

GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION BOARD MEETING

May 20, 2025

Public Comments for May 20, 2025, Board Meeting

(Received as of May 19, 2025)

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

Name	Chad Purkey
Organization	Association for a Better New York (ABNY)
Comment Topic	Hudson Yard Concrete Casing Project, General Comment
As a proud member of the Build Gateway Now coalition, the Association for a Better New York (ABNY) commends the Gateway Development Corporation on recently reaching important construction milestones and encourages continued, timely progress on the entirety of the vital Gateway Program. We wish to commend and congratulate the Commission on recently surpassing the halfway point of the incredibly important and complicated concrete casing work at Hudson Yards. This project is foundational to ultimately making the critical new Hudson Tunnel Project a reality. In achieving this construction milestone on schedule, the Commission continues to demonstrate that proper expertise and project management is driving the Gateway Program's activities forward. Yet again, we reiterate our support for the Gateway Program and commend the Commission on its dedicated advancement of the country's most urgent and critical infrastructure project. Once completed, Gateway will ensure more reliable and increased transit service for the region's growing workforce and economy, ensuring the city and region's forward momentum.	



**PUBLIC COMMENT FROM THE ASSOCIATION FOR A BETTER NEW YORK SUBMITTED TO THE
GATEWAY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REGARDING THE GATEWAY PROGRAM**

May 19, 2025

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We wish to commend and congratulate the Commission on recently surpassing the halfway point of the incredibly important and complicated concrete casing work at Hudson Yards. This project is foundational to ultimately making the critical new Hudson Tunnel Project a reality. In achieving this construction milestone on schedule, the Commission continues to demonstrate that proper expertise and project management is driving the Gateway Program's activities forward.

Yet again, we reiterate our support for the Gateway Program and commend the Commission on its dedicated advancement of the country's most urgent and critical infrastructure project. Once completed, Gateway will ensure more reliable and increased transit service for the region's growing workforce and economy, ensuring the city and region's forward momentum.

Name	Mateo Colón
Organization	New York Building Congress
Comment Topic	Hudson Tunnel Project
New York Building Congress Comments to the Gateway Development Commission The New York Building Congress represents over 500 member organizations and more than 250,000 skilled tradespeople and professionals who are dedicated to the growth and prosperity of the New York region. We are proud members of the Build Gateway Now Coalition and strongly support the Hudson Tunnel Project. The Building Congress congratulates the Gateway Development Commission on reaching the 50% completion milestone for the Hudson Yards Concrete Casing – Section 3. Advancing such a complex project under active rail operations, in one of the most congested corridors in the country, is an extraordinary achievement. This milestone demonstrates the GDC’s technical expertise and its commitment to delivering real results on schedule. The Hudson Tunnel Project is the most urgent transit infrastructure project in the nation; and it has been for decades. It will secure the future of rail service along the Northeast Corridor, ensuring that New York, New Jersey, and the entire region remain economically competitive and globally connected. This safe, modern tunnel into Penn Station is essential to keeping millions of people connected to jobs, education, and each other. The risks of delay or disruption are not theoretical; we’ve seen just how quickly even temporary service disruptions can ripple through the region. One third of our nation’s GDP runs through the Gateway corridor; this is infrastructure with national consequences. But GDC’s continued progress gives us confidence that the long-standing promise of Gateway is finally becoming reality. The Building Congress respectfully urges continued support and momentum behind this once in a generation infrastructure investment. We look forward to continuing to work with the Gateway Development Commission and our fellow coalition members to ensure the successful delivery of the full Gateway Program. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today. Carlo A. Scissura, Esq. President and CEO New York Building Congress	

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*YOUNG PROFESSIONALS LIAISON



May 20, 2025

Gateway Development Commission Board Meeting

The New York Building Congress represents over 500 member organizations and more than 250,000 skilled tradespeople and professionals who are dedicated to the growth and prosperity of the New York region. We are proud members of the Build Gateway Now Coalition and strongly support the Hudson Tunnel Project.

The Building Congress congratulates the Gateway Development Commission on reaching the 50% completion milestone for the Hudson Yards Concrete Casing – Section 3. Advancing such a complex project under active rail operations, in one of the most congested corridors in the country, is an extraordinary achievement. This milestone demonstrates the GDC's technical expertise and its commitment to delivering real results on schedule.

The Hudson Tunnel Project is the most urgent transit infrastructure project in the nation; and it has been for decades. It will secure the future of rail service along the Northeast Corridor, ensuring that New York, New Jersey, and the entire region remain economically competitive and globally connected. This safe, modern tunnel into Penn Station is essential to keeping millions of people connected to jobs, education, and each other.

The risks of delay or disruption are not theoretical; we've seen just how quickly even temporary service disruptions can ripple through the region. One third of our nation's GDP runs through the Gateway corridor; this is infrastructure with national consequences. But GDC's continued progress gives us confidence that the long-standing promise of Gateway is finally becoming reality.

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carlo Scissura'.

Carlo A. Scissura, Esq.
President and CEO
New York Building Congress

Name	Mateo Colón
Organization	New York Building Congress
Comment Topic	Hudson Tunnel Project
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Name	Jerry Keenan
Organization	NJ Alliance for Action
Comment Topic	
Click here to view the pre-recorded video statement	

Name	Samuel Turvey
Organization	ReThinkNYC
Comment Topic	RPA/WSP Economic Analysis of Gateway Projects
We applaud the construction of the Gateway Tunnels and the economic and other benefits that will be brought to the region. We ask that this large public investment be accompanied by thinking large enough to fully leverage the upside from this \$50 billion dollar set of infrastructure investments to include a through-running conversion at Penn Station proper without resort to the proposed terminal track expansion below 31st Street in Manhattan. We are disturbed that at last month's meeting a report authored by the RPA and WSP was submitted claiming to represent the economic benefits of the pending Gateway Tunnels. The Report appears not to have taken into account a possible through-running conversion at today's Penn Station which we believe would greatly amplify and even multiply the economic benefits to the public investment in Gateway. This apparent oversight follows a disturbing pattern. As you are aware, WSP, inexplicably issued a report about through-running options at Penn Station in conjunction with the FX Collaborative firm with one paragraph dedicated to the benefits of through-running last October. While they grazed cost-benefit analysis in doing so, they only discussed the cost which they described as prohibitive. While the report was quick to characterize through-running as an expensive option you usually need to fully describe what you are paying for before declaring something expensive. Through-running is more cost effective than the present terminal track plans so we are not sure why they characterized through-running as expensive. Not to be outdone, WSP has now collaborated on an economic analysis with the RPA of the economic benefits of the multi-billion dollar planned Gateway Tunnels under the Hudson River. At first reading the report doesn't even appear to dedicate one word to the internationally recognized gold standard in commuter rail, through-running. While an odd analogy, these activities--these two reports that WSP had a hand in over the past year-- remind us of the old George Carlin "partial football" score riff, "Notre Dame 6....." The RPA and WSP undoubtedly based their economic analysis on what is now only a "hope" that their terminal track expansion at Penn Station will somehow allow for 48 trains per hour peak and reverse peak to traverse the tunnels. After years of study and millions--if not tens of millions of dollars of expense--WSP, FX Collaborative, ARUP and others have not figured out how they can accomplish this 48 Trains Per Hour metric with the planned expansion of terminal tracks to the south of Penn Station. Modeling at this number for terminal tracks is the triumph of hope and hubris over actual engineering experience. Not only has WSP or these other parties failed to demonstrate that terminal tracks can get to 48 Trains Per Hour--they haven't even had the transparency to let the public know what their modelling can produce. 39 Trains Per Hour? 40 Trains Per Hour? 42 Trains per Hour? Through-running incontrovertibly would add substantial connectivity to the region well	

beyond the terminal track expansion modelled by the RPA and WSP. Reverse commuters, cross regional commuters and any number of variants thereon would add obvious and substantial benefits to the region's economy. The RPA estimates 7% of the the region's commuters are reverse commuters and the Effective Transit Alliance suggests there are as many as 400,000 cross regional commuters. Those numbers will only increase if you get folks in cars off the harrowing traffic-filled commutes on Broome Street, the Cross-Bronx Expressway and the Mario Cuomo Bridge. Of equal importance, beyond a pure metric, through-running will greatly increase access to the housing and employment markets in comparison to terminal track alternatives across a broad economic swath of the population.

We are talking about better commutes, better livelihoods and better housing.

While the RPA and WSP cannot even grace the public with a Trains Per Hour number for their "forever in incubation" Penn Expansion terminal track plan they have acknowledged that ReThinkNYC's through-running plan can generate 48 trains per hour peak and 48 trains per hour reverse peak (albeit some of the reverse peak trains wouldn't provide one seat rides to the outermost reaches of the region). ReThinkNYC's model would also provide for 6 more peak Trains Per Hour from Long Island.

The capacity issue is the inverse of what the RPA and WSP is asserting. It is through-running that can generate more trains per hour than the RPA's and WSP's favored terminal track model, not the other way around.

We ask why aren't these activities by the RPA and WSP being challenged. The economic benefits of through-running are adding greatly to the economies of all our international peer cities and increasingly domestic cities while we get a partial economic analysis in return years after most peer cities already have through-running. We ask that the Gateway Commission request that the RPA and WSP redo the report and include a bona fide attempt to evaluate the economic benefits we may all be foregoing into the next century if a through-running conversion at Penn Station does not happen in the first half of this century.

As you are aware, the FRA and others will be demanding real answers to both the benefits, costs and roadblocks to through-running. This effort will determine if this truly transformative transit operating model which has generated hundreds of billions of economic growth wherever it has been implemented can take place in our ever congested region where its benefits can be easily be expected to be a multiple of what has happened in other cities.

The Gateway Development Commission should choose to be part of the solution and not part of the problem--a complete economic report should be requested and should not have to await the FRA's others intervention. The public needs to be first.

Name	Joshua Berman
Organization	Regional Plan Association
Comment Topic	Concrete Casing Progress
Regional Plan Association congratulates the Gateway Development Commission on reaching the halfway point of construction on the Hudson Yards Concrete Casing – Section 3. Achieving this milestone on schedule is a testament to the expertise, coordination, and dedication of the GDC team, and reinforces our confidence in their ability to successfully deliver the Hudson Tunnel Project. For decades, the Hudson Tunnel Project has been the most urgent mass transit infrastructure priority in the United States. In less than two years, GDC has made remarkable progress toward this historic effort. This work is not just important; it is essential. Millions of riders are counting on the GDC to deliver a 21st-century rail system that provides reliable service into, out of, and through New York City. The Hudson Tunnel Project stands on its own as a vital reliability initiative with transformative value for passengers, our region, and the nation. The Northeast Corridor is the most heavily used passenger rail corridor in the country, and the ten-mile stretch between Newark and New York is its most congested and vulnerable segment. The urgency of this project is clear: from the economy to equity, the consequences of delay or failure are unacceptable. The recent NJ TRANSIT strike underscored the real-world impact of service disruptions to every commuter, whatever mode they use. While temporary, it gave us a glimpse into how devastating a long-term tunnel shutdown could be for working people and businesses alike. Reliable rail service is essential to sustaining our regional economy and workforce. The majority of new commuters working in New York now come from west of the Hudson River. Ensuring a reliable, on-time commute is critical not only for quality of life but for attracting workforce talent and driving economic growth. For hourly workers, in particular, every minute matters, a delayed train can mean lost wages, missed opportunities, or even job loss. Regional Plan Association is proud to stand with the GDC and our partners in the Build Gateway Now Coalition as we work to secure a modern, resilient, and equitable transportation future. The Hudson Tunnel Project is an investment we cannot afford to delay.	

Public Comment from Regional Plan Association Submitted to the Gateway Development Commission

May 19, 2025

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Regional Plan Association is proud to stand with the GDC and our partners in the Build Gateway Now Coalition as we work to secure a modern, resilient, and equitable transportation future. The Hudson Tunnel Project is an investment we cannot afford to delay.

Name	Joseph Clift
Organization	Self
Comment Topic	Problems with HTP Cost, Communications and Adherence to GDC Open Meetings Policy
Please see attached two pages. Please provide to GDC Board members and staff in format provided, and post in this format on the GDC Board meeting webpage of public comments. Thank you! Joseph M. Clift	

Problems with HTP Cost, Communications and Adherence to GDC Open Meetings Policy

Statement by Joseph M. Clift to the Gateway Development Commission (GDC), May 20, 2025

Good morning. My name is Joseph Clift. I am a past Director of Planning for the LIRR and have had a now 22-year involvement as a rail transit advocate in the ARC Project and its successor, the Gateway Program. The following are my comments and requests for action:

1. HTP is still a failure from a rider and a taxpayer perspective- I have attached my previous Feb. 3, 2025 statement to the Board; all of the issues I raised in it are still valid: in summary, the \$16B Hudson Tunnel Project does not improve trans-Hudson rider mobility, delays Hudson River Tunnel repairs for 10 years and contains a tremendous amount of incredibly expensive non-value-added project scope and decades-old, rather than state-of-the-art technology, which serve only to enrich the project's planners, administrators, designers and builders at great taxpayer expense.

2. Incredibly high \$2.0M/foot cost of Manhattan Tunnel Project must be questioned- Yes, the 700-foot-long \$1.4 billion Manhattan Tunnel Project prices out to an incredibly high \$2.0 million per foot, yet it is intended only to assist the sub-aqueous TBMs (tunnel boring machines) in navigating the first 700 feet of tunneling in Manhattan. No wonder the construction cost of the HTP is \$14 billion! I believe there has to be a far less expensive alternative, one that may require more disruption at the surface, and an effort must be undertaken to find one. **I ask the GDC Inspector General to examine my claim and report back to the Board and to me.**

3. Plain English stating purpose of today's two resolutions, 0525-01 & 0525-02- Why is there no explanation in simple, clear English of the purpose of each of these resolutions? Isn't it common sense that the public easily understand the purpose of each resolution, and therefore shouldn't such an explanation be a requirement? **I ask the GDC Inspector General to examine this failure and report back to the Board and to me if such an explanation should be required for all resolutions.**

4. Why is a GDC Executive Vice-President necessary? Nowhere in the original public plans for GDC senior management was the position of Executive Vice-President contemplated or approved. I question any need for this position and **ask the GDC Inspector General to examine my claim and report back to the Board and to me.**

5. Virtual meeting without in-meeting public comment opportunity is wrong- A comment on today's meeting format to both Board members and to the GDC Inspector General: I believe the 100% virtual format without any opportunity provided for members of the public to comment during the meeting via telephone, zoom, etc. is clearly a violation of GDC's Open Meetings Policy in spirit, if not in letter. GDC is alone among regional public transit-focused entities in not providing this opportunity, so easily accomplished with current communications technology. **I ask the GDC Inspector General to examine my claim and report back to the Board and to me.**

6. GDC staff repetitively violates GDC's own agenda & document distribution requirements- Again – in fact, at every GDC meeting to date – GDC Public Outreach staff has violated GDC's Open Meetings Policy requiring posting of agenda and backup documents “no later than 72 hours” before the meeting (IV. C. 2.). For each and every meeting, it is not a rational argument to claim that it was not “practicable” to release documents 72 hours in advance of the meeting, yet that is the only excuse for this action. **I ask the GDC Inspector General to examine my claim and report back to the Board and to me.**

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

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. degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an M.B.A. from the Stanford Graduate School of Business. Contact info: jmclift@alum.mit.edu, 212-245-6299, 646-343-7332 (mobile).

Corrected Item 2, Cost of Manhattan Tunnel Project: from \$700M/ft to 2.0M/ft, 5:08pm. 05/20/25

\$16B HTP does not improve rider mobility & delays Hudson River Tunnel repairs for 10 years

Statement by Joseph M. Clift to the Gateway Development Commission (GDC), Feb. 3, 2025

Good afternoon. My name is Joseph Clift. I am a past Director of Planning for the LIRR and have had a now 22-year involvement as a rail transit advocate in the ARC Project and its successor, the Gateway Program.

I will comment today on the current plans for the Hudson Tunnel Project, and I direct my initial remarks to Vice-Chair Coscia. At the last GDC Board meeting on January 16, you stated, and I am paraphrasing, that the true stakeholders of Gateway, and therefore the Hudson Tunnel Project (HTP), are the people who rely on the system every day, the riders, whose lives are affected by having a mobility system that does something for the quality of life in this region and for the ability to economically thrive in this region.

It is also stated repeatedly by GDC officials and others, and I quote, "The Gateway Program is the most urgent infrastructure program in America."

If Vice-Chair Coscia is correct, and I wholeheartedly agree with him, and if, in fact, Gateway is really the most urgent infrastructure program in America, then a number of troubling facts about the Hudson Tunnel Project come to mind:

1. Why were only two pages provided just 24 hours before this meeting, in contravention of GDC bylaws, regarding approval of the \$1.4B Manhattan Tunnel Project contract with no details of the project scope, schedule, source of funds, competitors bids or any other information required to make an informed decision on approval or disapproval of this contract, and why was no explanation provided of the relationship between the \$1.8B Market Case Estimate for the Manhattan Tunnel Project and the \$1.4B contract?

2. Why does the \$18B Hudson Tunnel Project provide ZERO, and I emphasize ZERO, memorialized in the project's FEIS, additional trans-Hudson rail capacity or ridership, not even one additional seat, if it is a major element of the most urgent infrastructure program in America, and that program is focused on rider benefit, and what lies did the FTA have to accept or create to approve such a project for Capital Investments Grant funding, when every other project approved for CIG funding has demonstrated increased ridership?

3. Why is the current track alignment of the \$18B Hudson Tunnel Project such that it only increases trans-Hudson capacity after another \$30B is spent on other elements of Gateway, instead of adjusting that track alignment so that immediate benefit of more trans-Hudson capacity is achieved if it is a major element of the most urgent infrastructure program in America, and that program is focused on rider benefit?

4. Why was the Hudson Tunnel Project designed with incredibly expensive non-value-added project scope and decades-old, rather than state-of-the-art technology if it is a major element of the most urgent infrastructure program in America, and that program is focused on rider benefit?

5. And finally, but certainly not least important, why does the \$18B Hudson Tunnel Project delay for 10 years the start of major repairs and upgrades to the two existing Hudson tunnel tubes, which recently suffered an infrastructure failure **every 4.5 weekdays** based on NJ Transit Alerts, and a viable best-practices alternative that could begin immediately, the detailed nights-and-weekends repair-in-place program provided to the GDC by London Bridge Associates over four years ago, if it is a major element of the most urgent infrastructure program in America, and that program is focused on rider benefit?

I leave you with this thought: Given the facts I have stated above, I sincerely doubt that the Hudson Tunnel Project and the Gateway Program as currently designed can withstand the thorough objective review for its cost-effectiveness contemplated by the new administration in Washington.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

* 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. degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an M.B.A. from the Stanford Graduate School of Business. Contact info: jmclift@alum.mit.edu, 212-245-6299.