



PENN 2023

Envisioning a New Penn Station, the Next Madison Square Garden, and the Future of West Midtown

THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF REPORTS BY
THE ALLIANCE FOR A NEW PENN STATION



Regional Plan Association





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H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture, Diller Scofidio + Renfro,
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), and SHoP Architects

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New York Penn Station Departures - 6:09

Line	Train	Destination	Platform	Time
A-13	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:10
A-14	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:15
A-15	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:20
A-16	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:25
A-17	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:30
A-18	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:35
A-19	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:40
A-20	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:45
A-21	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:50
A-22	Thruway	Southbound	8	6:55
A-23	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:00
A-24	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:05
A-25	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:10
A-26	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:15
A-27	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:20
A-28	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:25
A-29	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:30
A-30	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:35
A-31	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:40
A-32	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:45
A-33	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:50
A-34	Thruway	Southbound	8	7:55
A-35	Thruway	Southbound	8	8:00

THE ALLIANCE FOR A NEW PENN STATION

October 17, 2013

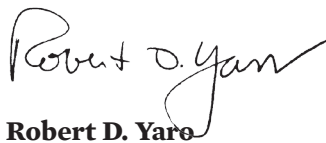
Why Penn 2023?

In the summer of 2013, at the urging of RPA, MAS, and many others, the New York City Council voted to limit Madison Square Garden's permit to operate on top of Penn Station to just 10 more years. By 2023, New York will have had the chance to reimagine our nation's busiest train terminal. This represents a historic opportunity to shape the future of Manhattan's west side and ensure the economic health of the city and the region.

But the clock is ticking. New York must take advantage of this narrow window to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to plan for a new Penn Station and Madison Square Garden and to re-envision the surrounding area.

To help move this critical project forward, RPA and MAS will be jointly issuing a series of reports in the coming months. This report outlines the case for a new Penn Station, describes principles to help guide development and illustrates the necessary elements for a new transit hub. Subsequent reports will look at potential sites for a new Madison Square Garden and will outline the economic feasibility and benefits of a new Penn Station.

In the same way that previous generations of New Yorkers built the bridges, tunnels, and roads that link together our city and region, this is the critical infrastructure project of our era. Now is the time to find a new home for Madison Square Garden and rebuild a more functional, modern 21st century Penn Station, to ensure the economic health and vitality of New York City for generations to come.



Robert D. Yaro
President
The Regional Plan Association



Vin Cipolla
President
The Municipal Art Society of New York

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



LIRR TRAIN INFORMATION

Line	Train	Arrival	Departure
Norfolk	101	10:00	10:05
	102	10:05	10:10
	103	10:10	10:15
	104	10:15	10:20
Long Beach	201	10:00	10:05
	202	10:05	10:10
	203	10:10	10:15
	204	10:15	10:20
Metro-North	301	10:00	10:05
	302	10:05	10:10
	303	10:10	10:15
	304	10:15	10:20

CORRIDOR

Track 20-215 Y 10:15-05 20:15

10:15-05 20:15

Tracks 13-19

PENN
2023

I. Executive Summary

New York and the tri-state region urgently need a new Penn Station and a new Madison Square Garden.

Penn Station is our region's gateway. Hundreds of thousands of people pass through the station every day. The station, which replaced the original 1910 McKim, Mead and White Beaux Arts-style building, is severely overcrowded. Built to handle 200,000 travelers, the station now serves some half a million. As public transit use and our region's population expand, even more people will be crammed into the station's jammed corridors and stairwells.

Our region now has an opportunity to envision a improved civic experience and create a holistic plan for Penn Station, Madison Square Garden, Midtown and the greater Northeastern region.

- Penn Station is the critical infrastructure project of our time. Rather than a single building, a 21st century Penn Station is a network of connected pieces. Moynihan Station is currently underway, and Amtrak has begun planning efforts on the Gateway project, which will expand Penn Station to the south. These investments should be coordinated in order to create an inclusive redevelopment strategy and maximize transit connectivity.
- Much of the West Midtown district is significantly underdeveloped. Few of the area's outdated office, retail and hotels contribute to New York City's ability to retain its prominence and competitive position as a global business center. The Penn Station office district has the lowest overall rental rate of any of the Midtown submarkets. A new station would have dramatic impact by improving the quality of the surrounding district.
- Ensuring the station's viability is crucial, not only as part of planning for projected growth, but is also essential to the health and vitality of the city and region. Investing now will help keep New York competitive and ultimately create a better environment in which to work and live.
- Building a new Penn Station has broad public support in New York. According to the 2013 MAS Survey on Livability, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, and conducted by the Marist Poll, 74% of New Yorkers say it should be a "top priority" or "an important consideration" for the next administration.
- This report is the first in series that RPA and MAS will be issuing, investigating the economic, transportation and planning issues around Penn Station.

Why We Need a New Penn Station

- Penn Station is currently operating at capacity;
- Ridership along the Northeast Corridor is growing;
- Moynihan Station is a critical first step to fixing Penn, but the planned Amtrak hub alone will not be able to relieve congestion at Penn over the long term;
- The severe limitations of Penn Station inhibit the growth of regional rail, including the potential for high-speed service along the entire Northeast Corridor between Washington, D.C., and Boston;
- Manhattan's west side is seeing dramatic changes at Hudson Yards and around the High Line that will only increase demands on Penn Station;
- The existing Penn Station stifles growth and limits economic opportunity in the area;
- Crowding at the station raises safety issues;
- The existing streetscape is inhospitable and doesn't knit the neighborhood together as it should;
- The current superblock form of Penn Station and the Garden hinder pedestrian circulation; and
- The current structure of Madison Square Garden limits opportunities to improve the station below. Rebuilding the Garden in a suitable nearby location will create enormous value while unlocking the ability to rethink the existing station.

Vision

The creation of a new Penn Station is vital to the region's prosperity and quality of life. But the station is just one piece of a larger vision to revitalize the underperforming area surrounding the station and connect it to the economic and cultural fabric of the city. A successful strategy will involve:

- Creating an outstanding transit hub;
- Building a new, modern Madison Square Garden;
- Completing Moynihan Station;
- Reviving the surrounding neighborhood into a world-class district.



II. WHAT'S WRONG WITH PENN STATION?



**PENN
2023**

II. What's Wrong With Penn Station?

Many global cities are restoring or building new gateways to serve as the principal entry point for intercity and international travelers and commuters.

Cities are making these investments because revitalized train stations make good transportation, economic-development and city-building sense. These train stations serve both as major transportation hubs and as focal points for urban revitalization, tourism, and public life. By contrast, Penn Station has been relegated to a substandard, crowded, and unsafe basement location for the past half century.

In the 1960s, the original Penn Station building was demolished while the below-grade portion beneath Madison Square Garden was remodeled into the corridors and cramped stairways of today. This redesign reflects the mid-century's loss of faith in the future of public transportation—a time when America was investing in automobiles, highways, and suburban infrastructure rather than rail and subways. The great architecture critic Ada Louise

Huxtable chastised this disinvestment as the original Penn was demolished, lamenting in a 1963 *New York Times* article, “We are an impoverished society. It is a poor society indeed that can’t pay for these amenities; that has no money for anything except expressways to rush people out of our dull and deteriorating cities.”¹

Today, however, there is an urban renaissance as more people flock to cities to live, work, or invest. The use of intercity and commuter rail along the Northeast Corridor and in New York has grown exponentially over the last decade, a pattern that is expected to continue. The confluence of this growth and the extraordinary amount of new development anticipated in Midtown and across the city will put great pressure on the already overwhelmed Penn Station.

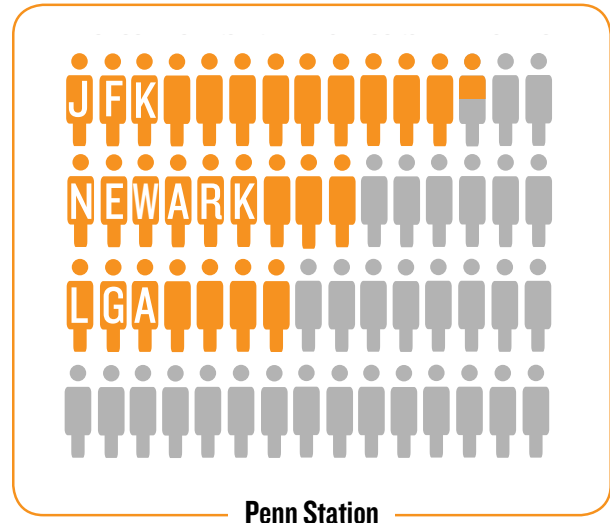
With the expected development pressure, it is imperative to address the station’s severely congested facilities and crowded, disjointed pedestrian spaces now. This year, Mayor Michael Bloomberg recognized transportation’s role in the city’s economic future, stating, “The lack of new transit investment is creating a serious and urgent threat to New York City’s economic competitiveness.”²

Penn Station Is at Capacity

Penn Station is the busiest transit hub in the western hemisphere. Its 1960s design—created by architect Charles Luckman—was devised at a time when both train travel and New York were thought to be in decline. Planners didn't anticipate the revival of public transportation and the economic rebirth of New York City.

Today the station moves more than half a million people a day, more than that of Kennedy, LaGuardia and Newark airports combined.³ Further, the more than 1,100 columns that line the station's narrow platforms obstruct the flow of travelers, compounding the problem of loading and unloading trains and moving passengers—many with wheeled luggage—up and down the station's narrow and inadequate stairways, escalators and concourses.

When redesigned in the 1960s, Penn Station was meant mainly to serve intercity rail. Today, in addition to an expanded intercity service, it serves primarily as a regional commuter terminal.⁴ The station is home to Amtrak, New Jersey Transit, Long Island Rail Road (LIRR), and the 1, 2, 3, and A, C, E subway lines. The largest number of commuters travel by LIRR and by NJ Transit, the second- and third-biggest commuter rail operators in the United States behind Metro-North. Flanking the station are the New York subway system's fifth (1, 2, 3) and sixth (A, C, E), most heavily used stations, with the third ranked Herald Square only a block to the east.⁵



Number of Commuters Traveling Through Penn Station⁶

More people travel daily through Penn Station than JFK, LaGuardia, and Newark airports combined.

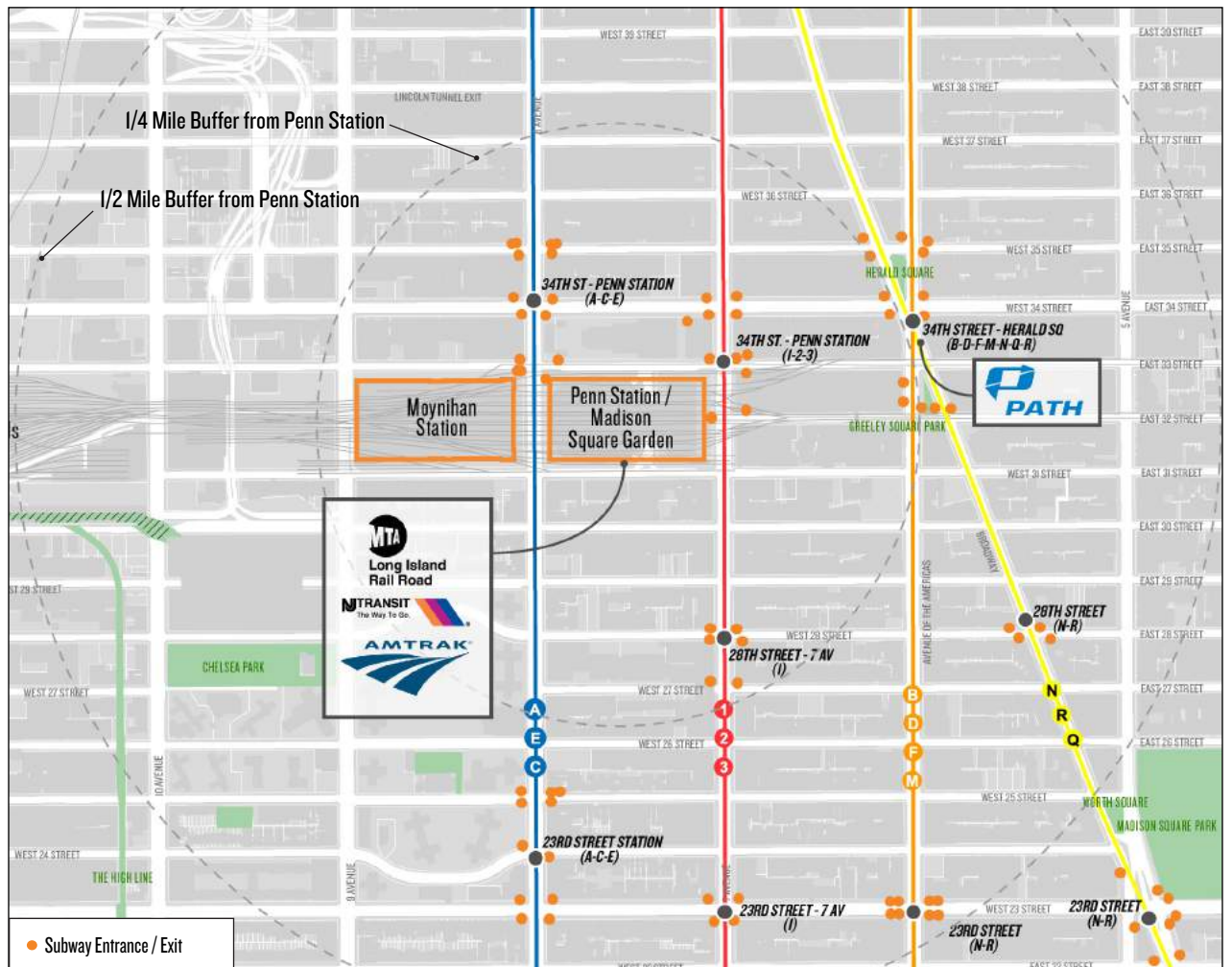
 = 10,000/daily



Familiar scenes of congestion at Penn Station.

Photo Credit: Syd London

New York's Regional Transportation Hub



Transit Connections Near Penn Station

Data and Sources: New York Department of City Planning MapPLUTO 13v1, Spatiality Blog

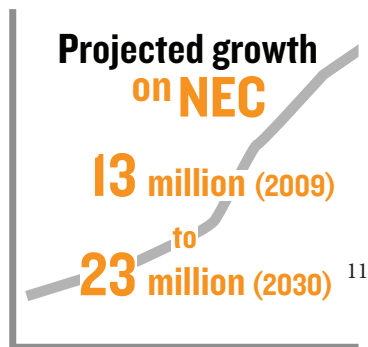
Penn Station is a critical transportation hub, with dozens of transit connections to elsewhere in the city and the region. The station is home to New Jersey Transit, Long Island Rail Road, Amtrak and two connecting MTA New York City subway lines (the 1,2,3 and the A,C,E). In the block around Penn Station are numerous local and regional bus lines,

including private bus lines like Bolt Bus and the NYC Airporter bus. A block to the east at Herald Square are connections to the B, D, F, M, N, Q, and R subway lines and PATH. The area also features some of the most in-demand Citibike bike share stations.⁷

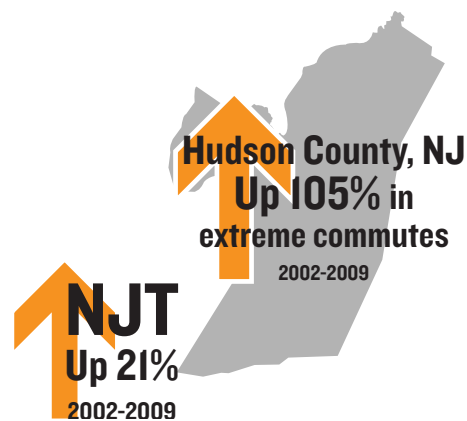
Ridership Is Growing

In the last decade, the number of average weekday Penn Station riders on NJ Transit, LIRR, and Amtrak has grown by **26%** and subway ridership (1, 2, 3 and A, C, E) has swelled by **34%**.⁸ NJ Transit, LIRR, and Amtrak are currently operating at capacity, yet ridership for each service is projected to increase. NJ Transit ridership alone is expected to rise **28%** by 2030.⁹

These projections made by Regional Plan Association were underscored by a 2012 Rudin Center for Transportation and Policy Management study that found that the greatest growth ridership rate coming into Manhattan was from Northern New Jersey, an area dependent on NJ Transit and the PATH train, where there was a **21%** increase from 2002 to 2009. Since employment opportunities have declined in most counties in Northern Jersey since 2002, working residents are becoming increasingly dependent on New York City for jobs and rely on public transit.¹⁰



A number of service expansion projects have been proposed for Penn Station. Metro-North hopes to bring trains into Penn Station, utilizing the existing Empire Service Tunnel.¹² The Federal Railroad Administration's master plan for the Northeast Corridor is investigating the potential for a new "Metropolitan" service that would connect major centers north and south of New York without requiring a change of trains. Amtrak is proposing to expand Acela service, its high-speed network along the Northeast Corridor. There also have been proposals for direct services into Penn from the area's regional airports.¹³ While these projects represent important improvements, they would place additional strain on station, and would be contingent on increasing capacity at a future Penn Station.



More people are commuting from New Jersey to Manhattan. Super commutes, those that are 90 minutes or longer, are also on the rise, especially for Hudson County.¹⁴



The Farley Post Office, built in 1912 by McKim, Mead and White.
Photo Credit: Syd London

Moynihan Station Is a Critical First Step

Expected growth led to plans for a new terminal, named after the late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The Moynihan Station Development Corporation (MSDC) is currently in the first phase of converting the James A. Farley Post Office building, located adjacent to Madison Square Garden and Penn Station along 8th Avenue, into Moynihan Station. A vital part of relieving the congestion at Penn Station, Moynihan Station also will serve as a gateway to Hudson Yards as that area develops. Moynihan will

also play an essential role in developing a phasing plan for constructing a new Penn Station. Moving Amtrak operations across Eighth Avenue frees up space in the existing Penn Station, allowing the station to continuously operate as portions are rebuilt. But when complete, the new Moynihan Station will only serve Amtrak, which serves a limited portion of the passengers who use Penn Station.¹⁵

Moynihan's Legacy



The Farley Building, home to Moynihan Station.

Throughout his career, Senator Moynihan was a committed steward for public works and strongly believed that society is judged, more than any other merit, on its culture, particularly its architecture. In the 1990s, Moynihan became a champion for a new station. He fought to restore the station to its former civic grandeur through the creation of a new transportation complex that would have included a new Penn Station, a new station for Amtrak across 8th Avenue in the historic Farley Post Office, and a relocated Madison Square Garden.

Moynihan garnered the support of government agencies and other entities to begin to build a new station. Plans for a new Amtrak station within the Post Office are underway; however, the full breadth of what the Moynihan complex could be—including a relocated MSG and reimagined Penn Station — remains unrealized.



Penn Station is the lynchpin of the Northeast Corridor.

This Is a Regional Issue

The growth over the past decade and the projected ridership increases into the next decades will not only affect Manhattan, but the entire region. Although Penn Station currently anchors Amtrak's Northeast Corridor—one of the most heavily traveled rail corridors in the world—a reconstruction plan for the station isn't currently included in plans for the corridor's future. This won't change until New York decides that it wants the Garden relocated and Penn Station rebuilt.

The Northeast Corridor spans from Richmond, Va., to Boston. Intercity train travel along the Northeast Corridor is expected to increase over the next 20 years from 13 million riders in 2010 to an estimated 23 million riders by 2030, before high-speed rail is factored in.¹⁶ With high-speed rail, Amtrak projects ridership will hit 26.2 million by 2030. Amtrak is planning to build a new southern extension of Penn Station between 30th and 31st streets as part of its Gateway tunnel proposal.¹⁷ This expansion must be considered as an essential part of an integrated, holistic vision for Penn Station. With the station at capacity today, expanding service remains a major challenge facing the Northeast Corridor region.¹⁸

A Changing West Side



Hudson Yards and the Growth of the West Side

Often referred to as “the city within a city,” the West Side’s Hudson Yards development is located west of 8th Avenue from 30th to 42nd streets, stretching over the rail yards below. After a 30-year build-out, the project will include 44 million square feet of new development, with 29.7 million square feet of office space, 12.8 million square feet of residential development, half a million square feet of hotel space and one million square feet of retail space.¹⁹

Hudson Yards isn’t the only development happening on Manhattan’s West Side. Spurred by the coming extension of the 7 Line and completion of the High Line, the West Side is undergoing tremendous growth. These changes are expected to bring tens of thousands of residents and workers and millions of visitors to the area, placing even more demand on Penn Station.

Hudson Yards and Midtown West: A Sampling of Planned and Proposed Projects

Hudson Yards East



3 Hudson Boulevard
The Moinian Group

Source: FX Fowle



One Hudson Yards
Extell Development Company

Source: Extell Development



Hudson Yards East E Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: David Childs / SOM



Hudson Yards East North Office Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates



Hudson Yards Retail Base
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates / Elkos Manfredi Architects



Hudson Yards East South Office Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates / Elkos Manfredi Architects



Hudson Yards East D Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: diller scofield + renfro



Culture Shed
NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

Source: diller scofield + renfro



7 Subway Station
MTA

Source: HYDC / NYCEDC



Hudson Yards Boulevard and Park
Hudson Yards Development Corporation

Source: Hudson Yards Development Corporation

Hudson Yards West



Hudson Yards West Residential Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



Hudson Yards West Residential Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



Hudson Yards West Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



Hudson Yards West Residential Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



Hudson Yards West Residential Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



Hudson Yards West Residential Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



Hudson Yards West School
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



Hudson Yards West Residential Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



Hudson Yards West Residential Tower
Related Companies and Oxford Properties

Source: Related Companies



The High Line, Phase III
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation and Friends of the High Line

Source: James Corner Field Operations / diller scofield + renfro

Manhattan West



Manhattan West Residential Tower Building 3 & 4
Brookfield Properties

Source: Manhattan West



Manhattan West South Office Tower
Brookfield Properties

Source: Manhattan West



Manhattan West North Office Tower
Brookfield Properties

Source: Manhattan West



520 W. 28th Street
Related Companies

Source: Related Companies / Zaha Hadid Architects



Avalon West Chelsea
525 W. 28th St
AvalonBay

Source: Fogarty Architecture Design



Chelsea Park
260 W. 26th St
Heller Organization and Triumph Property Group

Source: Heller Organization / Triumph Property Group



500 W. 30th St
Related Companies

Source: Winick Realty



Soori High Line
Blackhouse Development + Oriel

Source: Soori High Line



Moynihan Station Phase I and II
Moynihan Station Development Corporation

Source: Moynihan Station Development Corporation



The district surrounding Penn Station is underdeveloped and could be improved to better contribute to New York City's ability to retain its prominence as a global business center.

Photo Credit: Syd London

Restricted Economic Development

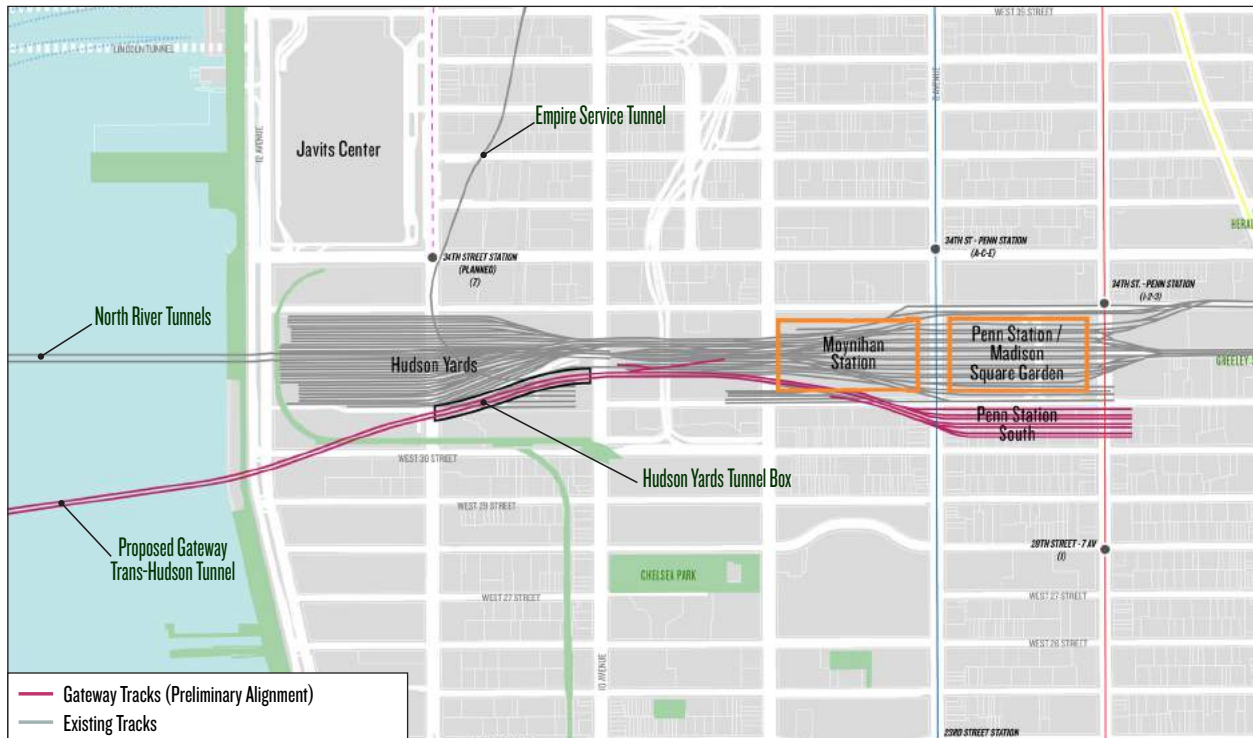
Penn Station should be one of New York City's greatest assets. But with MSG on top, the station is essentially frozen in time. There is no way for the station to grow and improve to properly accommodate passengers or unlock the economic development potential of the West Side.

Despite being the busiest transportation hub in the Western Hemisphere and located within the nation's largest central business district, Penn Station has never served as a major hub for high-quality office or other mixed-use development befitting its size and regional connectedness. This is unlike Grand Central Terminal on Manhattan's East Side or other great transportation centers around the world.

Much of the district is significantly underdeveloped.²⁰ Few of the area's outdated office, retail and hotels buildings contribute to New York City's ability to retain its prominence and competitive position as a global business center. The Penn Station office district, according to the Cushman & Wakefield 1Q 2013 MarketBeat report, has the lowest overall rental rate of any Midtown submarket.²¹

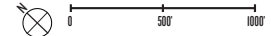
Grand Central Terminal demonstrates how a revitalized train station can attract new ridership and high-quality retail. Over the years, Grand Central has been able to attract diverse and upscale retail tenants such as Apple. Retail sales for Grand Central's approximately 100 tenants totaled \$177 million in 2011, a 2.8% increase over the previous year. The terminal also attracts specialized events such as art installations, historical exhibits and the annual Holiday Fair, functions that would be impossible to hold in the current Penn Station.²²

The Gateway Project



The Gateway Project in West Midtown (Preliminary Alignment)²⁴

Data Source: New York Department of City Planning MapPLUTO 13v1, Amtrak



Amtrak's Gateway Project

Following the cancellation of the Access to the Region's Core (ARC) Project in 2010, Amtrak unveiled the Gateway Project in 2011. Gateway lays the foundation for high-speed rail along the Northeast Corridor, calling for the construction of new rail bridges in the New Jersey Meadowlands, new tunnels under the Palisades and the Hudson River, and the construction of new tracks and an annex on Block 780, directly south of Penn Station. The completion of Gateway has tremendous

implications as part of the construction of a new Penn Station. It will add new train capacity to the station and allow for the phased reconstruction of the existing Penn Station.

The project is still seeking funding, though in the summer of 2013, construction began on a "tunnel box," which will preserve the right-of-way for Gateway underneath the Hudson Yards development.²³

Crowding and Safety

Located under MSG, the subterranean Penn Station is difficult to find. Exterior signage is poor and locating street entrances is difficult. Dim lighting, low ceilings, unclear signage and tight stairways and corridors make the station crowded and circulation difficult. Poor wayfinding leaves passengers feeling disoriented. One result has been the overuse and congestion of certain station entrances.

Approximately 70% of passengers enter and exit from only two entrances: 34th Street and 7th Avenue (8,200 people per hour during the peak AM hour) and 32nd Street and 7th Avenue (10,200 people per hour during the peak AM hour).²⁵ This makes the station increasingly unsafe for passengers, due to undersized, overcrowded platforms, and limited egress options. The station's cramped conditions raises safety concerns, which will only be compounded as passenger volumes grow.

Unfriendly Streetscape

MSG's grim, opaque brown street facade does little for the experience and aesthetics of the surrounding area. The Garden's 8th Avenue entrances have been closed for security reasons, leaving the 7th Avenue entrance as the only public entry. Penn Station's former mid-block taxiway was also closed for security reasons after 9/11, leaving cab passengers with baggage no alternative but to unload in the busy streets.



Crowded and chaotic sidewalks in the area around Madison Square Garden.

Photo Credit: Syd London

Case Study: San Francisco's Transbay Terminal



Image Source: Transbay Joint Powers Authority



The 'Grand Central of the West'²⁶

Designed by Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects and developed by Hines, the San Francisco Transbay Transit Center is currently under construction in downtown San Francisco. The Transbay Center will eventually service multiple bus lines, regional rail, and California's new high speed rail system. The Transit Center also includes an elevated park on the building's roof, approximately 60 feet above street level with numerous green architectural elements.

Adjacent to the Transit Center is the Transbay Transit Tower, which at 1,070 feet tall, will be the tallest building in San Francisco. Built on adjacent land, the Tower provided a funding source for the Transit Center.²⁷



The Transbay Transit Tower

Image Source: Pelli Clark Pelli



The steps of Moynihan, facing Madison Square Garden.

Pedestrians walking along surrounding side streets are met with poor sidewalk conditions, a large superblock wall on 8th Avenue and sidewalks that in the early hours are often blocked by event trucks. MSG concert events require an average of 10 trucks, with some shows requiring 20 or more. Most of these don't fit in the Garden's outmoded loading docks, forcing them to unload from the streets. These trucks take over area plazas and sidewalks further adding to street and sidewalk congestion.

Torn Urban Fabric

The Penn Station and MSG superblock, located from 31st to 33rd streets between 7th and 8th avenues, add to the already disjointed and fragmented West Side of Midtown. The area's public realm is disorganized and divided due to the prevalence of superblocks and large, unconnected infrastructure and development projects like the Lincoln Tunnel, postal service facilities, Hudson Yards, and Javits Center. A better planned station will act as an anchor for a revitalized West Side, reintegrating the superblocks into their surroundings.



Columns that land on the train platforms hinder circulation.
Photo Credit: Syd London

A New Arena for New York

Madison Square Garden's presence atop Penn Station makes it exceedingly difficult to address the station's issues of congestion and safety, let alone plan for increased transit capacity. More than 1,100 support columns punctuate the station's platforms, hampering ingress, egress and overall circulation. Moving the arena will allow for a far more comprehensive and rapid reconstruction of Penn Station. The tracks, platforms and concourses can't be rebuilt to modern standards while the arena remains in place.

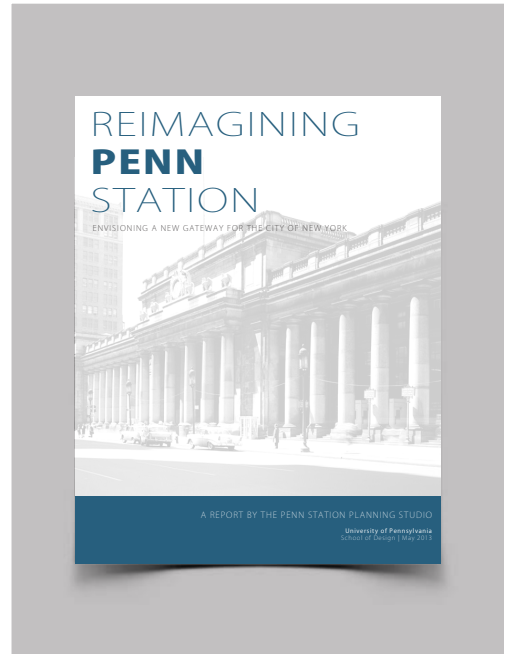
Furthermore, the now 45-year-old MSG arena can't properly expand and update its venue to remain competitive much longer. It is now one of the oldest arenas in the NBA and the NHL. Although it has recently undergone a renovation, it continues to fall further behind as new more modern arenas are built. The new Barclays Center in Brooklyn has demonstrated how a modern arena can provide the capacity and amenities New Yorkers and visitors expect.

Moving MSG has been proposed several times over the years. Its relocation is key to the development of a better arena and station and improvement of the surrounding area. Relocating MSG to a suitable new site would generate enormous economic value.

New Yorkers Support a New Penn Station

A project of the magnitude and complexity of building a new Penn Station can only happen with broad public support. According to the 2013 MAS Survey on Livability, supported by The Rockefeller Foundation, and conducted by The Marist Poll, a majority of New Yorkers believe rebuilding Penn station to meet the current and future transportation needs is an important issue for the next mayor to address in his first 100 days in office. The survey found that **74% of New Yorkers say it should be a "top priority" or "an important consideration."**²⁸

Envisioning a New Penn Station and the Next MSG



(Left) The May 29, 2013 MAS Design Challenge for a New Penn Station and the Next Madison Square Garden; (Right) The RPA and UPenn's Reimagining Penn Station Report.
Photo Credit: Giles Ashford

To help imagine what a new station and arena might look like, the Municipal Art Society of New York and Regional Plan Association initiated design and planning processes to examine the future of the station and the surrounding district.

MAS challenged the firms Diller Scofidio + Renfro, H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture, SHoP Architects and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill LLP (SOM) to re-envision the station, arena, and surrounding area. This design challenge was meant to inspire the imagination as we begin to grapple with the site's complex transportation, design and public realm issues. Each firm explored

the potential placemaking, transit, and economic benefits a relocated arena and new station could bring to the West Side.

At the same time, Regional Plan Association partnered with a research team at the University of Pennsylvania to prepare preliminary designs for a new Penn Station with the capacity, amenities, and safety needed of a modern station. It has also investigated opportunities to revitalize the surrounding district through proposed financing plans, project delivery mechanisms and a phasing plan for the construction of a new station.

III. A VISION FOR PENN 2023



PENN
2023

III. A Vision for Penn 2023

These following goals articulate a vision for a revitalized West Midtown District, which includes the next Madison Square Garden, and an interconnected transit center consisting of Moynihan, the Gateway project, and a new Penn Station.

The goal of Penn 2023 goes beyond building a new arena and station—it is about securing Midtown’s future economic success and keeping New York City competitive.

A new, improved Penn Station should become New York’s main gateway, designed to accommodate projected growth of intercity, commuter rail, and mass transit in an attractive, efficient transportation hub. A new station and relocated Madison Square Garden can be developed into great assets and anchors for the area, better leveraging the millions of pedestrians that frequent the station each year while acting as a new core for a more livable 21st century Midtown.

This chapter includes a number of images created by the firms who participated in the *MAS Design Challenge for a New Penn Station and the Next Madison Square Garden*, which generated many creative ideas for the future of West Midtown.

These renderings don’t reflect a proposed plan for Penn Station or West Midtown, but rather are meant to stimulate discussion about possibilities for the station and the surrounding district.

Penn 2023

A new Penn Station is not merely a new train shed; rather, it is a complex, linked system, with additional transit capacity and a mix of uses. To create a successful transit hub and new arena, and sustain a thriving neighborhood, many components must be in place, including:



Conceptual Elements of a New Penn Station

Image sources, opposite page:
 (top row, from left to right): H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture, SHoP
 (bottom row, from left to right): MSDC, Amtrak, Diller Scofidio + Renfro



1 A Comprehensive Plan for West Midtown

Accompanying the rebuilding of Penn Station should be a comprehensive plan for the entire West Midtown district, complete with infrastructure, circulation, traffic, and other needed strategies. The plan should look at how public space can knit together the district, especially in light of the tremendous changes happening in the area.

Creating a new Penn Station and a surrounding revitalized district also should include extensive public outreach to help formulate ideas and take into account the needs of residents, property owners, businesses and transit passengers.



2 A Relocated Madison Square Garden

Moving the Garden permits the reconstruction of Penn Station, while also allowing for the creation of a modern state-of-the-art arena. A full study would have to be undertaken to evaluate the feasibility of any proposed sites.



3 A Completed Moynihan Station

Completing phases 1 and 2 of Moynihan Station is a critical first step to allowing the phased reconstruction of Penn Station. Relocating Amtrak's back-of-house operations to Moynihan opens up much needed room in the current Penn to begin phased reconstruction.



4 The Gateway Project and Penn Station South

The Gateway project will add critical new capacity to Penn Station. New trans-Hudson crossings will allow for the proper maintenance of the existing, 100-year-old North River Tunnels.



5 A Reconstructed Penn Station

The relocation of Madison Square Garden and the completion of Moynihan Station and Gateway will permit the phased shutdown of Penn's tracks, allowing them to be rebuilt to modern safety and circulation standards. A new train shed could bring light and air into the tracks and waiting areas below.

1 Create a World Class District

- First and foremost, give the public a strong voice when planning the district. Ensure that decisions are made transparently and openly with input from a broad range of stakeholders.
- Encourage world-class architecture and urban design to build a great district that integrates West Midtown with the surrounding neighborhoods of Chelsea, Hell's Kitchen, and Hudson Yards.
- Create a pedestrian environment that rivals those of Grand Central Terminal and Rockefeller Center. Maximize public space throughout the district by enhancing the pedestrian environment at street level and below grade.
- Emphasize a mix of uses in both new construction and existing buildings to help create a dynamic 24-hour district.
- Make the district a global model for climate-friendly development. Ensure that all new buildings in the area are designed to minimize their carbon output and incorporate state-of-the-art green technology.



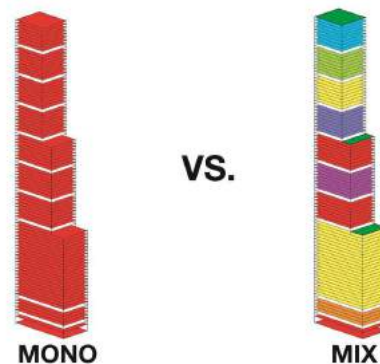
Envisioning Penn Station as the center of a economically vibrant Midtown West.

Courtesy of H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture



A rebuilt Penn Station could become a catalyst for district-wide improvements.

Courtesy of SHoP



New buildings in the district should include a mix of uses.

Courtesy of H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture

② Build the Next Madison Square Garden

- Build a new world-class, state-of-the-art arena.
- Locate the arena on a site that is accessible by transit, walking and cycling.
- Ensure that the arena relates appropriately to the surrounding urban context, wherever it is located, with activated facades, suitably scaled facilities, and appropriate signage.
- Encourage sustainable building best practices to minimize the carbon footprint of construction.



A vision for a new Madison Square Garden overlooking the Hudson River.
Courtesy of H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture



A vision for a dynamic new Madison Square Garden.
Courtesy of SHoP

3 Complete the Moynihan Station Project

- Create a meaningful work of civic architecture using our historic legacy, as Senator Moynihan envisioned. Design excellence and sustainability must guide all aspects of the project.
- Complete Phase I and II improvements at Moynihan in a timely fashion to allow for the phased reconstruction of Penn Station. To the extent possible, minimize train service disruptions and surface impacts during the multi-phase construction process.
- Protect the integrity of the historic Farley Building, one of New York City's most significant landmark structures, while also accommodating new uses. Find an appropriate mix of tenants for the rear of the Farley Building.



New entrances to Moynihan Station will be located at 31st Street and 8th Avenue.

Image source: Moynihan Station Development Corporation



Another view of the 31st Street and 8th Avenue entrance.

Image source: Moynihan Station Development Corporation



View of Moynihan's new West End Concourse.

Image source: Moynihan Station Development Corporation

4 Increase Transit Capacity

- Increase transit capacity to ensure that Penn Station adequately serves the needs of New York City and the region for years to come. Rebuild Penn Station's tracks to better accommodate passenger flows.
- Facilitate a transparent public process to ensure accountability for the planning and construction of the Amtrak Gateway Project, including new rail tunnels under the Hudson River.
- Ensure that the Gateway Project seamlessly connects to the existing transportation infrastructure and to the public realm.
- Integrate the extension of the Gateway Project under Block 780 (south of Penn Station) through clear circulation and design that emphasizes connection to Penn Station and the greater West Midtown public realm.



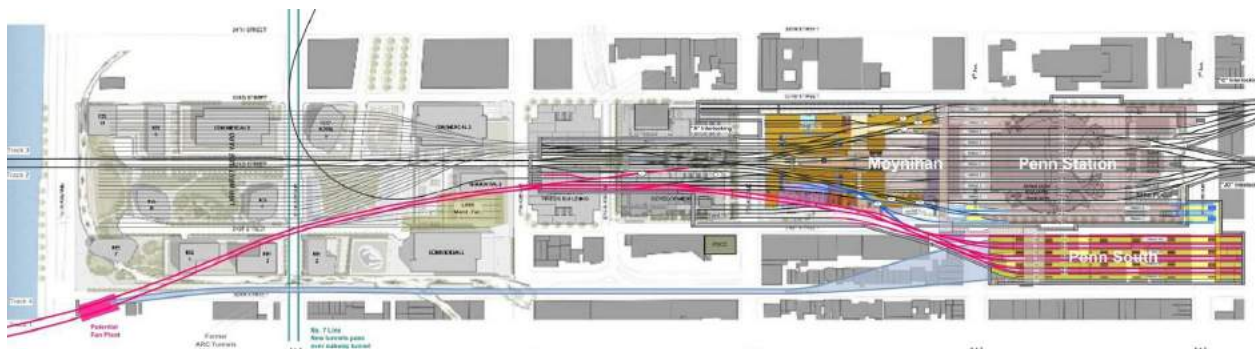
Ownership map of Northeast rail lines, showing Penn Station as the linchpin of the Northeast Corridor.

Image source: Amtrak



Gateway includes numerous improvements between Newark and New York, including the reconstruction of bridges in New Jersey.

Image source: Amtrak



Amtrak's Gateway project includes increased capacity and an expansion of Penn Station one block south.

Image source: of Amtrak

5 Create a Great New Penn Station

- Construct an exemplary 21st century Penn Station with dramatically improved public circulation and safety features. Create a station that promotes economic vitality through multiple, layered uses. Use creative applications of technology to improve the transit experience.
- Prioritize the transportation functions of the station in its planning and design. Emphasize improvements that expand capacity and transit connectivity. Maximize the project's intermodality by promoting connections to multiple transit services — airport access, taxis, walking and biking.
- Ensure a healthy and vibrant public realm by creating high quality public spaces.
- Improve the pedestrian experience in and around Penn Station. Maximize permeability by providing multiple exits and entrances.



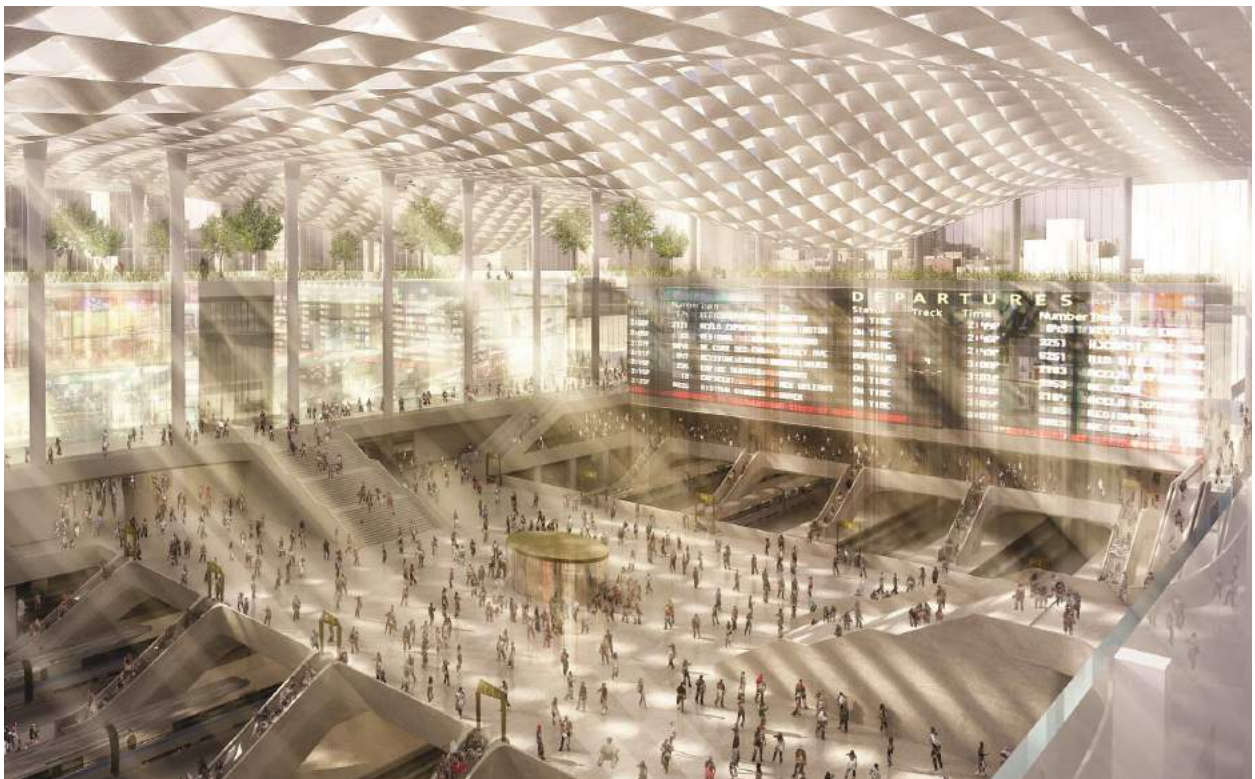
A rebuilt Penn Station could provide new open space opportunities.
Courtesy of SOM



A new Penn Station could allow for creative new ways of interacting with transit through technology. Here, a “remote track view.”
Courtesy of Diller Scofidio + Renfro



A new Penn Station could have a mix of uses.
 Courtesy of Diller Scofidio + Renfro



A proposed grand hall provides a vision for a fitting entrance into New York City.
 Courtesy of SHoP



Proposed platforms free from columns.
Courtesy of SOM



A new airy and light-filled Penn Station.
Courtesy of H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture

Act Now

City Council's vote to limit MSG's permit to operate on top of Penn Station to just 10 years offers a crucial window of opportunity. Planning must begin now in order to take advantage of this limited time frame. Infrastructure improvements, such as LIRR's East Side Access, the new Moynihan Station and the #7 line extension will be completed over the next 10 years, providing an opportunity to divert commuter traffic so that phased reconstruction can begin at Penn Station even as it continues to function as the city's principal transportation hub. The longer we wait, the more congested the station will become, making it more difficult to make improvements.

Relocate Madison Square Garden

Relocating MSG is key to rebuilding a new Penn Station—one that can accommodate high-speed rail, increased train, commuter and pedestrian traffic and provide a better experience for all. Restricting MSG's permit to 10 more years was the first step in proving that New York City is committed to investing in a new station.



Rendering of the East Side Access Long Island Rail Road terminal, currently under construction. The opening of East Side Access will provide a limited opportunity to divert traffic from Penn Station.

Image source: MTA

Where Should the Garden Go?



Finding a New Home for the Garden

Identifying the next home for Madison Square Garden will be a formidable but vital part of fixing Penn Station. Timing is critical, as certain sites that would be appropriate may be sold and developed before they can be acquired as a new home for the Garden.

The Farley Post Office building's western annex is one logical site. The Garden was in negotiations to move to the back of the Farley building as part of a plan developed by Related and Vornado in 2007, but decided to renovate in place instead.²⁹ Adjacent to Penn and Moynihan Station, the majestic colonnade structure could make for a great arena, provided the costs of building an arena in a historic structure over operating train tracks aren't prohibitive.

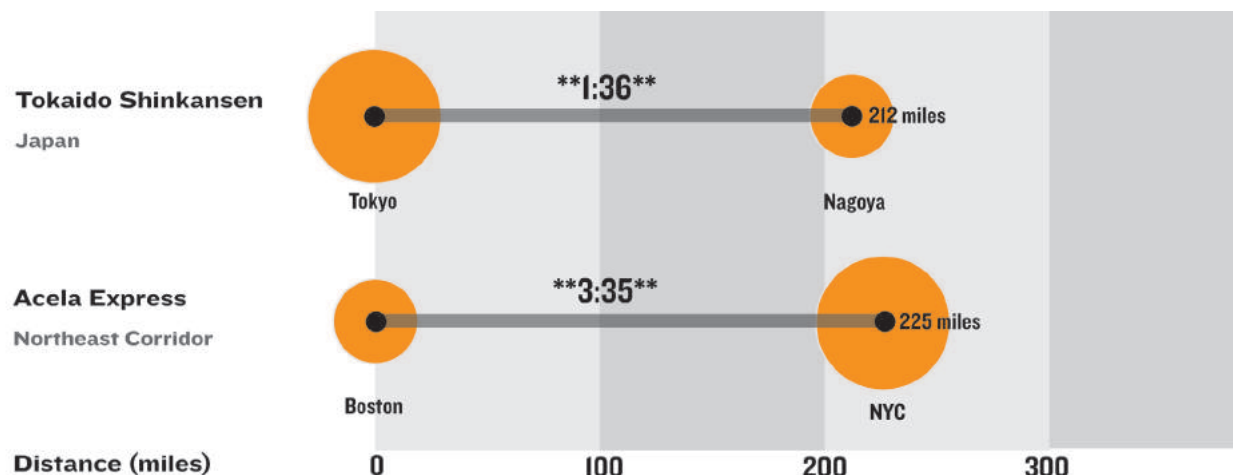
The nearby Morgan Postal Annex—located at 9th Avenue and W. 30th Street—is another option.

Owned by the U.S. Postal Service, this site is close to transit and is two whole city blocks, large enough to accommodate an arena. Steps would need to be taken soon to facilitate this move, or the site could be lost to another use. Other possible locations for the Garden include the USPS Vehicle Maintenance facility located at W. 24th Street & 11th Avenue and the southern end of the current Javits site at 34th Street and 11th Avenue.

No matter the site selected, the new arena must be superior to the existing structure in order to meet the needs of the Garden for years to come.

The Alliance for a New Penn Station has embarked upon a research effort to study funding strategies and the economic impact of a new Penn Station. The Alliance will also assess the feasibility of potential sites for a new Madison Square Garden.

Comparison of International High-Speed Rail Corridors³⁰ (Japan and Northeast Corridor)



Traveling from Tokyo to Nagoya takes an hour and a half on Japan's high-speed rail system. Traveling from Boston to New York City on Acela takes over twice as long.

Modernize Transit

Cities around the world are investing in infrastructure in order to take full advantage of more sustainable forms of transit, such as high-speed rail. For New York to follow suit, it must capitalize on the Northeast Corridor Master Plan and Amtrak's high-speed rail program, which includes building two new rail tunnels under the Hudson. Building a modern and expanded Penn Station is the key to unlocking this potential. Investing in the new station now will create the capacity to increase the number of trains in and out of the city each day, allowing shorter commuting times, as well a more flexible network for commuters.

Including the new Penn Station in the NEC Master Plan currently being prepared by the Federal Railroad Administration will make it possible to build the planned NEC high-speed rail service, allowing travelers from New York City to reach Philadelphia in 37 minutes and Boston and Washington, D.C. in 94 minutes. This service would fully integrate New York's economy and housing market with those of other Northeast metropolitan areas, unlocking the economic potential of the whole Northeast megaregion. It will also help decongest New York's already congested airports and provide alternatives to gridlocked highways.

A Proposed Penn Station Redevelopment and Revenue Capture District



Proposed Penn Station Redevelopment and Revenue Capture District and Potential Development Sites

Data Source: New York Department of City Planning MapPLUTO 13v1



Capturing Penn's Value

Although funding a New Penn will require a financing package that would likely include support from federal, state, and city governments, as well as user fees and other sources, New York has a tremendous funding opportunity that would take advantage of new development. MAS and James Lima Planning + Development recently produced *Unlocking Penn's Potential: Establishing a Penn Station Redevelopment and Revenue Capture District*. The report explores creating a Penn Station Redevelopment and Revenue Capture District as part of a potential funding strategy for building a new Penn Station. A Penn District could add

billions of dollars of additional revenue to the City of New York through property taxes and other payments. Bonds could be issued against such revenue streams to fund capital costs for needed improvements. Based on a number of assumptions, the report concludes that the net present value of the bonus payments alone from the proposed Penn District would be an estimated \$1.3 billion, at a 6.5% discount rate.

To read the report, visit [MAS.org](https://www.mas.org)

Spur Economic Development

Efficient transit is essential to the economic development and health of the city. New and expanded high-speed inter-city and commuter rail will increase reliability and capacity while reducing travel times, expanding New York's access to skilled workers and increasing tourism and visitor spending, all of which is good for business.

A new Penn Station would also dramatically improve the area's retail environment. The station itself has a captive audience of high-income travelers, but doesn't provide the retail options to capture this opportunity. Relocating MSG and building a new Penn Station would provide an opportunity to create new, high-quality retail, both in the new station and at street level. Retail at the street level also would better connect the station to the street, lessen area congestion and improve pedestrian access to surrounding businesses.

Building a new station and arena will help stimulate the local economy during construction and after. According to a MTA study, investments in the region's transportation—beyond basic state of good repair costs—would yield an economic return of \$2.03 for every dollar invested.³¹ Another recent MTA report found that the \$8.2 billion invested in capital work from 2005 to 2009 in New York City generated 194,695 jobs and a \$24.5 billion economic benefit during the same period.³²

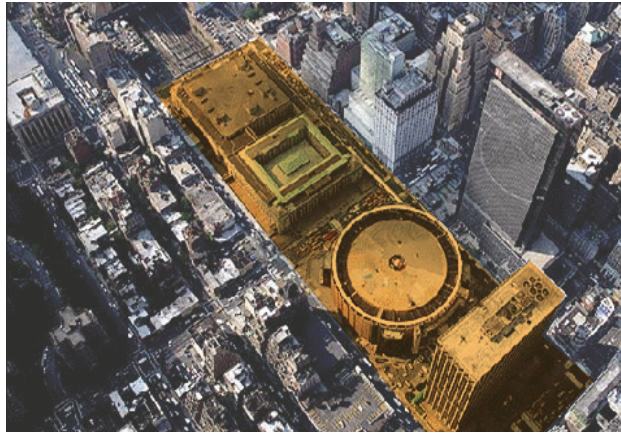
Keep New York City Competitive

New York City is competing on a global scale against London, Paris, Hong Kong, Tokyo, and other cities for investment and talent. These places understand the value of public transit and the value of high quality public spaces. Many of New York's global competitors are restoring their major train stations or building new ones with expanded capacity and amenities. London's King's Cross and St. Pancras stations, for example, have been restored as hubs for high-speed and intercity rail, creating a focal point for travelers, tourists, and business people. The area around these revitalized stations is becoming London's "innovation district"—a magnet for technology, research and design activities. Paris' new Les Halles station will provide more transit capacity as well as a range of amenities for travelers and local residents. Having a modern and efficient Penn Station is critical to keeping New York competitive in the 21st century.

Create New Anchors for New York

Redesigning Penn Station is essential to improving the quality of life for our city's workforce and the hundreds of thousands of people who pass through its cramped, cavernous corridors each day. Creating new anchors - places that enhance rather than detract from their surroundings - is key to achieving the regeneration of Midtown West.

Looking to France for Inspiration



Penn Station/MSG, New York

<i>Destruction:</i>	1963
<i>Reconstruction:</i>	1968 Station
<i>Redevelopment:</i>	TBD
<i>Currently Serves:</i>	500,000+ daily
<i>Re-Investment:</i>	TBD



Les Halles, Paris

<i>Destruction:</i>	1971
<i>Reconstruction:</i>	1977 Station
<i>Redevelopment:</i>	2013
<i>Currently Serves:</i>	750,000 daily
<i>Re-Investment:</i>	€765 million

+50% more space for travelers
+40,000 sq. ft. of playground space
+88,700 sq. ft. of lawn, retail, library, music centers

Encourage Sustainability

Improving the capacity, efficiency and amenity of the city's largest rail hub will encourage more sustainable forms of transportation and development. Promoting compact, pedestrian and transit-friendly development around a new Penn Station will concentrate people and activities at higher densities both here and around the region, preserving land and reducing travel by car. A 2011 study by the University of Pennsylvania found that a new high-speed line along the Northeast Corridor would divert nearly 30 million riders from cars and planes, attract six million new riders and reduce carbon monoxide emissions from cars by more than three million tons a year.³³

Constructing a new station allows the opportunity to rethink natural systems in the station itself, allowing for a more energy-efficient and sustainable station. These systems could be built in tandem with new public spaces, as is happening in San Francisco's Transbay Transit Center (see previous inset).

IV. CONCLUSION



**PENN
2023**

IV. Conclusion

For the first time in a half century, New Yorkers have the opportunity to build the world-class train station and arena that represent the best of our city. New York's civic leaders are united in urging city, state and federal officials to act boldly to seize this opportunity. It might not come again. New York City deserves a world-class train station and truly dynamic arena.

In order to make this happen, RPA and MAS formed the Alliance for a New Penn Station in early 2013. Through this coordinated effort, the Alliance will work toward planning a new Penn Station and the next Madison Square Garden.





Join the Alliance for a New Penn Station

New York City deserves a world-class train station and truly dynamic arena. In order to make this happen, MAS and RPA formed an Alliance for a new Penn Station. Through this coordinated effort, the Alliance will work toward planning a New Penn Station and the next Madison Square Garden.

Send an email to newpennstation@mas.org to join.

Visit mas.org and rpa.org to learn more.

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PENN 2023

THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF REPORTS BY
THE ALLIANCE FOR A NEW PENN STATION



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Regional Plan Association is America's oldest and most distinguished independent urban research and advocacy organization. RPA works to improve the economic competitiveness, infrastructure, sustainability and quality of life of the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan region. A cornerstone of our work is the development of long-range plans and policies to guide the growth of the region.

For more information, visit www.rpa.org.



About MAS:

The Municipal Art Society of New York has led New York City's livability movement since 1893. MAS's mission is to advocate for public policies, private sector practices, individual agency and community engagement for a resilient built environment that encourages our city's economic vitality, cultural vibrancy, environmental sustainability, livability and social diversity.

For more information, visit mas.org.

