

**PENN
2023**

Madison Square Garden: Shaping the Future of West Midtown

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

October 2014

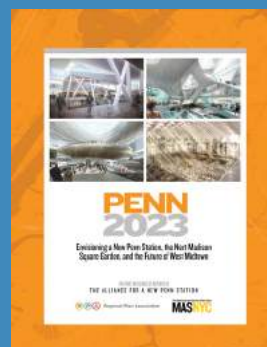
This report is the second in a series of reports issued by the Alliance for a New Penn Station about the future of Penn Station, Madison Square Garden and Manhattan's West Side.

The first report, entitled *Penn 2023*, outlined the case for a new Penn Station, described principles to help guide development and illustrated the necessary elements for a new transit hub.

Penn 2023 can be downloaded here:

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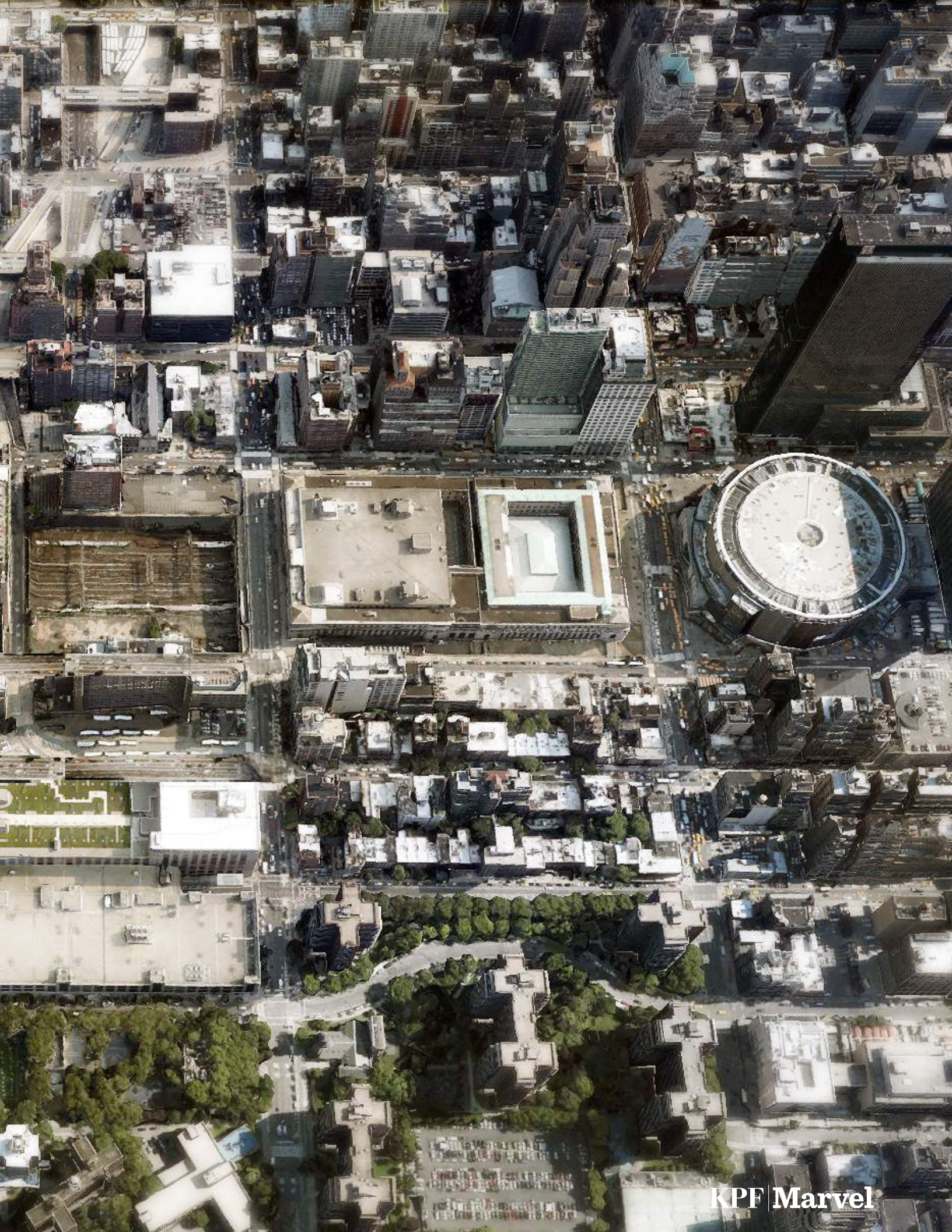
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A rapidly changing district...



Executive Summary

A new city within a city is emerging in West Midtown, and Penn Station is at the center of it. Yet the station is deficient in many ways and critically unprepared to absorb future growth. Over the next few years, difficult decisions about the futures of Penn Station, Madison Square Garden and West Midtown must be made to ensure the economic vitality of the New York region for years to come.

West Midtown is in the midst of tremendous change.

Hudson Yards, the largest private real estate development in U.S. history with tens of millions of square feet of development, is under construction in West Midtown. This development will bring hundreds of thousands of new residents, workers and visitors to the area. The opening of the 7 train extension from Times Square to 34th Street and 11th Avenue, and the completion of the first phase of Moynihan Station will help serve this growing district, but that alone is insufficient to absorb the coming increases in travel demand to and from West Midtown.

Penn Station is struggling to meet current transit demand and unprepared to absorb future growth.

Penn Station is the primary transit hub in West Midtown, yet it is critically unprepared to handle any new growth in travel demand. Built to accommodate 200,000 passengers per day; the station is now handling nearly 600,000, contributing to Penn Station's overcrowded, oppressive and increasingly unsafe conditions. With New York City's projected growth in both population and employment between now and 2030, now is the time to enact a plan to increase the capacity of Penn Station, the region's most important transit hub.

The century-old tunnels under the Hudson River that feed Penn Station need to be replaced before major changes to the station can be realized.

Major expansion and reconstruction of Penn Station and its 100-year-old tunnels are required to support the expected population growth and catalyze economic activity in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan region for the next half century.

The Hudson River rail tunnels, which carry more than 160,000 passengers on more than 500 trains in and out of Penn Station every day, have long been in need of

major repairs. The urgency about the tunnels' condition increased substantially after Hurricane Sandy, which flooded the tunnels for the first time in their history, causing extensive damage. According to Amtrak, both of the Hudson River tunnels need to be shut down, one at a time for more than a year each, for major repairs. With no alternative route into Penn Station, closure of one of these two tunnels would slash rail service across the Hudson River by 75 percent during the busiest periods of the day, severely disrupting travel throughout the region as commuters shift to alternative ways of crossing the river, such as cars, buses, PATH and ferries. The region urgently needs a new pair of rail tunnels to keep traffic moving. Once built, new tunnel capacity along with the addition of new platforms at Penn Station will provide the "swing space" the railroads need to continue operating uninterrupted as major construction activity occurs at and around Penn Station.

Leaving the Garden in place severely limits options for improving Penn Station.

With Madison Square Garden and Two Penn Plaza in their current configuration, options for improving Penn Station are severely restricted. Bleak entrances could be upgraded; the maze of concourses could be unified, rationalized, and expanded; and retail space could be built to attract high-quality food and goods. However, the structural elements supporting the Garden complex limit potential improvements to tracks and platforms, opportunities to raise ceiling heights and bring in natural light, and more. Leaving the Garden and its structural elements in place would also increase the cost and complexity of many other potential station improvements. A fresh approach to the design of the arena and station would allow for a vastly superior station and more appealing urban conditions.

This is a unique, once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine the future of Penn Station, Madison Square Garden and West Midtown.

Decisions about the Garden's future will affect the future of Penn Station. Madison Square Garden has moved three times in its history; it is reasonable to think it will move again. It is also important to understand what will happen if the Garden stays in place. This report examines three potential visions of the future for the Garden – one where the arena remains in its current location; a second where it moves to the Farley Post Office Annex site, the western half of the block across 8th Avenue from the current Garden; and a third where it moves to the Morgan Post Office and Annex site just a few blocks southwest of where the Garden stands today.

Building a new Madison Square Garden would allow Penn Station to expand and unlock the potential of the West Midtown district.

Relocating the Garden would unlock enormous benefits for Penn Station's railroads and their riders, Madison Square Garden's owners, teams and artists and their fans, as well as the public. Unearthing the Garden and all of its support columns and utilities would allow for a complete overhaul of Penn Station, providing an opportunity to build a new city landmark. Likewise, the new Garden could be designed as an ultra-modern entertainment complex that has lower production costs, attracts even more events and visitors, and supports and catalyzes the future development of West Midtown. The Alliance for a New Penn Station believes that relocating the Garden, and ultimately Two Penn Plaza as well, will be necessary to create a new, world-class Penn Station capable of handling the growth in rail ridership that is projected and anchoring the new city within a city rising in West Midtown.

From the extensive analysis presented in this report, the Alliance for a New Penn Station recommends the Morgan Post Office and Annex site as the most suitable place for Madison Square Garden to go.

The site of the Morgan site, located between 9th and 10th avenues and 28th and 30th streets, is both large enough to accommodate a new state-of-the-art arena and a quick, three- to seven-minute walk from Penn Station. Relocating the Garden to this site will provide the city with a new arena and allow for the reconstruction and expansion of Penn Station, each of which can be designed to vastly improve the conditions of the district.

Addressing all of these challenges will require creative, new approaches.

Other cities that have reconstructed old or built new major train stations in dense, complex urban environments, like San Francisco, London and Denver, have created a single entity and given it the authority to act as “master builder” for the station area. This method helps to address both infrastructure and land use challenges and raise the revenue necessary to plan for the future. Similar approaches could deliver the same results in New York.

The Alliance for a New Penn Station

In the summer of 2013, Regional Plan Association and the Municipal Art Society led a coalition that convinced the New York City Council to limit Madison Square Garden's operating permit from a permit in perpetuity to one that expires in just 10 years. We now have eight and a half years to chart a new course for the Garden. This deadline is a unique opportunity to both rethink how this vital transportation hub can better fulfill its role as a civic anchor and create a new, 21st century entertainment and cultural center that could become a strong economic driver for the city. Now is the time to consider the future of Madison Square Garden so that we can plan for an improved Penn Station and West Midtown district.

This report, the second in a series by the Alliance for a New Penn Station, focuses on the future of Madison Square Garden, and more specifically on the question of whether it should remain in place or be built anew on another site. The first report, *Penn 2023*, released in October 2013, summarized the vision of the campaign for a new Penn Station. In it, the Alliance identified the elements of a successful strategy for West Midtown, including a comprehensive plan for the district; a completed Moynihan Station; an expansion of transit capacity, achieved through the Gateway Program and an expansion of Penn Station to the south; and construction of a new Madison Square Garden on a new site. Future reports by the Alliance for a New Penn Station will focus on the numerous transportation and economic development issues in West Midtown.



...transformed by a new civic anchor.



The Future

Tens of millions of square feet of mixed-use urban development are under construction or planned in West Midtown, and even more is envisioned. The realization of this plan will create a new central business district, which will have major implications for the surrounding area and the entire transportation network serving New York City.

The MTA's West Side Yard is currently being decked over and Hudson Yards, the largest private real estate development in U.S. history, is rising above it. New York City's 2005 and 2009 rezoning of the rail yards and the surrounding district allows for the addition of 25 million square feet of office space, three million square feet of hotel and two million square feet of retail, and 20,000 housing units. A 2011 report by Cushman & Wakefield projected that current demand for new development will result in the full build-out of the Hudson Yards district by 2041, bringing new residents and visitors to the area. Many other sites in West Midtown, including the Javits Convention Center, have been the subject of development plans over the years, some of which could gain momentum as Hudson Yards is built out, further straining Penn Station and the rest of the district's transportation network.

Two important infrastructure projects are underway that will help alleviate congestion at Penn Station. First, the 7 train – a crucial subway line that connects Times Square, Grand Central Terminal, Citi Field, and downtown Flushing – is being extended from its current terminus at Times Square to a new station at 34th Street and 11th Avenue. Extension of the 7 train, set to open in 2015, was paid for using a value capture mechanism set up by the City of New York. First, the City created a new entity, the Hudson Yards Infrastructure Corporation, to raise revenue through the sale of bonds to pay for construction. Eventually, all developments within the value capture district will pay into the Hudson Yards District Improvement Fund, which will be used to repay the principal and interest on the initial bonds.

Second, the first phase of the long-awaited Moynihan Station project is underway. Once fully implemented, portions of the landmarked James Farley Post Office, directly across 8th Avenue from Penn Station and designed by McKim, Mead & White, the same firm that designed the original Pennsylvania Station, will be converted into a new, grand train hall for Amtrak with new passenger waiting areas and vertical access to many of Penn Station's platforms via an expanded Western Concourse. It will also add several new entrances to the Western Concourse and the 8th Avenue subway station. This project was initially championed by the late-U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan in the 1990s. Work on phase one began in 2012 and is set to finish in 2016. The second phase of the project is estimated to cost \$700 million. Developers Related and Vornado have pledged roughly \$500 million for phase two, and the Federal Transit Administration allocated an additional \$13 million earlier this year.

These two transit projects are critical to ensure the future mobility needs of this growing district and alleviate congestion at Penn Station. However, they simply will not create enough capacity in the transportation network to handle the growth in travel demand that is projected over the coming years. When Hudson Yards is fully built out, the 7 train will likely carry tens of thousands of riders per day. But the 7 train is already congested and future growth in riders from the neighborhoods it serves in Queens and East Midtown could jeopardize its ability to serve the ridership projected in West Midtown. Moynihan Station will relieve much of the current congestion and confusion at Penn Station, but will not substantially expand the station's capacity to serve projected growth in commuter and intercity rail ridership.



(Top row): Related Companies; Silverstein Properties / Department of City Planning (bottom row): Archiller Architects; Brookfield Properties; Moinian Group.

Manhattan's Rapidly Changing West Side

A sampling of the buildings proposed and under construction in Manhattan's rapidly changing West Midtown. (Top row, from left): Hudson Yards Towers and Related's Abington House; the Shops at Hudson Yards; and 520 West 41st Street, a proposed development by Silverstein Properties that would be the city's tallest apartment tower. (Bottom row, from left): Blackhouse's 470 West 11th Avenue; Brookfield Properties' Manhattan West development; and the Moinian Group's 3 Hudson Boulevard.

The Problem

Penn Station is the nation's busiest transit hub and a gateway to New York City, serving hundreds of thousands of passengers per day. The station is cramped, crowded, and confusing to navigate, and increasingly unsafe. Built to serve 200,000 daily passengers, the station now handles more than half a million, more than at any time in its history. It is woefully unprepared to handle the huge increase in travel demand on the horizon.

Penn Station is operating above its effective capacity.

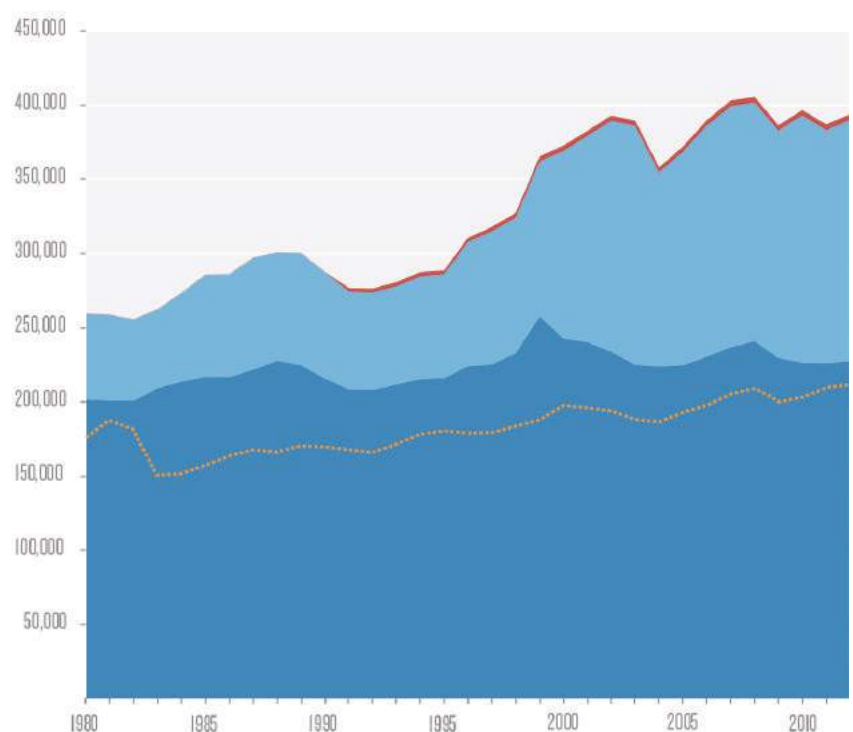
Since the 1980's, the volume of passengers using Penn Station has grown tremendously, with much of this growth has come from commuters that live west of the Hudson River. Since 1980, annual ridership on NJ Transit's rail network has more than doubled, to 74.6 million. Most of this growth is the result of NJ Transit's major capital improvements over the years, which increased the amount of direct, one-seat rides to Penn Station. Ridership on Amtrak trains grew significantly in recent years as well, breaking numerous records on the Northeast Corridor since the opening of Acela Express service in 2001. Today, there is virtually no more room for growth in both trains and people at Penn Station.



Average Daily Ridership at Penn Station (Excluding Subways)

Ridership has grown dramatically at Penn Station since 1980.

- Empire Line (Amtrak)
- Hudson River (NJT & Amtrak)
- East River (LIRR & Amtrak)
- Grand Central



The lack of track and concourse capacity is not the only problem that plagues the station. Some of Penn Station's other major issues include:

- **Train Delays:**

Train delays are common in Penn Station. They are often caused by aging infrastructure at the track level, including the Hudson River and East River tunnels. They can also be traced back to the station's narrow platforms with limited vertical circulation, which slows the process of clearing and increases queuing at platform stairwells and escalators.

- **Passenger Experience:**

Penn Station is now infamous for its cramped and oppressive conditions, and complexity that induces a state of confusion and anxiety in its users. Located underground, the station lacks access to natural light and air, and its retail spaces are far inferior to those offered at other major transit hubs in New York City.

- **Wayfinding:**

The Penn Station complex is poorly connected and can be disorienting. There are no visual linkages between many of its public spaces, even ones located near each other, forcing the station to rely on signage for way finding. However, most of the station's signage has been installed by one of the railroads to assist its passengers, often ignoring or providing incomplete information to passengers of the other railroads.

- **Street-Level Visibility:**

Madison Square Garden and Two Penn Plaza dominate the streetscape and visual identity of the superblock, making Penn Station difficult for passengers to find.



Syd London

Syd London

A Station in Need of Change

With poor visibility from the street, a cramped and confusing layout, and frequent delays, Penn Station needs a near-complete overhaul over the next 20 years.

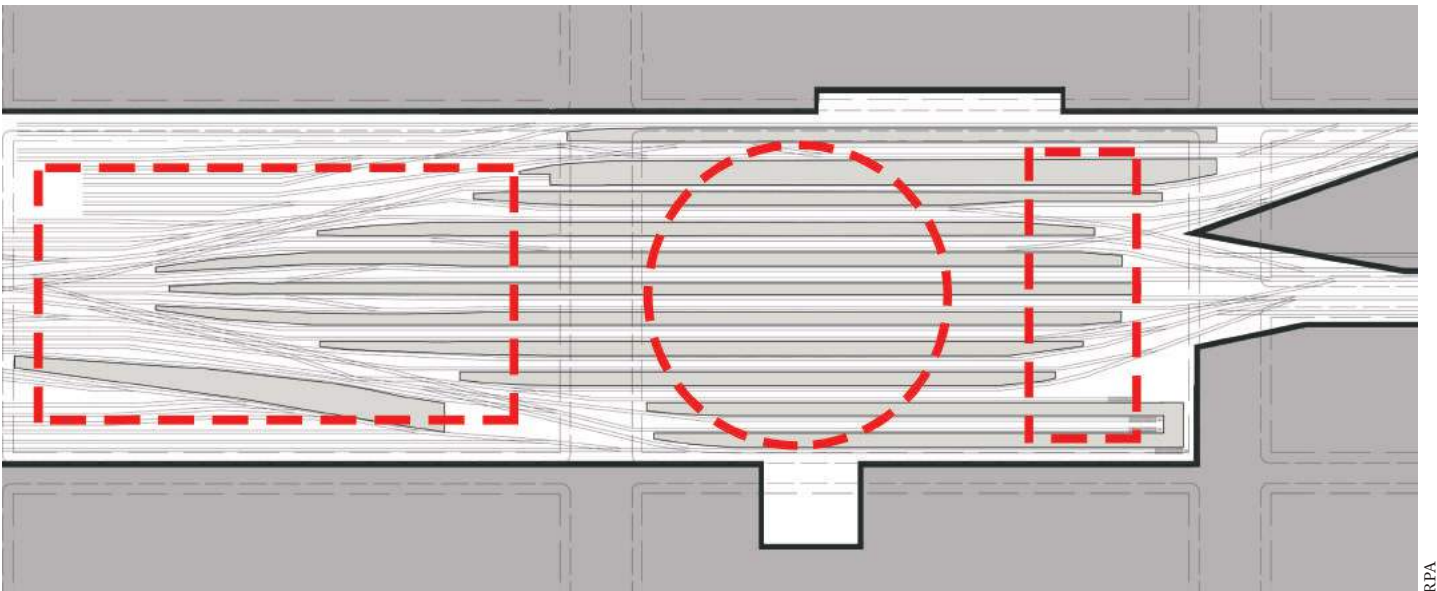
The future of Penn Station is coupled with the future of the Garden.

Following the destruction of the above-grade portion of the original Penn Station in 1963, the current station was rebuilt completely underground beneath Madison Square Garden and Two Penn Plaza. One of Manhattan's most beautiful, historic structures was lost forever; gone with it were the building's grand public spaces with high ceilings and natural light, bold street identity, and unified design.

Because of the way the new office and sports complex was constructed, its future became intertwined with the future of Penn Station. Since the 1960's, Amtrak, Long Island Rail Road and NJ Transit have all made substantial improvements to the station, but each of these efforts has been constrained by the columns and utilities that support the Garden and Two Penn Plaza. Some concourses and passageways have been expanded and renovated over the years, but the station's tracks and platforms are largely original.

Fixing the station's many problems will be challenging in any case, but the presence of Madison Square Garden and Two Penn Plaza will constrain our ability to increase the height of the station's ceilings, bring natural light and air into the concourses, and make many of the other potential improvements, including any changes at the track and platform level, more difficult and/or expensive because of the need to work around the Garden's dense network of structural elements.

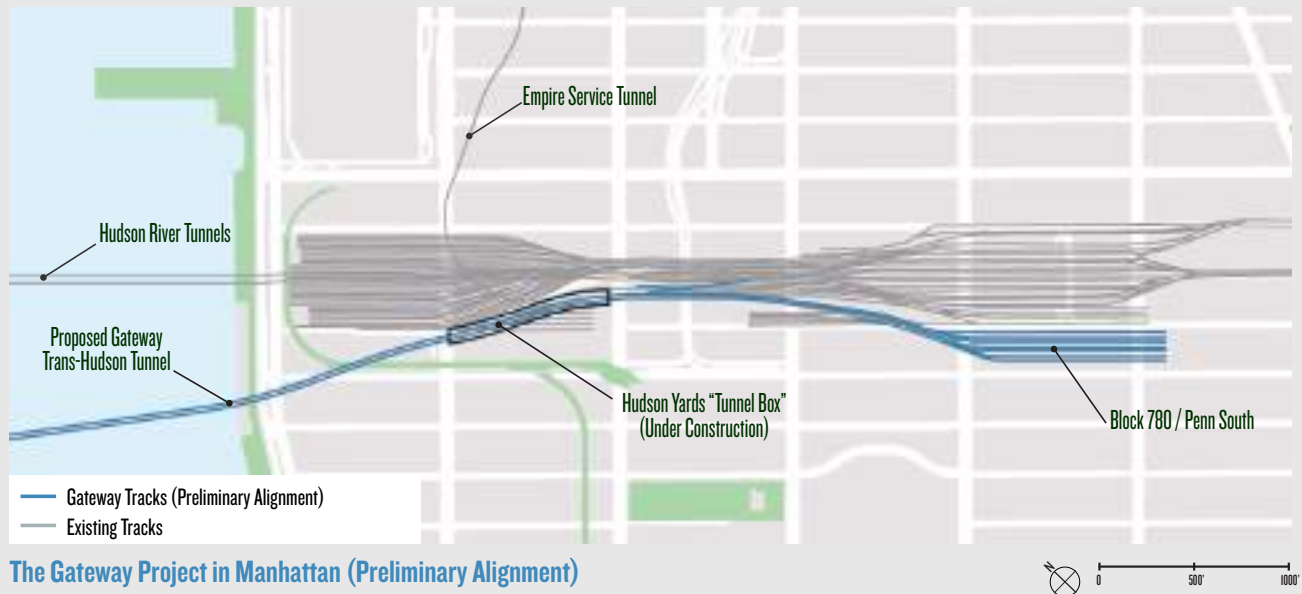
To preserve service while making major changes to Penn Station, new capacity is needed to provide "swing space" for all of the operating railroads to use during construction. New tunnels under the Hudson River, track and platform capacity at the station and a completed Moynihan Station are also needed. The railroads could also implement several through-running trains in the peak hours in the near term to ease train congestion and connect new markets throughout the region.



Track Alignment at Penn Station

The footprints of the Farley Post Office (left), Madison Square Garden (center, circle) and Two Penn Plaza (right) above Penn Station's tracks and platforms.

The Gateway Program

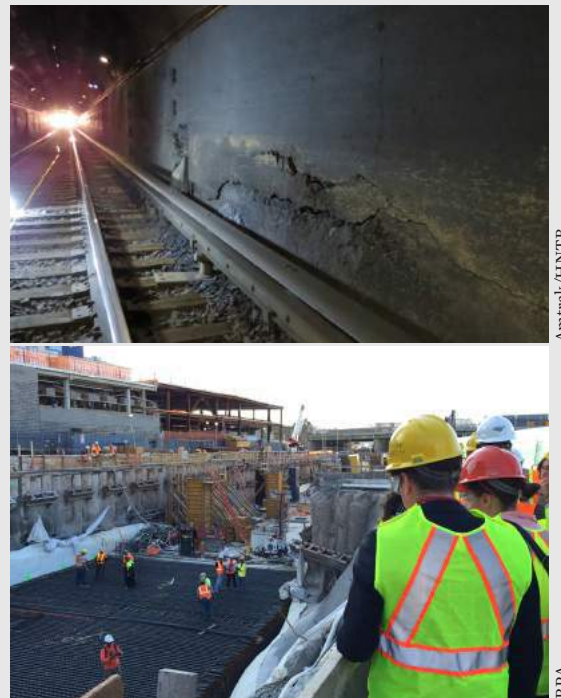


The Gateway Project in Manhattan (Preliminary Alignment)

New trans-Hudson rail tunnel capacity is an essential part of any plan for Penn Station.

Amtrak is currently advancing the Gateway Program, comprised of a suite of projects that together will make comprehensive improvements to the Northeast Corridor between Newark, New Jersey and New York, as well as replacing the 100-year-old Hudson River rail tunnels. The program will double train capacity under the Hudson River, a critical segment of the Northeast Corridor between Manhattan and all points south, including not only New Jersey, but also the biggest intercity rail markets in the country, such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.

Construction of the new tunnels began in 2013 with \$185 million in federal funding. These funds are dedicated to building a segment under the Hudson Yards development site to preserve the future right-of-way for this critical project. It was estimated in 2012 that the entire Gateway Program will cost \$14.5 billion and could be completed by 2025. Once built, new tunnel capacity along with the addition of several new platforms at Penn Station will provide the “swing space” the railroads will need to continue operating uninterrupted as major construction activity occurs at and around Penn Station.



(Top) Damage to the Hudson River tunnels caused by Hurricane Sandy. (Below) The “tunnel box” under construction beneath Hudson Yards will preserve the future right-of-way for the Gateway tunnels into Penn Station.

The Opportunity

At the urging of the Alliance for a New Penn Station, in 2013, the New York City Council voted to limit Madison Square Garden's operating permit to just 10 more years, enough time to develop the best vision for the future of Penn Station and Madison Square Garden. While some improvements to Penn Station can be made if the Garden stays in place, moving the Garden would deliver far greater benefits.

Moving the Garden would be a tremendous opportunity for West Midtown to reinvent Penn Station.

Relocating the Garden would allow for massive enhancements to Penn Station and additional development and retail opportunities. Without the Garden above it, the station could be completely redesigned from the ground up to provide vastly superior transit facilities with better pedestrian circulation and wider platforms to accommodate more trains and more people, grand interior public spaces with more air and natural light, and a far greater urban setting.

A new Garden will be a boon for the owners, teams, entertainers and fans – as well as the public.

A new, state-of-the-art Madison Square Garden would provide an enhanced fan experience, new amenities, uses, retail opportunities and public spaces. A new arena would also allow for an improved, modern design that opens up to streets and improves – rather than detracts – from the surrounding neighborhood. A new Garden would also better facilitate back-of-house operations like loading and unloading, and event management at lower costs to its owners than the current Garden. Likewise, a new arena would be a huge economic catalyst for West Midtown, further anchoring the enormous developments that are under construction there.



Flickr user mattbrit00



Flickr user julesantonio

Looking to Barclays

The Barclays Center shows how a modern arena can include attractive, dynamic open spaces.

New York and New Jersey have built several new sports facilities in recent years, proving the will and capacity to build exists.

In the past decade, the region has seen the opening of the Prudential Center (2007), Citi Field (2009), Yankee Stadium (2009), MetLife Stadium (2010) and the Barclays Center (2012). As these projects demonstrate, it is more than possible to take on the complex, challenging project of building a new arena. For all of the reasons that have been described, we should do it again.

The Garden has moved three times before.

The Madison Square Garden fans and visitors identify with today is actually the fourth iteration in a series of venues spanning 135 years and three separate locations throughout Midtown.

The first was built on the site of a rail depot at the northeast corner of Madison Square in 1879. The second Garden was built on the same site and designed by McKim, Mead and White. The third moved uptown to a larger venue designed by Thomas W. Lamb and built in 1925 located between 49th and 50th streets on 8th Avenue. The current Garden, the fourth, was built on the site of the original Penn Station in 1963. Today, the Garden is the oldest arena in the NHL and the second-oldest arena in the NBA.



(Top three) US Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Online Catalog

MAS

The Many Madison Square Gardens

The current Madison Square Garden isn't the first entertainment facility to bear the name. In fact, there have been four other Gardens on three different sites throughout Midtown.

The Garden has tried to move from its current location before.

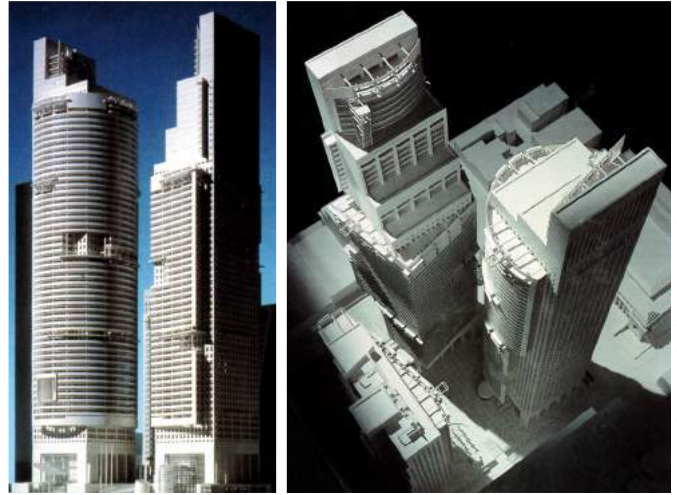
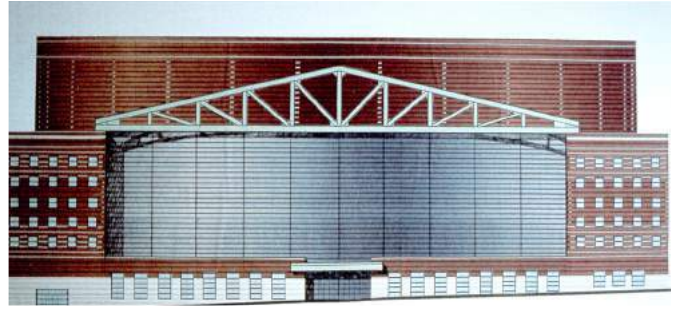
In 1986, the Garden revealed plans to build what would have been its fifth rendition atop the MTA's West Side Yard (the current site of Hudson Yards) and redevelop the site between 7th and 8th avenues. The proposal called for construction of a new arena with 22,000 seats, along with a new office and entertainment complex. Cesar Pelli, in association with Howard, Needles, Tammen & Bergendorff were selected to design the arena, while Skidmore, Owings & Merrill partnered with Frank Gehry won a design competition for the redevelopment of the current Garden site. However, the collapse of the real estate market in 1988 led to the abandonment of the project by 1989.

In 2005, talk of a fifth Garden emerged yet again. The team tasked with executing the Moynihan Station project envisioned an ambitious scheme to relocate the Garden to the Western Annex of the Farley Post Office and redevelop Two Penn Plaza. By the summer of 2006, a non-binding \$7 billion deal was circulated, which involved the Garden moving into the Farley Building annex, building of Moynihan Station, reconstruction of Penn Station and construction of a new commercial complex atop Penn Station equivalent in scope to Rockefeller Center. In the ensuing months, the scope of work evolved, but during a stall in negotiations, the effort abruptly ended with the resignation of then-Governor Spitzer in March 2008. Shortly afterward, the Garden announced it would renovate the current structure rather than move.

Previous Efforts to Move Madison Square Garden

(Top): Proposed Madison Square Garden, site bounded by West 31st and West 37th streets, 10th and 12th avenues, designed by Cesar Pelli in 1987, with a model of the proposed redevelopment of Penn Station shown below.

(Bottom): An image showing a relocated Madison Square Garden to the Farley Building, along with improvements to Penn Station.



Stern, Fishman and Tilove, New York 2000



SOM

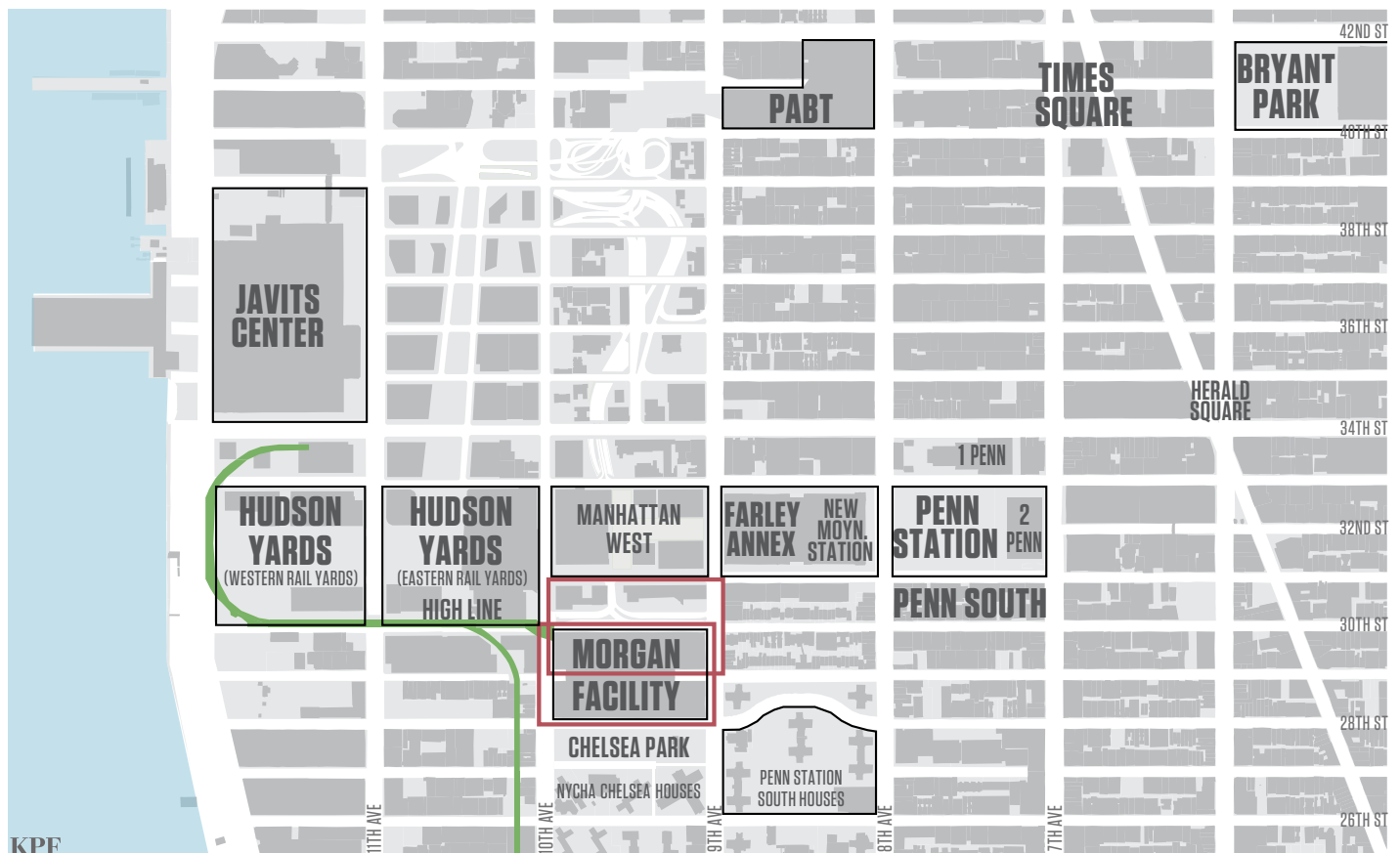
Where Can the Garden Go?

Finding a viable site is the next step in relocating Madison Square Garden. A suitable site needs to be accessible to mass transit, have neighboring uses compatible with a large entertainment facility and large enough to accommodate a new, modern multiuse arena.

There are viable sites that could be assembled, but it's essential to act now.

Moving Madison Square Garden will be a serious challenge, but it is feasible. Sites in West Midtown exist that are large enough to accommodate an arena, have good transit access and could be assembled from a few property owners. However, the most feasible sites are unlikely to remain available for long.

As part of the campaign for a New Penn Station, the Alliance formed a working group to look into possible sites for a new arena. In the end, the working group chose to look at two sites in greater detail: the **Farley Post Office's Western Annex** and the **Morgan Postal Facility and Annex**.



Double-Block Sites in West Midtown

A modern arena needs the width of two city blocks. There are very few sites in West Midtown that meet that requirement. The Morgan site is one of the few double-block sites that is not a park, active development site, or predominately residential area.

Alternative One: The Farley Building Annex

The Farley Annex could be a viable site, but presents a number of unique challenges.

The Farley Annex, located on the western half of the block across 8th Avenue from the current Garden, would be a convenient location in many respects. It would maintain a direct connection to Moynihan Station and Penn Station while moving it one block closer to Hudson Yards, the High Line and Hudson River Parkway.

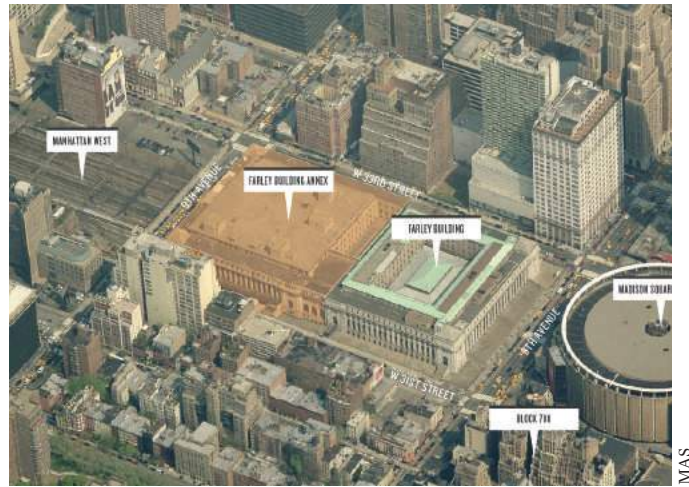
As part of the previous plan to move the Garden there, a tremendous number of architectural and engineering studies were done. It was determined the Farley Annex could accommodate an arena, but it would require a number of trade-offs. Constructing an arena within a landmarked building and on top of active rail lines presents extraordinary challenges. Because of the size of the Farley annex, the site would not offer the same amount of commercial development opportunities surrounding a new arena as a larger site would.

Our working group concluded that the Farley Annex was an exceptionally challenging site and therefore a less than desirable location for a new Madison Square Garden.

The Farley Building

At first blush, the Farley Annex seems like a logical option for relocating Madison Square Garden; however, it presents a number of challenges, given its landmark status and location above the active tracks leading to Penn Station

(Bottom): Rendering showing proposed improvements as part of phase one of Moynihan Station.



Alternative Two: The Morgan Postal Facility

The Morgan Postal Facility and Annex site could accommodate a new arena, along with new public spaces and new additional uses.

On a two-block site in West Midtown, bounded by 28th and 30th streets and 10th and 11th avenues, the site is a three- to seven- minute walk from Penn Station, and close to the new terminus of the 7 train at 34th Street and 11th Avenue. Smart planning and context-sensitive design could bring new open space and new cultural programming opportunities to the area, and ensure that the new arena is integrated into the surrounding community.

If this is to be the location for a new Madison Square Garden, steps need to be taken now to secure the site and facilitate the Garden's eventual move, or it could be lost to another use. Additionally, the building is still in full use as a mail sorting and distribution center for Manhattan, and those uses would need to be relocated.

The working group concluded that the Morgan site is the most suitable future space for Madison Square Garden.



The Morgan Postal Facility

(Above): The current Morgan United States Post Office building was constructed in 1933, with its design credited to James A. Wetmore. Originally the site existed within a low-rise residential and industrial context, but with the Hudson Yards and Manhattan West developments soon coming online, the neighborhood context is changing.

(Left): The site of the Morgan Post Office was once home to the Hudson River Railroad Depot, a terminal facility built by Cornelius Vanderbilt to accommodate passengers and the city's first freight lines up and down the west of Manhattan. The line and depot were demolished in 1931 to build the current post office facility.



There are a number of reasons why moving Madison Square Garden is viable and compelling:

- ***A better Penn Station***

The station could be reimagined and a safer, more modern facility could be built with improved pedestrian circulation, more light and air, and more new retail opportunities.

- ***An upgraded district***

Moving Madison Square Garden would allow the Penn Station superblock to be better integrated into the surrounding neighborhood, and new opportunities for retail, open space, and pedestrian amenities. Similarly, the Morgan superblock could be reimagined and become more welcoming to pedestrians and new economic opportunity.

- ***Close proximity to transit***

It is true that displacing the arena would move it farther from Penn Station than it currently is, but not by much. A new arena on the Morgan site would be a short 4-7 minute walk to Penn Station, nearly the same distance as Brooklyn's Barclays Center is to its neighboring transit hub, which is a 1-5 minute walk depending on point of departure.

- ***Improved stadium facility and new programming opportunities***

A more modern arena could bring operational improvements, such as simpler loading and unloading, leading to a reduction in operating costs and a broader range of stadium events.

- ***Increased open space and improved pedestrian experience***

Moving the Garden to the Morgan site would allow drastic improvements to the pedestrian environment around Penn Station and would enable improved pedestrian connectivity to the High Line and Chelsea Park. The area around the Morgan site could also be vastly improved with redesigned and more welcoming streets, and a stronger connection between buildings on the site and adjacent neighborhoods.



James Corner Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro, courtesy of the City of New York

Potential Connections to the High Line

In November 2013, the Friends of the High Line unveiled a design concept for the Spur, an addition to the third section of the High Line at the Rail Yards. The Spur will be directly adjacent to the Morgan Site, as seen in the images on the following page. The Spur concepts were developed by James Corner Field Operations and Diller Scofidio + Renfro.

- ***Development of the Morgan site could allow for a new long-distance bus facility***

The development of the Morgan site could allow for a new long distance bus facility. Located near the Lincoln Tunnel, this site could accommodate a below-grade bus facility that would connect to the tunnel via the Dyer Corridor. This would help alleviate bus traffic and improve traffic congestion in the area.



Morgan Site: Preliminary Concept One

This first concept would locate a new Garden on the southern portion of the Morgan site between 9th and 10th avenues and 28th and 30th streets. This option could accommodate a below-grade connection to the Lincoln Tunnel via the Dyer corridor, which would allow for the creation of a new long distance bus facility under the plaza located to the north of the new arena.



Morgan Site: Preliminary Concept Two

A second option would be to locate Garden on the northern portion of the Morgan site between 29th and 31st streets. With this option, a new long-distance bus facility could be placed under a plaza along the west or east side of the site depending on the exact placement of the new arena.



SON SQUARE GARDEN

Welcome to
RANGERSTOWN

NEW YORK RANGERS
2014 TEAM CREW
NEW YORK RANGERS
2014 TEAM CREW

A New Civic Anchor for the District

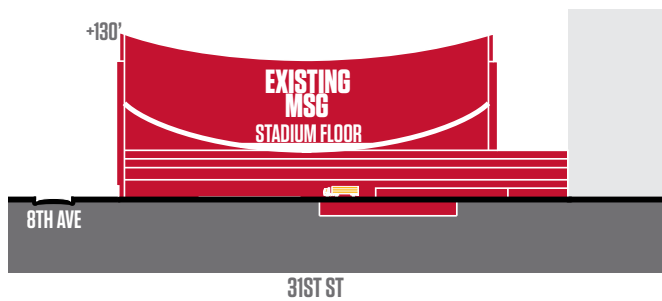




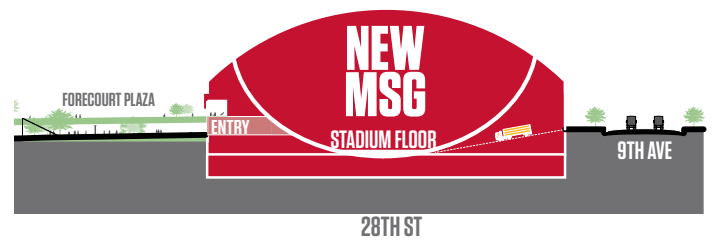
New Open Space Opportunities



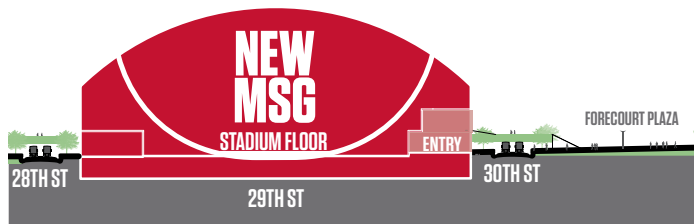
EXISTING STADIUM FLOOR - 5 LEVELS ABOVE GRADE



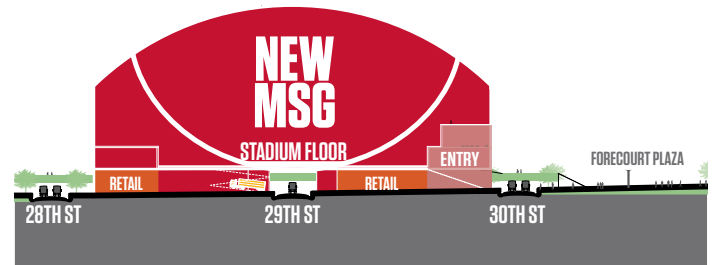
1. STADIUM FLOOR BELOW GRADE



2. STADIUM FLOOR AT GRADE



3. STADIUM FLOOR ABOVE GRADE



KPF

More Options for Positioning the Stadium Floor

At the current Madison Square Garden, the stadium floor is five flights up, making loading and unloading difficult. The stadium floor of the new arena at the Morgan site could be positioned in a number of ways to make loading easier. Additionally, as highlighted in the third alternative above, accommodations could be made to potentially preserve 29th Street, if deemed necessary because of traffic congestion concerns.

Previous Thinking on the Morgan Site

This working group is not the first to propose moving Madison Square Garden to the Morgan site. Previous studies that investigated the idea include:

SHoP Architects

The Morgan site was identified as the preferred site for a relocated Madison Square Garden during the May 2013 MAS Design Challenge for a New Penn Station and the Next Madison Square Garden by SHoP Architects. Their proposals involved connecting the relocated Garden to Penn Station through the creation of a new public park between 8th and 9th avenues, a block that is currently fully built-out, and is comprised of largely residential along the southern half. The SHoP proposal also explored the idea of extending the High Line to connect to this new park as a means of avoiding pedestrian conflicts with the Lincoln Tunnel exit at Dyer Ave.

University of Pennsylvania Penn Station Planning Studio

The Morgan site was also identified as a possible location for a new Garden in the University of Pennsylvania, School of Design 2013 Penn Station Planning Studio. That report also proposed connecting a relocated Garden to Penn Station via an elevated open space though does not propose the Gateway Park. Instead, the elevated open space would pass over the sidewalk and parking lane along 31st Street.



SHoP Architects

Rendering showing SHoP's proposal for a relocated Garden on the Morgan site. The proposed SHoP scheme would have the Garden be serviced through a midblock loading dock, with the arena surrounded by additional mixed-used development.



UPenn Studio

Elevated park proposal along 31st Street, part of the UPenn proposal.

Is There an Option for Keeping the Garden in Place?

There are options for making incremental improvements to both the arena and Penn Station with Madison Square Garden in place, but they won't allow us to fix many of Penn Station's underlying transportation issues. Worse, they could lock in place the current arrangement for another generation.

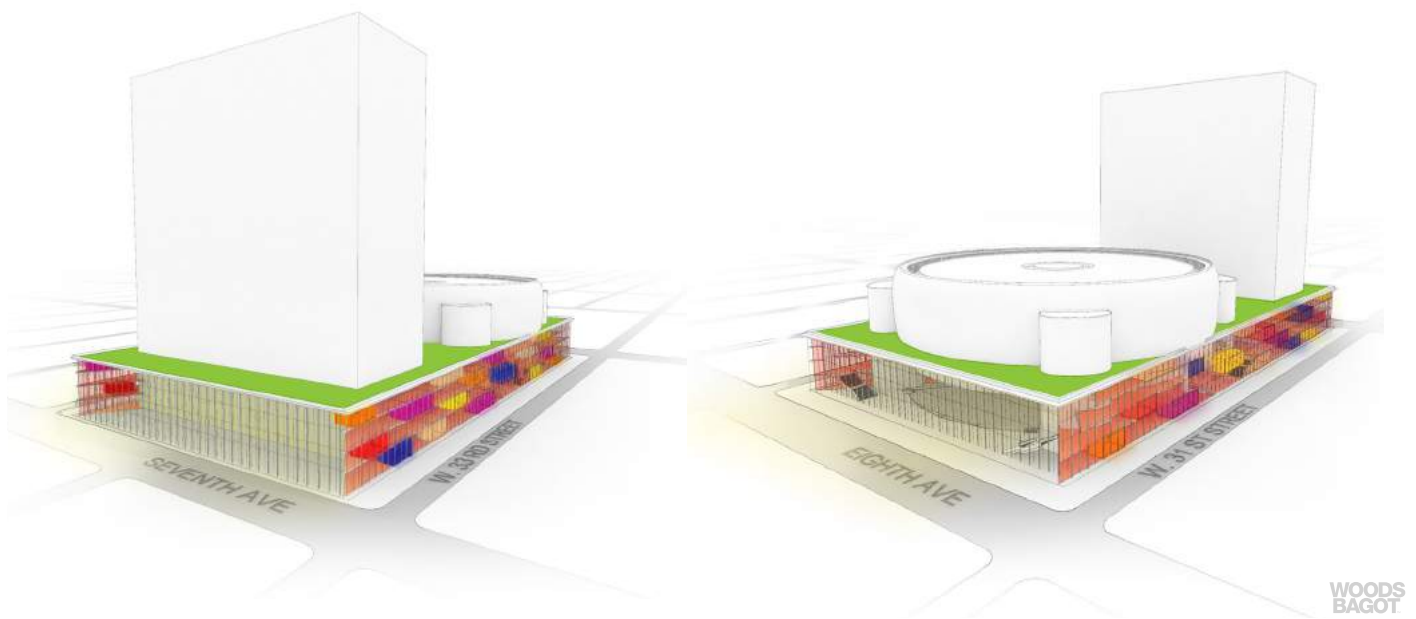
There needs to be a Plan B.

Madison Square Garden will move eventually. The question is, when? In the event a deal between the state, city, railroads and Madison Square Garden does not get done in the next eight years, there needs to be a plan for improving Penn Station and the surrounding district with the Garden still in place. In this case, the Alliance for a New Penn Station has identified a few potential improvements, including the construction of a retail/office wrap, and relocation of the Madison Square Garden theater on 8th Avenue and reconstruction of the 7th Avenue sidewalk and plazas to allow for new grand entrances to Penn Station.



The Downside of Improving the Garden in Place

Improving the Garden in place could dramatically change the facade of the building and offer grand new entrances to the station, but would likely be unable to address the severe limitations of the tracks and platforms.



Adding New Uses to the Current Garden Facility

View of potential retail and office wrap around the existing Madison Square Garden and Two Penn Plaza.



The Garden on Top of the Garden

View of a potential rooftop amenity on top of a new train hall.



Potential 8th Avenue Train Hall

View of a new train hall in Penn Station, made possible with the removal of the Theater at Madison Square Garden.



A New 8th Avenue Entrance for Penn Station



The District

With the incredible amount of development going on in West Midtown, including the potential for a new arena on the Morgan site and a reimagined Penn Station, it's imperative that future development build upon existing cultural and historic resources.

As development proceeds, holistic planning should include the following principles:

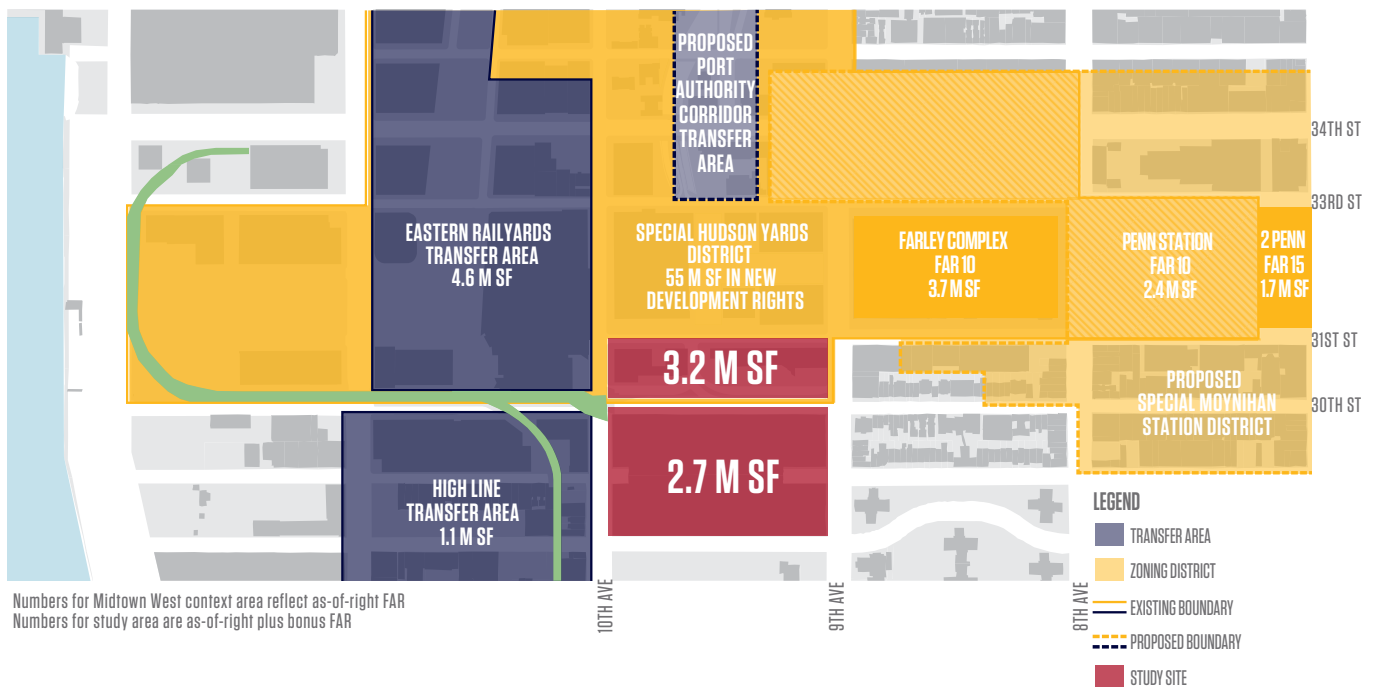
- ***A new arena must be well integrated with the existing urban fabric.***
Any new arena on the Morgan site will require thoughtful planning to ensure that it doesn't overwhelm surrounding buildings, streets, and parks.
- ***Area residents and stakeholders need to be actively involved in the planning process.***
The development process should include consultation with those who would be potentially impacted by the construction of a new arena.
- ***Open space connections should be improved.***
As new open space opportunities are created, existing and new open spaces should be well connected through planning, design and wayfinding.
- ***There must be transparency in air rights transfers.***
With tens of millions of square feet available in development rights in the district, plans for individual building should not proceed in isolation. Moynihan Station recently hired a broker to assist in the sale of their development rights as a way to provide additional funding for the project. The community board has already asked that possible receiving sites for Moynihan Station air rights be made public and a more inclusive process determining how development be coordinated within the district.



The Penn Zone

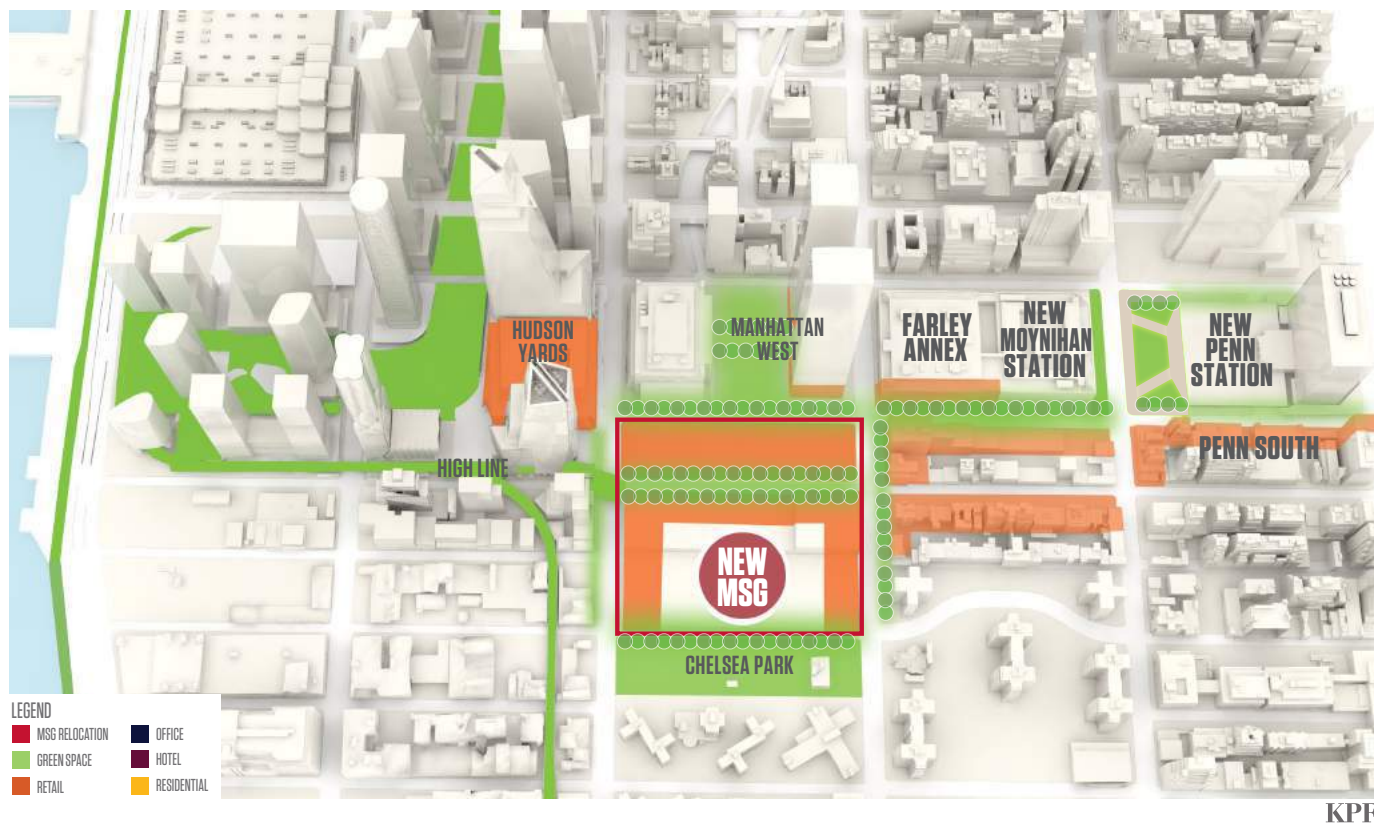
This postcard from the 1940's shows a birds eye view of what was referred to as "The Penn Zone," illustrating how Penn Station was not only a principle transportation hub of the city and a true Gateway to the city, but also a defining anchor for West Midtown.

- ***Important historic resources should be preserved.***
In an evaluation, MAS identified more than 60 buildings with cultural or historic relevance in the district. Any development plan should carefully consider which of these buildings to preserve, and how future development can build upon the existing cultural and historical fabric of the area.



Zoning Capacity of the Morgan Site

This district has tremendous development potential for residential, office and retail projects. Where the development rights are received would have to be carefully managed.



Pedestrianized Environment and Activated Retail Ground Plane

A new Garden on the Morgan site could help create an open space and retail coordior, connecting Penn Station, the High Line and the river.

Culture as the Placemaking Driver for the District

As part of the research by the Penn 2023 working group, Grimshaw Architects, in partnership with culture and placemaking consultancy Futurecity, conducted a cultural resource survey of West Midtown. The process involved a block-by-block survey of West Midtown, taking note of its many cultural assets.

Findings

The cultural resource survey reveals a surprising mosaic of cultural resources and creative industries within close proximity to the station, the transport gateway and original “heart of the city.” These resources range from small but important private arts and design organizations, to semi-public event spaces to some of the largest public venues in the city. While these assets are numerous and diverse, many are hidden from the public, and there is not yet a successful unifying neighborhood identity or pronouncement that they exist.

There is an opportunity to coordinate among the patchwork of neighborhood stakeholders to create a Cultural Master Plan that will preserve, cultivate, and promote the district’s creative assets.

Next Steps: A Cultural Master Plan

Culture plays a significant part in shaping our urban fabric. A cultural district/neighborhood can act as an important catalyst for economic development, and a tool for placemaking and social engagement. The cultural resource survey demonstrated the importance of these assets to West Midtown. A cultural master plan could answer questions, such as: How can the city best regenerate the district and overcome the current stigma attached to West Midtown? How can we best empower existing constituencies and communities threatened with displacement?

One of the central goals of the Cultural Master Plan will be to encourage private real estate interests to engage the cultural resources as partners in the development of the neighborhood.

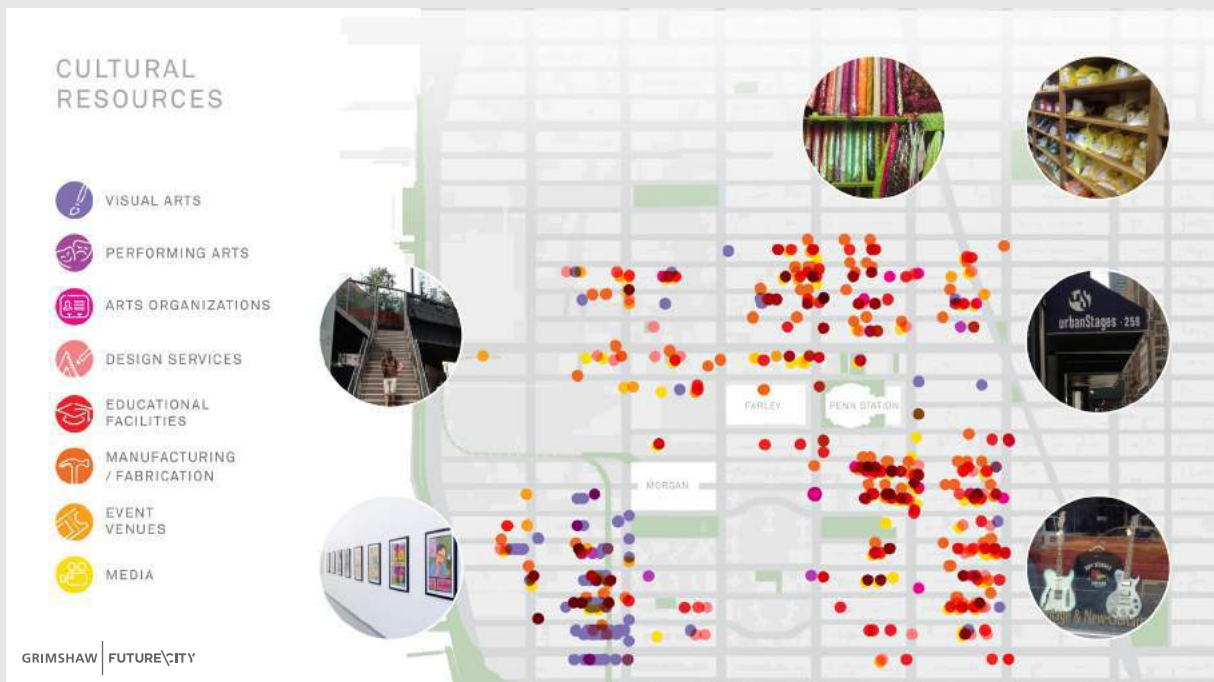


Conducting the Cultural Resource Survey

To conduct the survey, a block-by-block analysis was done of all of West Midtown.

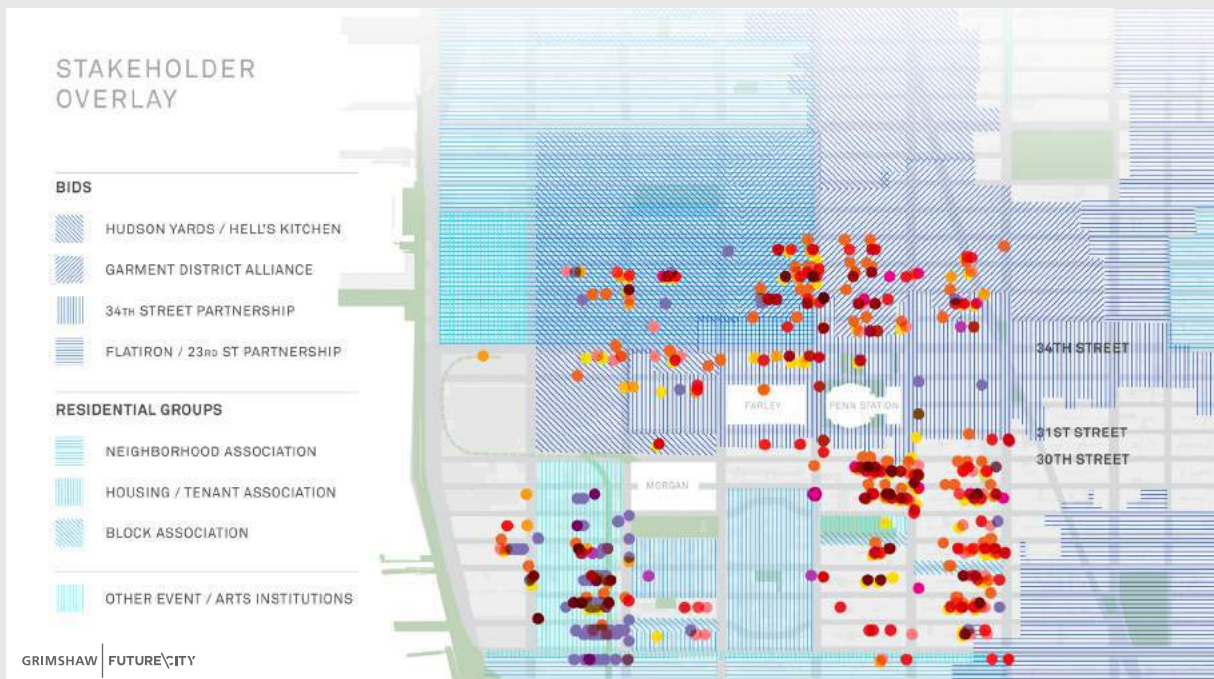
“As the urban population increases, so does the impact and importance of culture and creativity. Culture is the lifeblood of our cities, it is a major reason why people gravitate to them - to live, work or visit. Culture is deeply embedded in their social and economic fortunes, hence culture is now at the heart of public policy in most major cities.”

- The World Cities Culture Forum



Cultural Resources: Uncovering Cultural Assets

The survey findings were mapped, showing a surprising mosaic of cultural resources and creative industries within close proximity to Penn Station. These resources range from small but important private, behind the scenes arts and design organizations, to semi-public event spaces and the largest public venues in the city.



Mapping of Assets with Stakeholder Overlay

Overlaying the districts cultural assets with BIDs and stakeholder groups highlights the need for a more coordinated district identity.

The Need for Leadership

Addressing the infrastructure challenges outlined in this report will not be easy. It will require strong, patient leadership from government officials and financial contributions from everyone who stands to benefit, including federal, state and city government, as well as businesses and transit users.

With less than nine years left on Madison Square Garden's current operating permit, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform West Midtown by working with the Garden's owners, the railroads and federal partners. Their leadership, along with that of New Jersey Governor Chris Christie's, is crucial to ensuring that Penn Station and its entire connecting transit infrastructure are able to support the New York region's future growth.

New York City has experimented with new models, including the 7 train extension, which relies on the cooperation of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the City, and tax increment financing from developments in the Hudson Yards district, but the City and State have not yet taken full advantage of the opportunities available to build transit infrastructure coordinated with surrounding residential and commercial development. New models could help advance reconstruction of Penn Station and the new Hudson River rail tunnels, along with other future transit projects in New York City.

A huge multitude of stakeholders would be involved in a program to construct new trans-Hudson rail tunnels, relocate Madison Square Garden and rebuild Penn Station. A single entity should be created to be the "master builder and district planner," which can raise revenue and aggregate funding from multiple sources, acquire real property and enforce district plans through a combination of incentives and disincentives. This would not be unprecedented. With leadership from key elected officials, other cities around the world have figured out how to deal with similarly complex infrastructure predicaments using innovative project delivery and management structures to finance and build transit infrastructure and transit-oriented development districts.

A few notable examples of innovative project delivery and management structures from other cities:

London's Crossrail

Crossrail, Europe's largest construction project, is a new rail project that will increase London's rail capacity by 10%. The entity designing and building the project, Crossrail, was a 50/50 joint venture between Transport for London and the Department for Transport until 2008, when it became a fully-owned subsidiary of Transport for London. The \$14 billion project is being paid through government sources, including support from the mayor, transit riders' fares, a local business tax levy, and financial contributions from key beneficiaries of Crossrail, including Heathrow Airport Holdings and Canary Wharf Group.

San Francisco's Transbay

In San Francisco, a new entity, the Transbay Joint Powers Authority, was developed to pursue a \$4.5 billion project to rebuild the Transbay Transit Center, extend a Caltrain train line, and create a new community with 2,600 new homes (35 percent affordable) along with offices, retail and park space. The Transbay Joint Powers Authority is responsible for the financing, design, development, construction and operation of the new transit center and rail extension. It is also collaborating with the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and municipal departments to create an adjacent new transit-oriented neighborhood. The TJPA is a joint exercise of powers authority created by the City and County of San Francisco, the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board and Caltrans.

Conclusion

After thoroughly examining the issues laid out in this report, the Alliance for a New Penn Station and its design working group have concluded that to create a truly world-class transit hub and entertainment center, our political leaders should: immediately begin working with all of the property owners, railroads and affected agencies to develop a plan to relocate Madison Square Garden to the Morgan site; initiate critical near-term improvements to Penn Station, including the Gateway Program; and complete the Moynihan Station project.

Relocating the Garden will allow for a new Penn Station worthy of this great city and region. Moving the Garden to the Morgan site offers benefits and opportunities to West Midtown in excess of the benefits offered by other viable sites, but not without enormous challenges and costs. It provides the opportunity to rethink Penn Station to create vastly superior transit facilities with greater capacity and improved passenger experience, interior public spaces with much needed light and air, and urban conditions with additional commercial and retail development. A new Garden would be a huge economic catalyst for West Midtown, further anchoring the enormous developments that are under construction there.

The Garden has moved before and it will move again. Now is the time to plan a new Penn Station to be the anchor of a new city within a city in West Midtown and the central hub of the nation's largest metropolitan region.

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New York City deserves a world-class train station and truly dynamic arena. In order to make this happen, MAS and RPA formed the 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.

PENN 2023



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