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**100 YEARS**

June 30, 2022

**New York Building Congress Testimony at a hearing of the Empire State Development regarding the Pennsylvania Station Area Redevelopment Project's General Project Plan**

The New York Building Congress strongly supports the reconstruction of Penn Station and the comprehensive revitalization of its surrounding community. New York deserves a true, modern, state-of-the-art transportation hub in the heart of our central business district that meets the same New York City standard of excellence seen just a few blocks away in Grand Central Terminal.

Reimagining Penn station and rebuilding it to serve New Yorkers and visitors alike, with soaring ceilings that bring in natural light, grand entrances that safely move people, and modern amenities are part of this vision — and must be done now.

This vital development will connect Herald Square to Penn Station with improved open spaces for the community, 1,800 much-needed housing units, and improved retail and dining spaces to provide residents, workers, and commuters with an improved public experience. This project is an essential step towards transforming Midtown Manhattan into a true 24/7 community.

The proposal doubles Penn Station's circulation space. It is in the best interest of all New Yorkers to improve low-carbon transit usage to help combat the climate crisis. As the busiest transportation hub in the Western Hemisphere, Penn Station is a main artery for office workers, commuters, and the general public heading to Manhattan. The economic growth and vitality of the neighborhood relies on the advancement of this extraordinary public-private partnership.

We applaud the leadership of Governor Hochul, MTA CEO Janno Lieber, and Empire State Development President & CEO Hope Knight. Their determination to listen to the people of New York City, our elected officials, and transportation experts have presented us with a once-in-a-generation opportunity to bring our city into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Building is one of the best ways to get out of an economic crisis. At an estimated cost of nearly \$7 billion dollars, the Penn Station Area Redevelopment plan has the potential to employ nearly 50,000 building professionals over the next five years. These jobs provide a pathway into the middle class for New York families.

In closing, we ask that the ESD Board adopt the GPP and create a world-class transportation hub and a revitalized community.

Thank you for your consideration of this transformative project.

Very truly yours,

Carlo A. Scissura, Esq.  
President & CEO



# **BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK**

**GARY LaBARBERA**  
PRESIDENT

—  
AFFILIATED WITH THE  
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION TRADES DEPARTMENT  
OF WASHINGTON, DC  
—  
BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL  
OF NEW YORK STATE  
—  
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR OF CONGRESS  
OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION

## **TESTIMONY**

On behalf

### **BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF GREATER NEW YORK AND VICINITY**

In Support of the Pennsylvania Station Area Civic and Land Use Improvement Project  
June 30, 2022

I am Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York & Vicinity. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of the Pennsylvania Station Area Civic and Land Use Improvement Project.

The Building and Construction Trades Council is an organization of local building and construction trade unions that are affiliated with 15 International Unions in the North American Building Trades Union. Our local union affiliates represent approximately 100,000 union construction workers. The Building Trades mission is to raise the standard of living for all workers, to advocate for safe work conditions and to collectively advance working conditions for our affiliates' members, as well as all workers in New York City.

The Pennsylvania Station Project is a comprehensive redevelopment initiative that could revitalize the entire area around Penn Station. The renovation of the existing main station will improve access by adding 18 new escalators and 11 new elevators to platforms as well as more entrances and exits. These improvements will facilitate the goal of doubling the circulation for commuters and travelers, double the amount of floor space on the main concourse, and provide for higher ceilings that will improve the experience of commuters and visitors. These renovations will increase safety and security, make it easier for passengers to navigate through the station and connect to their destinations, and consolidate support functions. It will incorporate new entrances and access points as well as enhance the surrounding streetscape, address open spaces, and pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation.

Furthermore, the project will result in the development of ten (10) new buildings. It will allow for up to 1800 residential units with 540 intended to be permanently affordable. 162 permanently affordable units will be developed in one of the new buildings alone. The plan will also generate Class A commercial office, retail, and potentially hotel space as well as improve open public space around the Penn Station neighborhood.

In addition to improving transit access and circulation, creating new residential, commercial, and public space, this project will create a substantial number of construction jobs for workers. The General Project Plan should include a requirement that construction work must be performed under a project labor agreement. This would ensure that the construction workers

employed on this project receive family sustaining wages as well as medical and retirement benefits. It would also provide opportunities for individuals in apprenticeship programs to develop their skills through work experience in the industry. Additionally, performing construction work under a project labor agreement would provide opportunities to New Yorkers of all walks of life through our Apprenticeship Readiness Collective. These pre-apprentice programs – The Edward J. Malloy Initiative for Construction Skills, Helmets to Hardhats, Nontraditional Employment for Women, and Pathways 2 Apprenticeship - recruit in different demographic areas of New York City and provide entry level access to work in the construction industry, training, and preparation for a career and a future in construction work. A project labor agreement would ensure that the potential benefits of this project are fully realized.

With a Project Labor Agreement with the Building and Construction Trades Council, this project has the ability to provide real opportunity to New Yorkers through the creation of construction jobs with union wages and benefits. The Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York and Vicinity supports the use of a Project Labor Agreement for the Pennsylvania Station Area Project and projects like it. This project has the potential to revitalize and modernize our City, improve our transportation, and create middle class jobs for our members in the process. A project labor agreement with the Building and Construction Trades Council will help this project reach its full potential.

We thank you again for this opportunity to testify in support of the use of a project labor agreement for this Project.

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**Eric Yu**  
TD Bank



June 28, 2022

**Testimony: Penn Station Development**

Dan Biederman, President  
34<sup>th</sup> Street Partnership  
1065 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 2400  
New York, NY, 10018

I'm Dan Biederman, President of the 34th Street Partnership. Part of our mission is to steward and strengthen this part of Midtown, helping it reach its fullest economic and cultural potential.

Over the years, one of our biggest roadblocks has been Penn Station.

But thanks to Governor Hochul, we have a rare, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to improve both the district and station by transforming both into the vital, modern transportation hub we need it to be.

This plan prioritizes substantial improvements to the public realm and its infrastructure -- from widened and heightened corridors to better wayfinding and increased accessibility.

We'll see wider sidewalks, new retail that will activate our streetscapes, and an all around improved commuting experience that will see commuters spend more of their time -- and dollars -- here.

Repairing this transportation hub will mean workers and visitors can more safely and easily navigate the current maze of tunnels and corridors to frequent the thousands of businesses throughout the District without the thought of having to use this antiquated complex looming over them.

The pandemic has dealt a hard blow to Midtown, causing many of our small businesses to go bankrupt or close altogether. A bold investment in our infrastructure at this level is exactly what we need to recover and rebuild.

To us, this is a no-brainer, and there is no time to waste. We can't afford any more delays, so we commend Governor Hochul for fast tracking the construction and development process to deliver improvements to New Yorkers sooner rather than later.

It is time that our city has a modern transportation center made for the future. This is a symbol of our recovery and a declaration that New York is back for good.

We proudly support this project. Midtown's best days still lie ahead thanks to the Governor's Penn Station plan. Thank you.

**Ex-Officio**

Hon. Bill de Blasio	Hon. Scott Stringer	Vikki Barbero	Molly Hollister	Kevin S. Corbett
Phillip Eng	Hon. Jonnell Doris	Hon. Gale Brewer	Corey Johnson	Lowell D. Kern

# ReThinkNYC

## Statement of ReThinkNYC 6/29/2022 Submitted to Empire State Development Corporation

We have the largest transit hub in the hemisphere and one of the shoddiest.

This is in a year where we have a trillion-dollar infrastructure package.

Working people of the tri-state area are asking for a safe, reliable, well-planned station to get to and from work. **ReThinkNYC has such a plan.**

The Governor says that all we can expect is better and more escalators, more elevators and high ceilings in the old facility – plus a narrow skylight in a cavern of shadow casting supertalls .

Commuters, apparently, should be thankful for continuing to go underground like rats into the sewer.

We are told we need to level an entire fully functional neighborhood of mostly working and lower income residences and small businesses which Roth, Vornado and their accomplices have manipulatively tarred as “blighted”. The use of the “blight” tactic is a standing part of their playbook to demolish that which they do not like.

We are asked to believe Roth’s campaign contributions to the Governors (plural) didn’t facilitate this result.

The State should be looking at Madison Square Garden and 2 Penn Plaza and figuring how to give us back a real train station. Instead, they want to “euthanize” the surrounding neighborhood.

Is this the best and most equitable thing we can do at Penn Station?

The Gateway Tunnels should provide us with a seismic opportunity to promote decongestion of one of the world's most congested metropolitan areas.

Gateway should enable us to implement through-running which would allow trains to travel through Manhattan to other centers of business activity in the region instead of languishing in rail yards, or to return empty.

Through-running, the modern international standard, can be implemented in the envelope of the current Penn Station and Moynihan and eliminate the need to demolish any buildings on 31st and 30th Streets.

Why is this opportunity being squandered?

The commuter railroads – with no transparency and some of the most belligerent practices with respect to Freedom of Information requests – suggest this is not feasible and we should wait until 2080.

Their reasons are myopic and misinformed. We have pointed to those defects in prior submissions, including their engineering analysis of our plan. Their analysis changed our plan and then faulted us for those very same changes. We have pointed this out to them repeatedly but they stand by and repeat their faulty conclusions. We will leave it to others to assess their candor and motivation in doing so. Even with their faulty “Heads we win, tails you lose” engineering report they indicate we provide essentially the same capacity increase as their plan at half the cost.

Now, The Tri State Transportation Committee has also come forward in favor of through-running. Let's see how the transportation industrial complex adjusts to this heresy.

The MTA and others need to fairly assess and implement our plan, not their bastardization of our viable through-running alternative.

Andy Byford, formerly of our MTA, escaped across the pond and just opened a transformative through-running operation in London to broad international acclaim. Meanwhile, we had international travelers to a recent transit conference in Newark, who upon landing in JFK, could not believe the rigamarole of getting to Newark – three trains?

Our commuters and reverse commuters go through worse every day.

Given this, why should we wait decades before through-running can be implemented? Why isn't Madison Square Garden moving? Why can't we hope for a great above ground station.

We need to withdraw the GPP, Master Plan and other Penn Station initiatives or pause it for a year in order that:

- We can resolve the transit plan and federal funding issues
- We resolve where to move Madison Square Garden and when/
- We resolve the design for a bona fide above ground station worthy of the region and city.

Samuel A. Turvey

Chairperson

ReThinkNYC,

Co-Coordinator,

Empire Station Coalition

# RITCHIE TORRES

THE BRONX

June 29, 2022

Empire State Development Board of Directors  
633 Third Avenue, 37<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Empire State Development Board of Directors:

As travel rebounds and our economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, commuters across New York are desperate for a transit hub that meets modern travel demands. On behalf of my constituents in the South Bronx, I ask that you urgently commence work on the reconstruction of Penn Station to revitalize the station and the surrounding neighborhood to deliver a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Penn Station.

Penn Station is an outdated train station that was meant to service 200,000 travelers. Before the pandemic, the station serviced over 600,000 daily commuters, more than three times the amount of commuters it was intended to service.<sup>1</sup> Due to severe congestion, commuters from across the region face delays, crowds, and a confusing layout that diminish their travel experience, which results in widespread inconveniences and reduces the region's economic activity.

It is paramount to build a Penn Station that meets current travel patterns, accommodates future projections, and brings the transit hub into the modern era. The MTA's upcoming Penn Station Access project will open four new MTA stations in the Bronx through a one-seat train via Metro-North Railroad directly into Penn Station. This will, finally, alleviate the transportation desert in the Bronx by granting tens of thousands of Bronx residents increased access to Penn Station. My constituents will be afforded greater access to jobs, educational opportunities, health care services, and recreational activities through Midtown Manhattan.

The Penn Station Area Civic and Land Use project proposed by the Empire State Development Corporation will not only help address the transportation needs of my constituents, but the plan will help revitalize the surrounding neighborhood in Manhattan. I understand that the plan calls for the building of mixed used developments leading to 1,800 new residential units, with as many as 540 being permanently affordable housing units, and the creation of an estimated 8 acres of new public space. This development will lead to approximately 50,000 new union-construction jobs to help bring New York City towards a greener and transit-oriented system. It is paramount to provide Penn Station with the upgrade it needs as well as improve the surrounding community to be a more open, livable and welcoming.

In the last decade, New York has undergone massive infrastructure upgrades by bringing airports, subways, and commuter rail into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Yet, Penn Station, the busiest passenger rail station in the country, remains woefully outdated. I am of the belief that it is imperative to immediately begin transforming Penn Station into a modern transit hub that will efficiently service hundreds of thousands of commuters every day for generations.

Sincerely,



Ritchie Torres  
Congressman  
New York's 15th Congressional District

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<sup>1</sup> "The Case for Penn South", *Regional Plan Association*, <https://rpa.org/work/reports/the-case-for-penn-south>



## **Testimony to Meeting of the Directors of the New York State Urban Development Corporation d/b/a Empire State Development**

**June 30, 2022**

Reinvent Albany advocates for transparent and accountable government. While we appreciate the ability to submit written testimony for this Board meeting, the public should be given additional opportunities to comment on this project before it is approved, including on its finances.

The Penn Station Redevelopment project under consideration by the Directors is important to the City and the State. Reinvent Albany supports improving Penn Station and New York's major transit hubs to better serve transit riders.

Unfortunately, Empire State Development refuses to release basic information to Legislators and the public about the Penn Station deal's financing. The newly-released Final Environmental Impact Statement notes that "Project financing is not part of the EIS scope" and further states that "the terms of potential payment agreements or other financing options are yet to be determined."

Does ESD not know how it intends to fund the project? Why can't ESD make it clear why it wants to fund state transportation infrastructure using an opaque scheme that essentially steers future New York City property tax revenue to the State via a Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) deal and puts all the risk on taxpayers?

Further, this deal could result in a real estate firm and [big political donor](#), Vornado, getting a tax break worth a billion or more dollars. It is ironic that a state public authority – an entity that exists to act independently of politics – is securing subsidies for a major donor to the Governor.

There are many unanswered questions about Penn Station Development finances that should be answered before the Directors approve any aspect of the project:

- 1. What is the logic of this financing approach given that there are frequently cost overruns on mega projects?** PILOTs won't be able to adjust to cost overruns, nor will the real estate market, meaning the State will have to pay for any increases in costs. An [RFP for the design was only issued by the MTA on June](#)

[9th](#), and costs can increase as designs change. The FEIS now lists Penn Station reconstruction costs at \$7 to \$9 billion, an increase from the announcement made by Governor Hochul last fall when it ranged from \$6 to \$7 billion. The MTA's East Side Access, which ballooned to an unfathomable \$11 billion cost, is a cautionary tale for mega projects.

2. **What is the total cost to city and state taxpayers of this financing scheme, versus the State using conventional borrowing?**
3. **What is the impact on city real estate tax revenues, given the proximity to Hudson Yards?** The Penn Station area does not exist in a vacuum, but rather in the center of midtown Manhattan.
4. **Exactly how much is the development expected to raise in support of the renovation project?** It is a gamble to base revenues off of development that is speculative and would occur over multiple decades.
5. **How much does the State intend to give the developer in tax breaks via discounted PILOTs?** If the Hudson Yards model is used, there could be \$1 billion or more in tax breaks (see [research from the Schwartz Center for Economic Policy](#)).
6. **How long will taxpayers pay interest payments on project bonding before Vornado properties generate any revenue?** PILOTs don't begin to generate revenue until the completion of construction, which ranges from 2028 to 2044 for all the buildings (see page 12 of [IBO's report](#) for details).
7. **How much will the State be paying in credit enhancement mechanisms?** Because borrowing based on PILOTs is considered risky by bond raters, the State must guarantee the bonds.
8. **What are the risks to the taxpayers if development does not go as planned, and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) come in at lower levels?** (See [IBO's research](#) about city payments made in Hudson Yards.) Given that subway ridership remains at 60% of 2019 levels and the return to office is slow, there are concerns about the resiliency of the real estate market in the post-COVID world.
9. **What assumptions are going into making the City "whole" in terms of projections from current tax revenues as well as increased costs for city services?**
10. **As part of this redevelopment project, why is the State not proposing to end Madison Square Garden's \$44 million annual tax abatement, which has cost New York City over \$875 million in lost tax revenue since 1982 (See [IBO's testimony](#) to the State Senate)?**

### ***Approving the Penn Redevelopment would be Irresponsible***

NYS taxpayers will be on the hook for at least a portion of bond payments from PILOTs and possibly much, much more if the development doesn't go as planned decades from now. It would be irresponsible for ESD Directors to sign off on any aspect of this project without a clear financing plan and understanding of the PILOT agreements.

The State needs to go back to the drawing board and fund this project through traditional, transparent funding. Why can't we just fund transit projects with traditional capital grants from the State or City? Then there would then be real honesty about exactly who is paying and who is benefitting.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. Please send any questions to Elizabeth Marcello at [elizabeth \[at\] reinventalbany.org](mailto:elizabeth@reinventalbany.org).



**Comments from the Partnership for New York City  
Empire State Development Directors on the  
Pennsylvania Station Area Civic and Land Use Improvement Project**

**June 29, 2022**

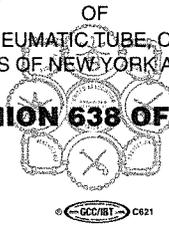
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The Partnership for New York City supports the proposed Pennsylvania Station Area Civic and Land Use Improvement Project, which is vital to fund the renovation and expansion of Penn Station, promising millions square feet of residential, commercial and retail space to provide housing and business uses. Access to mass transit is a major factor in business location decisions, impacting commercial real estate demand and shaping job growth patterns. The Project will transform the surrounding areas and support economic growth as well as generate revenue to help fund transit and public space improvements. A modern transit hub that can support commercial activity, offer innovative live/work opportunities and connect people to jobs will boost economic recovery and ensure an attractive location to work, live, visit and invest.

# Enterprise Association of Steamfitters Local Union 638 U.A.

OF  
STEAM, HOT WATER, HYDRAULIC, SPRINKLER, PNEUMATIC TUBE, COMPRESSED AIR, ICE MACHINE, AIR CONDITIONING  
AND GENERAL PIPE FITTERS OF NEW YORK AND LONG ISLAND, A.F.L.-C.I.O.

**STEAMFITTERS LOCAL UNION 638 OF THE UNITED ASSOCIATION**



*Daniel Mulligan*

Business Manager

27-08 40th Avenue, 4th Floor  
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Phone: (718) 392-3420

Fax: (718) 392-3855

Email: dmulligan@iu638.com

## TESTIMONY

On behalf

Enterprise Association Steamfitters Local 638

In Support of the Pennsylvania Station Area Civic and Land Use Improvement Project

July 28, 2022

I am Daniel Mulligan, Business Manager of Steamfitters Local 638, a Building Trades union that represents nearly 9,400 members working in the pipe trades and heating, ventilation and air conditioning industry. Our union's mission is to provide the highest quality training and education to our members and ensure that they have access to family-sustaining wages and top-tier benefits commensurate with their skill and professionalism.

Redevelopment of and around Pennsylvania Station represents a tremendous opportunity to enhance and modernize the transportation infrastructure of the station and the surrounding neighborhood. As the City has grown, and commuters and visitors have returned to our City following the pandemic, the need to expand Penn Station has once again become apparent. Increased access to outdoor spaces, new bike, pedestrian and vehicle lanes and the development of 10 new buildings will beautify the neighborhood and bring millions of dollars in economic development to the surrounding area. These new buildings will bring more business activity to the area and plans for residential buildings will include 540 permanently affordable units and a total of 1800 new housing units, at a time when affordability and the availability of housing is a critical issue to New Yorkers.

To derive the full benefit of this landmark project, the General Project Plan should include the requirement that construction work on this project be done under a Project Labor Agreement (PLA). PLAs ensure that workers are paid family sustaining wages and have access to the highest quality retirement and medical benefits available, which unions like Local 638 provide. They also ensure that projects are completed on time, within budget and with the highest level of quality.

Using a union workforce on this job benefits our members, who rely on new construction projects such as this to continue their careers and maintain their benefits, but it also benefits the community more broadly, by allowing us to bring new apprentices into our training program and give them access to middle class careers. As we train the next generation of construction worker, we strive to ensure that our union and workforce represents the diversity of greater New York City, which is why we partner with pre-apprenticeship and workforce readiness programs like Construction Skills, Nontraditional

Employment for Women, Helmets to Hardhats and other programs that provide opportunities for women, people of color, veterans, and other historically underserved communities.

Signing a PLA with the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York and Vicinity (BCTC) will benefit our members, as well as the nearly 100,000 construction workers that make up the membership of the 15 affiliated unions that form the BCTC. This Penn Station redevelopment plan has the promise to be the next in a long line of important construction projects to shape the landscape and character of our City. It is vital that a skilled and unionized construction workforce be at the center of this plan to ensure that the true promise of its economic development is realized and shared with the broader community. Investments in transportation and infrastructure such as this produce economic multipliers that benefit numerous industries and communities, making this expansion necessary for the City to modernize and meet the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of the project and the need for the use of a PLA for all phases of this plan.



Empire State Development  
June 30, 2022  
Directors Meeting

Comment on  
Pennsylvania Station Civic and Land Use Improvement Project

My name is Charles Yu, and I am the Senior Director of Business Assistance at the Long Island City Partnership, the Local Development Corporation (LDC) for Long Island City (LIC). I am writing today to reinforce the importance of investing in our public transit infrastructure to our local businesses and economy, and to the many people who rely on public transit to access opportunities in the region.

The Long Island City Partnership (LICP) advocates for economic development that benefits the industrial, commercial, tech, cultural, tourism, and residential sectors of Long Island City (LIC). Our mission is to attract new businesses to LIC, retain those already here, welcome new residents and visitors, and promote a vibrant and authentic mixed-use community. Among other programs, we manage the LIC Business Improvement District (LIC BID) and Industrial Business Zone (IBZ), providing through both one on one assistance to a wide range of companies including in accessing relocation, equipment purchasing, capital project and workforce development incentives.

Our neighborhood is one of the most important regional economic drivers, supporting a vibrant mixed-use community and one of the most productive manufacturing centers in New York State. For several recent years, LIC has been the fastest growing residential area in the country. Its education opportunities span from Cornell Tech to LaGuardia Community College. It has more than 6,800 businesses employing over 107,000 employees across diverse socio-economic backgrounds and a wide range of skill levels. It is home to multiple renowned arts and cultural institutions, including MoMA P.S.1, MoMI, SculptureCenter, Socrates Sculpture Park, and The Noguchi Museum.

We owe much of our success to our public transit infrastructure, which enables people from the five boroughs and surrounding suburbs to come here. Many of the social and professional connections that are fundamental to our neighborhood's success cannot happen without the physical connections provided by public transit. From the student who attends classes at LaGuardia Community College, to the worker who makes essential products in advanced factories, to the tourist who visits an exhibition at one of our museums, they all rely on public transit to get to their destinations.

Fortunately, the State recognizes the importance of public transit to our local economy. Its support and actions on recent and ongoing transit projects play a vital role in ensuring our transit infrastructure can continue to serve the region's growth. We believe improvements to Penn Station that enhance service are very helpful, and will leverage previous public investments to continue to benefit LIC, the region, and its people. What is more, as the COVID-19 pandemic continues, it is more important than ever to improve the public transit connections to jobs and career opportunities for all—a crucial component of an equitable recovery.

On behalf of the LIC business community, I thank you for your consideration of these matters.

**LIZ KRUEGER  
SENATOR, 28<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT**

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**CHAIR, MAJORITY MEMBER  
FINANCE**

**COMMITTEES:  
RULES  
BUDGET & REVENUE**

**Comments to NYS Urban Development Corporation Directors Regarding Approval of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Pennsylvania Station Area Civic and Land Use Improvement Project**

**State Senator Liz Krueger**

**June 29, 2022**

I continue to have lingering questions about the projects' finances and effect on the neighborhood that have not been adequately answered by the FEIS. I ask that the Board of Directors answer these questions before approving the FEIS. If any of these questions are unanswerable at the moment, the ESD Board of Directors should wait to approve the FEIS until all substantial environmental impact questions are addressed. Thank you for taking these concerns into consideration before voting on the FEIS.

**How will displaced residents be compensated?**

During the joint Senate hearing on June 24, Senator Krueger asked Commissioner Knight what ESD's commitment to displaced residents is. Commissioner Knight would only say that ESD would follow federal regulations. These regulations, which offer residents a maximum one-time payment of \$7,200, are inadequate considering the value of property in the area and the high cost of rent.

In addition, there have been no guarantees that rent regulated tenants would be able to keep their status in the event that they are relocated. Current rent regulated tenants at risk of displacement should remain rent regulated regardless of whether they are income qualified for an affordable unit. Before this FEIS is approved, ESD must make a clearer commitment to how both residents and businesses would be relocated equitably.

**Is the construction of new affordable housing dependent on the approval of a southern expansion of Penn Station onto Sites 1 through 3?**

According to ESD's CT-8 Response, only Site 1A would be "required" to include residential uses. Residential uses are "permitted" on Sites 1B, 4, and 8. The response goes on to state that "up to 1,798 residential units could be built, of which 540 would be permanently affordable." I am worried about the uncertainty of the word "could." The least we can do for our neighbors who are relocated from homes they've had for decades is to ensure that housing for them is prioritized. Residential buildings should be the first ones built, and if Site 1A is not built, housing must be guaranteed on other sites.

**If New Jersey and the federal government do not come through with their portion of financing for Penn Station redevelopment and/or expansion, is it possible that we could have development without station improvement?**

During the June 24<sup>th</sup> hearing, Hope Knight stated that this is a possibility, and that any PILOT that does not go toward funding the Penn Station project would go to the city. What steps are being taken to ensure that we do not have real estate development without transit improvements?

**Given the high demand for Class A office space, why must we financially incentivize developers to build it?**

ESD's CT-4 Response makes a compelling argument that demand for Class A office space is high despite the pandemic and will continue to increase. Given that, what reason does ESD have that developers would need to be financially incentivized to build Class A office space? In Hudson Yards, it made a lot more sense to incentivize development given that the area was extremely lacking in economic development and transportation infrastructure. With Penn Station's coming reconstruction, as well as the Gateway Program and Metro-North Penn Station Access, this area will continue to be a thriving transportation hub. So, given the high demand for Class A office space, and the centrality of the Penn Station neighborhood, why does ESD insist that developers have to be incentivized?

**Is Tax Increment Financing the best mechanism for financing this project?**

Given the uncertainties about long-term revenue projections for the proposed development, I have concerns about whether reliance on Tax Increment Financing to fund large portions of the project is the best financing model. Have other options such as state bonding been fully evaluated? Bonding has traditionally been a safe way to fund transportation infrastructure, has it been fully considered as a funding alternative?



The Greater Harlem  
Chamber of Commerce  
200A West 136<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10030  
Established in 1896 - 2021  
125<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

June 29, 2022

Hon. Kathy Hochul

Cc: U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer  
U. S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

**Subject: Pennsylvania Station Civic and Land Use Project**

Dear Governor Hochul,

I am pleased to inform you that at our 2nd Quarter Board of Directors meeting held on June 23, 2022, the full Board of Directors of The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce unanimously voted to support and encourage the Pennsylvania Station Civic and Land Use Improvement Project.

It is our firm belief that the development and completion of this project will significantly enhance and facilitate better use of Pennsylvania Station, through enhanced pedestrian mobility improvements, expanded capacity for and accessibility to public transit, open public spaces and the overall important emphasis on environmental benefits. We also support the proposed bicycle infrastructure improvements and other related development connected with the site.

With that in mind, we wish to officially notify you of the support of our Chamber for this very important development project that will substantially improve Pennsylvania Station and thereby benefit all New Yorkers and visitors who utilize the station.

If there is any additional way that we can assist in expressing our support, please let us know.

**On behalf of the Board of Directors of  
The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce**

Respectfully,

Lloyd A. Williams  
President & CEO

June 29, 2022

Directors of the New York State Urban Development Corporation  
d/b/a Empire State Development  
633 Third Avenue

[Submitted via email to [ESD@esd.ny.gov](mailto:ESD@esd.ny.gov)]

**RE: Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Penn Station Civic and Land Use Project  
General Project Plan**

To the Directors of Empire State Development:

REBNY thanks the Directors of the Empire State Development (ESD) for the opportunity to provide a strongly favorable statement regarding the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the revised General Project Plan for the Pennsylvania Station Civic and Land Use Project. REBNY also wants to thank ESD and the Governor for the robust public engagement process to date, which includes the creation of the Community Advisory Committee Working Group (CACWG), in which REBNY participates, and the City, State, and Federal agency staff engagement with the CACWG over the last year.

REBNY supports policies that plan for the City's long-term growth and provides opportunities for new housing, jobs, and economic opportunity. REBNY believes this General Project Plan, as proven time and again on other large-scale plans, will provide a catalyst for renewal and growth as we continue to navigate beyond the pandemic. The need for improvements to Penn Station is clear to anyone who has utilized its platforms. A new Penn Station is imperative given the demonstrated rail capacity needs today with the projected population and job growth for the region. According to the RPA, that [work must and should start as soon as possible](#) to take advantage of the temporary reduction in passengers.

But, in the [words of City Planning Director Daniel R. Garodnick](#), a new Penn Station cannot properly serve the City "unless it is paired with a world-class hub of transit-oriented development in the area around Penn Station, and integrates other critical components of the transit infrastructure in the area . . . infrastructure that will enhance rail capacity and intermodal connections."

In recent years, the streetscape has seen some public space improvements by private property owners. However, no cohesive vision unites these blocks in the same manner one finds outside Grand Central, Bryant Park, Union Square and other major transit hubs. A key component of the financing for these improvements would be commercial development by the private sector. Floor area generated by the GPP for this purpose would be subject to a sale, with funds going toward transit improvements, including the needed improvements to intermodal connections and the public

realm. This value capture development model has been utilized in other parts of the city to great effect and has proven to be a way to strengthen transit infrastructure and create good jobs that will play an important role in supporting New York City's long-term economic recovery.

Concerns should be addressed, but not at the cost of sacrificing momentum to the necessary work that must occur. Manhattan has the oldest and largest office market in the country, with currently vacant square footage in near obsolete, older buildings numbering more than the entirety of Boston and Austin's commercial market combined. New York City deserves opportunities to replenish this aging building stock, a critical component of the tax base both in terms of direct funds and indirect positive revenue generated. [New commercial development](#) in this neighborhood will provide added benefits through the financing of the improvements to Penn Station.

The GPP also contemplates up to four sites for residential use. This is a thoughtful provision to address the city's housing crisis. Furthermore, residential units and density adjacent to transit is simply smart planning. The City also has an obligation to provide opportunities for housing, including affordable housing, with good access to transit, jobs, and parks, which this plan will provide for. Therefore, the General Project Plan put forward by the staff at ESD, the MTA, and the Governor will be an critically important and positive force for the future of the City's largest transit hub and its surrounding blocks. The plan will ensure a world-class intermodal transit hub, a well-designed public realm, and a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood.

It is important that we plan for a better future and to ensure our place as a pre-eminent world class City. This GPP will induce new economic activity and tax revenue, provide much needed homes, and help to improve the quality of life for New Yorkers, commuters and visitors alike. Approval of the FEIS is an important step to advance these shared goals for smart planning and economic development in and around Penn Station.

Thank you for the consideration of these points.

Sincerely,

Basha Gerhards

Senior Vice President of Planning



229 West 135th Street - Front 1 - New York, NY 10030 - 212 926 2550

June 29, 2022

To Whom It May Concern

The Harlem Arts Alliance (HAA) is an arts service membership organization with 300+ cultural organizations, cultural practitioners and educational institutions of high learning: (CCNY, Columbia University, Et. al.). Over the past 20 years HAA has participated with City, State, and private developers to create strategies that improve the quality of life in Upper Manhattan by creating jobs and increasing community wealth through retail services, business services and cultural tourism.

On behalf of HAA'S Board of Directors we reviewed the proposed Penn Station Area Redevelopment Project Plan and support the revised draft which proposes a new expanded vision and vitality to the Penn Station Corridor; offering jobs, economic vitality MWBE opportunities, affordable housing, sustainable construction, environmentally built transportation enhancement and more.

The new Penn Station Development Hub, like the immortal phoenix bird flying out of the ashes, will regenerate itself with multiple enhancements for New York City local and international business, providing sustainable and inclusive opportunities as a great place to work, visit and travel. ESD working with the appropriate State, City and Private Enterprises will re-energize the new Penn Station.

We support the Revised ESD Penn Station submission. New York deserves the best.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Voza Rivers".

Voza Rivers, Chairman

# UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND JOINERS OF AMERICA

## NEW YORK CITY & VICINITY DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

**JOSEPH A. GEIGER**  
Executive Secretary - Treasurer

**PAUL CAPURSO**  
President /Asst EST

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June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022

To Whom it May Concern,

On behalf of the New York City District Council of Carpenters, I want to express my firm support for the Penn Station General Project Plan.

The New York City & Vicinity District Council of Carpenters represents 20,000 members with distinct crafts, including shop and industrial carpenters, dock builders, millwrights, timbermen, high rise concrete, floor coverers, and more.

We strongly support approving the Pennsylvania Station Area Civic and Land Use Improvement Project with a Project Labor Agreement setting forth terms and conditions for the construction workers renovating Penn Station and developing the surrounding neighborhood.

As you know well, the ambitious plans to renovate and renew Penn Station have been in development for years. After decades of delays and uncertainties, this project is on the cusp of becoming a reality. With your visionary leadership, we can move forward on a reconstruction project that will create thousands of union jobs and dramatically improve public transit in New York City.

The project plan will renovate the existing main station to improve access and circulation creating a safe and easier way for passengers to navigate throughout the concourse. In addition, renovations will incorporate new entrances and access points as well as enhance the surrounding streetscape, address open spaces, and pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular circulation.

Furthermore, the project will result in the development of ten (10) new buildings. It will allow for up to 1800 residential units with 540 intended to be permanently affordable. 162 permanently affordable units will be developed in one of the new buildings alone. The plan will also generate Class A commercial office, retail, and potentially hotel space as well as improve open public space around the Penn Station neighborhood.

The pandemic has dealt a terrible blow to union workers across our city. Working New Yorkers have been pushed to the brink, with jobs canceled or postponed and the impacts of the pandemic on personal livelihoods affecting union households in every borough. This project will create a substantial number of construction jobs for workers. The General Project Plan should include a requirement that construction work must be performed under a project labor agreement. This would ensure that the construction workers employed on this project receive family sustaining wages as well as medical and retirement benefits.

A project labor agreement would afford apprentices an opportunity to hone their skills and advance their careers in the construction industry through the hours of work that would be available on this project.

Performing this work under a project labor agreement will also provide opportunities for city residents to gain entry into the construction industry through our pre-apprentice and apprenticeship programs.

This project has the potential to revitalize and modernize our City, improve our transportation, and create middle class jobs for our members in the process. A project labor agreement with the Building and Construction Trades Council will help this project reach its full potential.

We simply can't wait any longer for Penn Station's reconstruction. I urge you to move forward with this wise investment in our economy, infrastructure and union workers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph A. Geiger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joseph A. Geiger  
Executive Secretary-Treasurer  
New York City and Vicinity District Council of Carpenters