jersey are interdependent and economically linked. Hundreds of thousands of New Jersians commute to work in New York daily. In fact, New Jersey residents accounted for 8% of the total New York state income tax liability generated by all filers in 2018. We can not let distractions from other ongoing negotiations between New York, New Jersey and the Federal Government stop our progress on Gateway.</p> <p>This new analysis reminds us that time is of the essence; projects of this magnitude only become more expensive and complicated the longer we wait. Thank you again to the Gateway Development Commission for your continued leadership on this project, and to all partners working toward this goal.</p>	

Name	Laura Colacurcio
Organization	ABNY
Comment Topic	Support for the Gateway Program
<p>On behalf of the Association for a Better New York (ABNY), I would like to reiterate support for the Hudson Tunnel Project and the Gateway Program.</p> <p>ABNY commends Governor Kathy Hochul, Governor Phil Murphy, and the New York and New Jersey Congressional delegations in their continuous efforts to advance this major infrastructure project for our region. The recent release of the Gateway Development Commission’s cost and schedule projections for the Hudson Tunnel Project is a critical step forward in developing this plan with transparency and efficiency.</p> <p>ABNY is pleased to learn of the potential funding grant agreement with the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), as it is imperative to reach a full funding grant agreement while there is broad consensus and support for this vital project for New York City and the larger Northeast region.</p> <p>Funding from USDOT can mitigate any hefty financial costs that New York and New Jersey may incur as a result of skyrocketing inflation and conservative prior projections. Funds from the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act can and should support this project. If we do not seize this opportunity to capitalize on the funding available, it may put the project at risk.</p> <p>Many New York and New Jersey residents rely on the Northeast Corridor for commuting, and furthering the Hudson Tunnel Project and the Gateway Program are crucial to support the region’s workforce. Both are indispensable components in our efforts to make New York a better place to live, work, and visit for all.</p>	

Name	Joe Clift
Organization	N/A
Comment Topic	
<p>The GDC Board now has a CEO for the Board to ask and get answered important questions! Joseph M. Clift* Comments to the Gateway Development Commission, Sept. 13, 2022</p> <p>Good afternoon. My name is Joe Clift. I am a past Director of Planning for the Long Island Railroad and a long-time advocate for improved, affordable trans-Hudson passenger rail mobility. I have four ASKS of you seven Gateway Commissioners, now that you have had a CEO in place for almost two months (56 days) --- Ask CEO Kolluri to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirm Gateway Phase I will add ZERO peak-hour train capacity into NY Penn --- not one additional rider! --- despite the expenditure of \$14+ billion in construction costs for the the Portal North Bridge and Hudson Tunnel Project. Many politicians, media representatives and members of the general public are unaware of this reality and should be made aware by a public confirmation by the CEO. 2. Immediately undertake a review of the entire Gateway Program as now planned, because it WILL NOT accomplish its basic objective of adding trans-Hudson capacity in time to accommodate the forecast of increased trans-Hudson ridership beyond pre-COVID levels in about 10 years. Right now, 2038 --- 16 years from now --- will come and there will be no additional train capacity into NYP! The project should be revised to add the components necessary to provide incremental capacity, while reducing existing unnecessary scope, to fit a \$14 billion budget. 3. Provide a report on the total construction cost of Gateway; this is the cost necessary to provide additional peak-hour train capacity into and out of NY Penn Station, the basic objective of the Gateway Program. Total Program construction cost has been estimated at \$35 billion, before the last \$2 billion increase in HTP cost. 4. Post reports online, as I asked at your July meeting. The Gateway Program website --- there is still no stand-alone Gateway Development Commission website for this 38-month-old organization --- still has no online library of Portal North Bridge Project, Hudson Tunnel Project or Gateway Phase 2 reports, including annual and monthly submissions to the FTA. Plus, the existing website provides no obvious access to Commission board meeting documents, which should be rectified immediately. <p>Thank you for this opportunity to comment. /220913 JMClift GDC.Bd.Mtg,Comments;4 Asks to new CEO</p>	

* Joseph M. Clift served as Director of Planning and Director of Strategic Planning for the Long Island Rail Road and Manager of Operations Improvement and Strategic Planning Analyst for Conrail. He holds a B.S. (M.E.) degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an M.B.A. from the Stanford Graduate School of Business.
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Name	Felicia Park-Rogers
Organization	Tri-State Transportation Campaign
Comment Topic	Gateway Project/Hudson Tunnels
<p>My name is Felicia Park-Rogers, I am the Director of Regional Infrastructure for the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. I am writing today to reiterate our complete and total support for the Gateway Project, our nation’s most important infrastructure project.</p> <p>We thank the GDC and Kris Kolluri for its work creating a new analysis on the cost and schedule projections for the Hudson Tunnel project. It’s encouraging that the Hudson Tunnel project is advancing toward a full funding grant agreement with the US DOT - an updated analysis was a necessary step in this process.</p> <p>It is crucial that we reach the full funding grant agreement while we have universal political support for the project. As we’ve seen in the past, losing any of the major partners could derail the project for years or decades, costing even more money and putting public safety, as well as the nation’s economy, at risk.</p> <p>Given the increases in cost and timeline, it’s welcome news that the federal government may make up the difference of the increased costs with IIJA funding and thereby may prevent increased financial burden on the states of New York and New Jersey, financial increases which are due to pandemic-related inflation and more conservative projections on financing charges.</p> <p>We cannot let distractions from other possible ongoing negotiations between New York, New Jersey and the Federal Government stop our progress on Gateway. We encourage the full cooperation between New York, New Jersey, and Amtrak to reach a fair and signed project development agreement as quickly as possible. We see encouraging signs of understanding between all parties of the mutual and myriad benefits of the Gateway Project for each state, the region, and the entire Northeast Corridor, our nation’s busiest passenger rail corridor.</p> <p>The new budget and timeline serve to remind us and to underscore that time is of the essence. The GDC has made significant strides in building the public trust on this mega project by being upfront and clear about the increased timeline and costs of this project. It is not easy news to hear, but it cannot be a reason for delay. Any and all potential further delays on a project of this magnitude would only cause it to become even more expensive and complicated.</p> <p>Additionally, we strongly encourage the GDC to be transparent with the public about the reasons for increased budget and extended timeline. A project of this cost and magnitude requires an informed public that is given every possible opportunity to know exactly where and how its funds are being spent.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	