

TSTC position paper on Gateway Tunnel and proposed No. 7 subway extension to New Jersey

The Tri-State Transportation Campaign strongly supports additional transit capacity across the Hudson River to reduce congestion, pollution, and support New Jersey and New York's economy. Access to the Region's Core would have achieved these goals. It would have doubled cross-Hudson River rail service between New Jersey and Manhattan, provided additional one-seat rides for eight NJ Transit lines, reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 67,000 tons, and generated 6,000 construction jobs annually.

TSTC maintains its position that Governor Christie's cancellation of Access to the Region's Core was the wrong move for New Jersey and New York. But now that the project is dead, the region is considering other alternatives.

Mayor Bloomberg has floated the idea of extending the No. 7 subway to New Jersey. Amtrak, with the support of Senators Lautenberg and Menendez, has proposed building a new rail tunnel into Penn Station. Each project is being further evaluated. If a preliminary evaluation indicates that either project is worthwhile, it will take many years to complete environmental reviews and secure the financial and political support necessary to bring a project to fruition.

As public interest in these projects escalates, TSTC has created the following principles to guide future discussions and investments.

1. **Additional cross-Hudson transit capacity is needed now.** It will take years to complete environmental reviews and line up financing and political support for a new rail tunnel across the Hudson River. But all Hudson River crossings are already at capacity and improvements are necessary now. To alleviate these problems, TSTC supports near-term improvements to cross-Hudson bus service. A population the size of Cincinnati travels by bus between New Jersey and Manhattan each weekday and these riders have seen few improvements in decades. TSTC supports the following projects that could improve the cross-Hudson commute: *a bus parking garage on the West Side of Manhattan, enhancements to the Port Authority Bus Terminal, reconstruction of the Lincoln Tunnel Helix, an additional morning eastbound Express Bus/High Occupancy Toll Lane along the Lincoln Tunnel approach, and a westbound evening bus only lane on the Lincoln Tunnel approach.*
2. **New York City should increase its subsidy to the MTA.** New York City has not increased its subsidy to the MTA in nearly two decades, according to the NYC Independent Budget Office. In fact, when inflation is taken into account, NYC's subsidy has declined since 1990. The MTA faces a \$10 billion budget deficit in its current capital program and without additional resources, the system will fall into disrepair.
3. **No expansion project should take resources away from the existing transit system.** The MTA and NJTransit both implemented drastic service cuts and fare increases in 2010 due to funding shortfalls. The MTA has no capital funding after 2011, meaning that without additional resources, the agency won't be able to repair the existing system, let alone complete expansion projects like the 2nd Ave subway. Maintaining existing transit network and levels of service should be the priority for our region. New cross-Hudson projects are vitally necessary, but should only proceed if existing maintenance, repair, and operating needs are met.
4. **New revenues will be needed for MTA, Amtrak, or NJTransit to shoulder the additional operating or capital needs associated with any project.** Cost estimates should consider the costs of operating any new service, along with additional capital equipment needs.
5. **NJ, NY, NYC, Amtrak and the federal government should work cooperatively to determine which proposed project, if any, should be supported in the absence of ARC.**

6. **Projects should be judged on cost effectiveness** along with their ability to effectively enhance regional connectivity, produce jobs, and support economic and environmental goals.
7. **All cost estimates, ridership projects and environmental impacts for both projects should be made publicly available as soon as information is available.**



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