



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

April 10th, 2023

Hon. Kathy Hochul
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Re: Status of Port Authority Bus Terminal Replacement Project

Dear Governor Hochul:

Manhattan Community Board 4 (MCB4) would like to update you on the Port Authority Bus Terminal replacement (PABTR) project in our district and share our growing concerns related to delays and funding. We ask your assistance in ensuring the Port Authority remains fully invested in moving the project forward with urgency and honor its commitment to provide the majority of project funding through its capital plan.

MCB4 is a Participating Agency in the PABT Redevelopment Project, and there is a history of consistent and productive meetings through which information was shared between the Hell's Kitchen community and the Port Authority. In the last several months, engagement has been reduced significantly and critically important issues remain unresolved. MCB4 reiterates its request to resume regularly scheduled meetings.

The project is currently 12 months behind its published schedule. There is no revised date scheduled for public hearings on the Draft EIS (originally due Spring/Summer 2022). The Official Notice of Availability of the Combined Final EIS and Record of Decision to be published in the Federal Register (originally due in Spring/Summer 2023) have not been announced. In the first half of 2022, there were bi-weekly meetings between the PANYNJ and the Community Board with a sense of progress and urgency. After a 9-month hiatus, those meetings have only recently resumed.

MCB4 was encouraged to hear that funding for the project is included in the 2017- 2026 PANYNJ capital plan for the first phase of construction, building platforms over the Dyer Avenue open cuts, ramps and staging terminal. Another \$ 7 billion, as originally committed, must be included in subsequent capital plans for the second phase of the project.

Since its inception, it has always been the intent of the Port Authority Board to fund this project with its own capital through its bonding authority. In March 2016, the Port Authority's press release¹ noted "Board to fund multi-billion-dollar replacement of America's busiest bus terminal in 2017-2026 Capital Plan, with new station remaining in New York. The Port Authority Board of Commissioners today committed to keep on Manhattan's West Side a new state-of-the-art bus terminal to replace the aging and outmoded current facility, while also voting to dedicate the funding necessary for completion of the project. The Board committed to allocate the necessary funds for the project's construction in New York City when the Port Authority established its 2017-2026 Capital Plan." In 2015, the budget for such a project had been established at \$10 billion.

However, we now understand that the project now includes both Federal Transportation funding and bonding authority derived from establishment of a New York City PILOT agreement on the development of towers as part of the Eighth Avenue bus terminal site. Those agreements are under negotiation and have not yet been reached. Until such agreements are reached, we understand the project is essentially paused. While further sources of funding are secured to reduce the PANYNJ's bonding needs, the project must not be paused but proceed in development.

Another factor the PANYNJ is facing is loss of revenue in all its divisions. However, despite such revenue loss, capital investment and planning has moved ahead, especially in our region's airports. The PABT Reconstruction & Expansion Project must be treated in the same fashion. It is a critical piece of our regional transportation infrastructure.

The PABTR project is crucial to the region's economic sustainability and to the health of our residents. In 1938, the Lincoln Tunnel, and its Dyer Avenue above and below ground approaches, tore a scar through the heart of Hell's Kitchen, demolishing hundreds of buildings. In 1950, the Port Authority Bus Terminal and its approach ramps continued the demolition and displacement of thousands of Hell's Kitchen residents. The PABT Bus Terminal Replacement and Expansion project would begin to heal that scar while addressing the numerous air quality, traffic, and congestion ills that the current outdated terminal imposes upon our community, while continuing as a lifeline for low and moderate income commuters.

The PABT Replacement and Expansion project has gone from generating major community opposition to a groundswell of community support and engagement. With its reconception, the Hell's Kitchen community and Manhattan Community Board 4 has welcomed it. That change is directly due to the Port Authority staff being exceptionally open to tapping local knowledge in designing and refining the proposed siting and solutions. This project will provide a terminal with larger capacity, lower maintenance

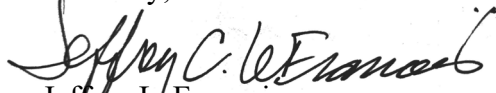
¹ https://www.panynj.gov/port-authority/en/press-room/press-release-archives/2016_press_releases/port_authority_willbuildnewbusterminalonmanhattanswestsidenearcu.html

costs, on time buses, better integration in the neighborhood fabric, and cleaner air in a district which has the third worst air quality in New York City. It will remove buses from city streets with attendant safety issues and create significant green space in a district which has one of the lowest in per capita green space in the City of New York.

Timing is of the essence: the post-COVID recovery temporary reduction bus usage provides a window of opportunity to undertake this effort while minimizing PABT operational risks. As the PANYNJ seeks additional Federal and City PILOT Revenue for the project, MCB4 requests the project be as fully funded in the PANYNJ capital plan as other PANYNJ projects and proceeds at full speed consistent with the Board of Commissioners' 2016 vote.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jeffery LeFrancois

Chair

Manhattan Community board 4

cc: Hon. Jerrold Nadler, U.S. Congress
Hon. Mark Levine, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Brad Hoylman-Sigal, New York State Senate
Hon. Linda Rosenthal, New York State Assembly
Hon. Tony Simone, New York State Assembly
Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council