CHAPTER 5: SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS AND ACTIONS
Plan 2040
Chapter 5: System Improvements and Actions

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1. Introduction

The first two chapters of Plan 2040 described the goals, needs and expected growth of one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country. The third and fourth chapters outlined the extensive transportation network and how the system is managed and operated to optimize the performance of existing and future transportation infrastructure. Chapter 5: System Improvements and Actions, presents an implementation strategy with specific steps and projects that were developed by NYMTC’s members. These projects are in various stages: some have been developed through planning work, design, or engineering, while others are purely conceptual or vision projects. All require additional planning, design, or engineering work before the costs can be ascertained in sufficient detail to begin program funding for their implementation. These short-, medium-, and long-term transportation improvement projects proposed in Plan 2040 will support the expanding, dynamic NYMTC planning area and transportation network.

This Chapter describes more fully components of the Council’s shared vision in Chapter 1 including the Strategic Transportation Initiatives and Investments which are critical to support the sustainable growth outlined in Plan 2040. In addition to describing the linkages between investments and initiatives and the shared goals, the chapter also outlines which of these (investments and initiatives) will help to: preserve the system; enhance the system, and grow the system.

Connecting the Improvements and Actions to the Shared Vision

The identification, planning, and implementation of the strategic land use designations, transportation investments, conceptual and environmental studies, and planning for pedestrians, bicyclists and special needs individuals are guided by NYMTC’s shared goals. The paragraphs that follow highlight the connections between the shared goals, and types of investments and initiatives that are programmed, planned and proposed and discussed later in the Chapter.

The shared goal to enhance the regional environment will be supported by actions and strategies that will reduce congestion, decrease greenhouse gas emissions, improve air and water quality, and preserve open space. Among the transportation investments and initiatives that will support this goal are: encouraging safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle travel; managing rail and auto congestion; encouraging mass transit use by increasing capacity, integration, and accessibility; modernizing infrastructure through replacements and rehabilitations that maximize efficiency and useful life; and the ongoing consideration of environmental issues and impacts in planning and evaluation studies.

Improving the regional economy, could bring sustainable growth and improve the mobility of people and goods in the NYMTC planning area. There are planned and programmed projects that will increase transportation connectivity and efficiency, including modernizing or replacing bridges and other linking facilities; encouraging transit-oriented development and complementary land-use policies; optimizing the movement of freight within, to, and from the region through rail and roadway improvements; and expanding transportation to Manhattan’s West Side to reduce commuting times and promote mixed-use development.
There are investments and projects that will be implemented to achieve the goal of improving the regional quality of life so as to achieve better mobility, safety, and accessibility and vibrant communities, among other outcomes. These include: rehabilitating or replacing facilities, and managing traffic flows and congestion to mitigate security and safety risks; coordinated planning to address the special needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, disabled people, low-income people, and older adults; conducting impact studies in dialogue with the public and community stakeholders; improving transportation experiences, including travel times, ease of connectivity, and accessibility, through modernization and expansion projects; and consideration of negative externalities, community needs, and environmental impacts throughout the planning process.

The goal of providing convenient and flexible transportation will be supported by actions and strategies that will increase the regional transportation system’s connectivity, reliability, and ridership. This Chapter outlines how Plan 2040 will address this goal by: modernizing infrastructure through replacements and rehabilitations that maximize efficiency, safety, and ease of access; increasing multi-modal, inter-regional, and intra-regional transit choices, expanding the capacity and reach of passenger and freight transportation infrastructure; and considering special needs individuals and underserved communities throughout the planning process.

The goal of building the case for obtaining resources to implement regional investments, will be aided by transportation planning actions and strategies that enhance the region’s ability to finance coordinated, prioritized projects with strategic funding methods, including but not limited to state and federal sources. This Chapter emphasizes the collaborative identification by NYMTC members of investments which represent the region’s best transportation strategy and whose benefits are beyond immediate regional impact.

Finally, the goal to improve the resiliency of the transportation system is now receiving a heightened focus after the recent disruptions to the transportation network from Hurricane Sandy. This Chapter outlines projects that will focus on hurricane recovery and creating new partnerships other government agencies to improve resiliency to mitigate adverse weather impacts on the movement of goods and people.
2. Programs, Projects, and Fiscal Constraint

In keeping with the shared vision, NYMTC members have collaboratively identified major regional and local projects and other strategic investments that will expand regional transportation capacity and improve the efficiency, accessibility, integration, and sustainability of existing transportation facilities. The transportation investments outlined in this Chapter are varied in scale, but all impact the region’s ability to grow in the future. The strategic improvements outlined in this Chapter represent the region’s best strategic view of meeting needs of the transportation system over Plan 2040’s planning period.

**Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)**

The TIP documents the short-term transportation improvements that will strengthen and enhance the region. The TIP is a list of prioritized transportation improvements identified by NYMTC members to be developed over a five year period along with the anticipated schedule and cost of each improvement. As the TIP represents the first five years of the Plan 2040 planning period, it is consistent with its goals, objectives and policies. Like Plan 2040, the TIP complies with all federal laws including the previous surface transportation legislation, SAFETEA-LU, and the current legislation, MAP-21, as well as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and subsequent Clean Air Amendments. Additionally, the TIP is incorporated into New York State’s Transportation Improvement Program to ensure continued federal funding.

NYMTC’s TIP includes projects and programs eligible for federal funding, as well as programs funded by or eligible for local and state resources in order to acknowledge the full spectrum of transportation requirements and improvement activities taking place in the NYMTC planning area. The majority of TIP projects are geared towards system preservation. Part of the Shared Vision outlined in Chapter 1 is to advance the TIP projects listed in the near-term actions in Category C (page 1-21). The TIP is linked to the financial analysis in Chapter 6, but the projects are not included in the lists of projects in Appendix 1 of this Plan. The complete TIP document and the associated list of projects are available on the NYMTC website and by contacting NYMTC.

**United Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

The NYMTC UPWP is developed annually and is one of the mandatory products of the metropolitan planning process. It defines the planning priorities in the NYMTC planning area and describes all transportation-related planning activities anticipated within a given program year. The work program also indicates which of these planning activities will receive federal funding. The core work and special studies included in the work program have their origins in the RTP and so they will help to set the stage for the implementation of Plan 2040 over the years.
3. Preserving, Enhancing, and Growing the Transportation System: Strategic Investments, Initiatives, and Major Projects

Strategic investments and initiatives in the NYMTC planning area are focused on preserving the transportation system, enhancing the capacity and accessibility of the system, and expanding the reach and integration of the system. The following list of strategic investments and initiatives are categorized as either preserving, enhancing, or growing the system, and each is important to the region as a whole and to the shared vision of sustainable regional growth. NYMTC is committed to securing all necessary funding for these projects and to seeing them through to their ultimate completion. The implementation timeframe for many of the investments are shown in Chapter 1, Section 4.

PRESERVING THE SYSTEM

Capital investments in the NYMTC planning area are primarily focused on preservation of the region’s relatively old and extensive transportation system. System preservation is critical part of the region’s shared vision. NYMTC works to fully protect the region’s past investments in this system and support a platform for future investment through management of day-to-day Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and System Preservation for all transportation assets. These assets consist of public transit equipment, roadways, bridges, and non-motorized transportation infrastructure such as walkways, trails, shared use paths, and greenways.

NYMTC’s role as the overseer of the financial plan for transportation needs in the downstate New York region makes its assessment of System Preservation, including O&M, both prime and central. Infrastructure investments designed to sustain and preserve the system produce innovations that have resulted in longer-lived assets at lower costs. Replacement and maintenance of transportation machinery and facilities is one of the region’s greatest needs, as a well maintained infrastructure maintains mobility, increases safety, encourages efficiency, supports economic growth, and sustains mass transit ridership. In addition to those projects in the TIP, the following strategic investments, initiatives and major projects are geared towards preservation of the existing transportation system. Some of these projects are contained in the TIP.

**Bronx River Parkway Bridge Replacement, New York City**

The purpose of this bridge replacement project is to rehabilitate and replace existing structures, to eliminate existing substandard geometric features, and to provide structural redundancy. Deteriorated bridges on the existing alignment of Bronx River Parkway will be replaced, namely, a two span bridge over Amtrak/
CSX, a single span bridge over East Tremont Avenue, and a seventeen-span viaduct over East 180th St / Morris Park Avenue and the New York City Transit Authority railroad yard. The roadway geometry will be improved, structural deficiencies will be eliminated, standard travel lanes and shoulders will be provided, a shared-use path on the structures will be made fully ADA compliant, and a new exit ramp structure spanning over Amtrak/CSX tracks will be built in order to improve traffic flow. The sponsor of this project is NYSDOT. The projected year of completion is 2022 and the projected cost is $286.35 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Cross Bronx Expressway Bridge Rehabilitation, New York City

This project will repair deteriorated bridge structures along the Cross Bronx Expressway between the Boston Post Road exit and the Bronx River Parkway exit in order to address structural deficiency issues. The project is sponsored by NYSDOT. The projected year of completion is 2026 and the project is projected to cost $125 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

East 153rd Street Bridge Reconstruction, New York City

With the demolition of the original East 153rd Street Bridge in 1992, a vital transportation link was removed from the traffic network. Constructing a new bridge in its place will provide an additional corridor in an area that has limited east/west routes and is prone to traffic congestions during peak hours. The new bridge will significantly reduce current congestion on the other main east-west corridors in the South Bronx, namely East 149th and East 161st Streets, and will provide the transportation infrastructure required to satisfy the travel demand and trips generated by the newly constructed and planned developments.

The project is sponsored by NYCDOT, 2026 is the projected year of completion. The project cost is projected at $143.75 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

City Island Road Bridge Replacement, New York City

The existing City Island Road Bridge was built in 1901 as a seven-span bridge. Spans 2 and 3 were swing spans, which were made fixed in 1963. Since its construction in 1901, many repairs have been completed to provide safe passage for traffic. However, the bridge has outlived its useful life. The goals of the project are to maintain safe, reliable access for vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic to and from City Island, to improve geometric deficiencies of the bridge, and to improve the condition rating of the facility to five or greater. The project involves the replacement of the City Island Road Bridge over Eastchester Bay in Bronx County with a single-span cable-stayed structure. The project is sponsored by NYCDOT. The projected year of completion is 2017 and the projected project cost is $127.032 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Shore Road Bridge Rehabilitation, New York City

The rehabilitation of the Shore Road Bridge, which crosses over the Hutchinson River, will improve the structural integrity of the bridge, provide effective and safe transportation service on the bridge, and maximize benefits while minimizing impacts of the bridge. This project involves the construction of a new bridge at a location adjacent to the existing structure. The existing bridge will be demolished after the completion of new bridge. The project sponsor is NYCDOT. The projected year of completion is 2026 and the projected cost is $300 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Major Deegan Expressway Rehabilitation, New York City

The concrete roadway deck along the portion of the Major Deegan Expressway from 138th Street to 161st Street—Macombs Dam Bridge Interchange is in need of replacement, as since it exhibits advanced deterioration and spalling. Some structural and sub-structural steel repairs are also needed across approximately one mile of the expressway due to fatigue cracking. The project is sponsored by NYCDOT and is expected to be completed in 2018. The projected cost is $246.058 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Replacement and Rehabilitation of I-678 Van Wyck Expressway Bridges, New York City

The purpose of this project is to address operational issues and structural deficiencies on the Van Wyck Expressway Bridges. The project entails replacement with operational improvements, rehabilitation in kind, rehabilitation with operational improvements and null alternate. The project is sponsored by NYCDOT, and the project is expected to be completed in 2016. The projected cost is $112.98 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Belt Shore Parkway—Fresh Creek Bridge Rehabilitation, New York City

The project replaces the existing bridge with an entirely new structure to address the structural and safety deficiencies associated with the existing bridge. The existing bridge is a deteriorating structure that requires frequent maintenance and repairs. This project is part of the improvement to the structural integrity of 10 bridges, providing effective and safe transportation service on the bridges, and maximizing benefits while minimizing adverse impacts. The project sponsor is NYCDOT; the project
completion year is 2018 and the projected cost is $113 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Belt Parkway Bridge Rehabilitation, Paerdegat Basin, New York City

The replacement of the section of the Belt Parkway Bridge over Paerdegat Basin with an entirely new structure will address the structural and safety deficiencies associated with the existing bridge, which requires frequent maintenance and repairs. The project sponsor is NYC DOT. The projected completion year is 2014 and the projected cost is $204.341 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Belt Parkway Bridge Rehabilitation, Gerritson Inlet, New York City

The replacement of the section of the Belt Parkway Bridge over Gerritson Inlet will address the structural and safety deficiencies associated with the existing bridge, which is deteriorating and requires frequent maintenance and repairs. The project sponsor is NYC DOT and the projected completion year is 2017. The projected cost is $115.743 million. Additional details are in Appendix 9.

Belt Parkway Bridge Rehabilitation, Mill Basin, New York City

The replacement of the section of the Belt Parkway Bridge over Mill Basin with an entirely new structure will address the structural and safety deficiencies associated with the existing bridge. The existing bridge is a deteriorating structure that requires frequent maintenance and repairs. The project sponsor is NYC DOT. The projected completion year is 2018 and the projected cost is $216.183 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Manhattan Bridge Lead-Removal Rehabilitation, New York City

Part of NYC DOT’s regular bridge and maintenance program, this project will entail maintenance operations to provide for the safety of pedestrian and vehicular movement. Specifically, the project involves the removal of lead-based paint from cable bands and main cables and the replacement with non-lead-based materials. The expected year of completion is 2014 and the projected cost is $153.215 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Brooklyn-Queens Expressway – Grand Central Parkway Interchange Reconstruction, East Leg, New York City

This reconstruction project aims to reduce accidents and relieve congestion on the roadway network at the BQE/GCP east leg interchange. This portion of the BQE will be redesigned and reconstructed. The project is sponsored by NYSDOT. The expected year of completion is 2023 and the projected cost is $115.448 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Brooklyn-Queens Expressway – Grand Central Parkway Interchange Reconstruction, West Leg, New York City

This reconstruction project aims to reduce accidents and relieve congestion on the roadway network at the BQE/GCP east leg interchange. This portion of the BQE will be redesigned and reconstructed. The project is sponsored by NYSDOT, and the expected year of completion is 2023. The projected cost is $115.448 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Rikers Island Bridge Reconstruction, New York City

The project involves replacing the superstructure of this rapidly deteriorating bridge. The coming expiration of the bridge’s estimated useful life makes rehabilitation necessary. The salty environment of the channel significantly affects superstructure, and this continued deterioration could also negatively impact the structural integrity of the bridge. The project is sponsored by NYC DOT. The expected year of completion is 2025 and the projected cost is $100 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Kew Gardens Interchange Reconstruction of Parkways and Expressways, New York City

The Kew Gardens Interchange is at the confluence of the Grand Central Parkway, the Van Wyck Expressway, the Jackie Robinson Parkway and Union Turnpike. Phase 1 of the project began in the summer of 2010, and is reconstructing a half-mile section of the Van Wyck Expressway just south of the interchange, between Union Turnpike and Hillside Avenue, as well as a quarter-mile section of Queens Boulevard over the Van Wyck Expressway. Work includes the construction of auxiliary lanes on the Van Wyck Expressway to ease the flow of traffic in both directions at the interchange with the Grand Central Parkway. This phase is expected to be completed by the beginning of 2016. The second phase, which got underway in the spring of 2012, continues the reconstruction of the Van Wyck Expressway north to 72nd Avenue, an additional three-quarters of a mile. The contract will replace the northbound Van Wyck Expressway two-lane viaduct with a three-lane version that includes shoulders. It will also replace the ramp connecting the westbound Jackie Robinson Parkway and Union Turnpike with the northbound Van Wyck, widening it from one lane to two. This project is slated for completion in the beginning of 2017. The project is sponsored by NYSDOT and the total cost projected is $262.78 million.
Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) Rail System Modernization, New York City

This project includes the signal system replacement program which will allow PATH trains to safely run closer together and thus increase the number of trains operated during peak times, increasing capacity. The other component of this project is the World Trade Center Transportation Hub which will restore and greatly enhance the level of services that existed prior to September 11, 2001. The Hub will feature advanced signal systems, state-of-the-art fare collection equipment, and climate-controlled platforms and mezzanines with superior lighting and finishes. This project is sponsored by the PANYNJ with phased opening of permanent improvements beginning in 2014.

Staten Island Ferry Terminals and Vessels upgrade, New York City

Over the period 2014-2018 NYCDOT plans to upgrade existing Staten Island Ferry vessels.

NY 347 Corridor Reconstruction and Green Route Implementation, Long Island

A green route along the NY 347 Corridor from Terry Road (CR16) to Route 25A will increase safety and efficiency for the traveling public. The planning, development and selection of a Preferred Alternative in the NY Route 347 Safety and Mobility Improvement Project Feasibility Study were guided by the following goals: increase safety and efficiency for the traveling public; improve capacity, mobility and travel time reliability by developing an efficient highway improvement that provides congestion relief while standards or standard design and environmental criteria; and provide a transportation system that fits within project constraints identified through public involvement activities and meets current engineering standards or standard design and environmental criteria. The project is sponsored by NYSFOT, the project is expected to be conducted between 2020 and 2040 and the projected cost is $470 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Cross County Parkway - Saw Mill Parkway Interchange Reconstruction, Lower Hudson Valley

The interchange between these two parkways is scheduled to be rebuilt starting in 2020 at a cost of approximately $38.7 million. Safety improvements will also be incorporated into the reconstruction.

ENHANCING THE SYSTEM

The following strategic investments and projects address the need to enhance capacity and accessibility of transportation in the NYMTC planning area. In strategically enhancing the regional transportation system these investments will create a framework that will support growth in a more sustainable fashion; help to bring together local land use decisions and regional transportation investment decisions; and focus transportation and development projects to produce complementary and more sustainable outcomes.

Kosciuszko Bridge Replacement, New York City

This replacement project addresses the structural, safety and operational deficiencies associated with the Kosciuszko Bridge. The existing bridge, which spans Newtown Creek from Morgan Avenue in Brooklyn to the Long Island Expressway and Brooklyn-Queens Expressway Interchange in Queens, is a deteriorating structure that requires frequent maintenance and repairs. The bridge contains several non-standard geometric elements, including an existing vertical profile that is not in compliance with modern standards for an interstate highway, resulting in unacceptably high accident rates and excessive delays to traffic. This project entails a replacement of the bridge to provide operational improvements and address structural integrity issues and motorists safety. The project is sponsored by NYSFOT and will occur in phases. Phase one is expected to be completed in 2016, with a projected cost of $536.705 million. Phase two is expected to be completed in 2018, with a projected cost of $96.2 million. Phase three is expected to be completed in 2020, with a projected cost of $242.1 million. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Goethals Bridge Replacement, New York City

In April 2013, the PANYNJ Board of Commissioners authorized a major project to replace the functionally obsolete Goethals Bridge between Staten Island and Elizabeth, NJ, on the I-278 Corridor. The existing bridge is functionally and physically deficient, with narrow lanes, no emergency shoulders, and a pronounced bend in the alignment of the approach span in New Jersey. These characteristics reduce traffic service, safety conditions, and the ability to quickly clear accidents. Increasing auto and truck volumes across the Bridge combine with the bridge’s deficiencies to further impair traffic conditions and increase accident levels. The bridge, which was opened to traffic in 1928, requires ongoing repairs, maintenance, and rehabilitation at escalating costs. Furthermore, the bridge’s layout limits the extent to which the
widespread use of E-ZPass toll collection systems and technology improvements can be used to improve traffic flows. The existing layout cannot accommodate future transit service or priority-lane treatments that would require dedicated space on the bridge. The deficiencies in the facility reduce its utility and dependability for truck-based movement of cargo and make it undependable for diversion of traffic from another transportation facility in the event of regional emergency. The project is sponsored by the PANYNJ and is expected to be completed in 2018. The total project cost is $1.5 billion. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Bayonne Bridge Navigational Clearance Project, New York City

The purpose of the project is to increase the navigational clearance over the main New York-New Jersey harbor shipping channel through the Kill Van Kull by raising the roadway deck of the Bayonne Bridge. In addition, the project will extend the service life of the bridge, improve substandard features, and incorporate seismic protection. This investment will improve the economic efficiency and sustainability of the PANYNJ. The project entails construction of a new roadway deck within the constraints of the existing arch structure, to raise the air draft of the structure from 151’ to 215’. The completed replacement deck will not change the number of traffic lanes (2 in each direction). It will include safety enhancements and a widened pedestrian way accommodating walkers and cyclists. It is sponsored by the PANYNJ and is expected to be completed in 2017. The projected cost is $1.3 billion. Additional details are found in Appendix 9.

Select Bus Service / Bus Rapid Transit Projects, New York City

Select Bus Service (SBS)/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects are being planned and implemented in New York City will improve the speed, reliability, and appeal of bus transit. The projects are jointly managed by New York City Transit (NYCT), in conjunction with New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT). The routes currently implemented or about to be implemented are:

- Nostrand Avenue, Brooklyn
- 34th Street, Manhattan
- First & Second Avenues, Manhattan
- Hylan Boulevard, Staten Island
- Hillside Avenue, Queens
- Webster Avenue, Bronx
- Utica Avenue Corridor
- Laguardia/East Elmhurst/Jackson Heights/125th St Crosstown Corridor

Routes under study and which may be implemented during the Plan 2040 period include: Woodhaven Boulevard, Flushing-Jamaica Corridor, and Southeast Queens Corridor. A full list of these is found in the vision list of projects, proposals, and studies in Appendix 1 of this Plan.

MTA’s Second Avenue Subway Phases 2-4, New York City

The Second Avenue Subway project will ultimately include a two-track line along Second Avenue from 125th Street to the Financial District in Lower Manhattan. It will also include a connection from Second Avenue through the 63rd Street tunnel to existing tracks for service to west Midtown and Brooklyn. Sixteen new accessible stations compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act will be constructed.

MTA LIRR East Side Access, New York City

The East Side Access project will connect the Long Island Rail Road’s Main and Port Washington lines in Queens to a new terminal beneath Grand Central Terminal in Manhattan. The new connection will increase the Long Island Rail Road’s capacity into Manhattan and dramatically shorten commuting time from Long Island and eastern Queens to Manhattan’s East Side.

No. 7 Subway 10th Avenue Station, New York City

This project is the construction of a new Tenth Avenue Station for subway service on the MTA New York City Transit #7 subway line to the far west side of Manhattan.

Manhattan Bridge Seismic Retrofit, New York City

The purpose of this project is to evaluate and strengthen all structural members and their connections of the Manhattan Bridge, including expansion joints, cables, suspenders, anchorages, masonry piers, abutments, bracings, superstructure framings, and bearings. The project is sponsored by NYCDOT, and the expected year of completion is 2023. The projected cost is $150 million.

Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge Seismic Retrofit, New York City

As part of bringing the Ed Koch Queensboro Bridge into a state of good repair, this project will evaluate and strengthen all structural members and their connections of the bridge. The project is sponsored by NYCDOT, and the expected year of completion is 2023. The projected cost is $150 million.

St. George’s Terminal Ramp Reconstruction, New York City

The purpose of this reconstruction project is to bring the ramps at the St. George’s Ferry Terminal into a state of good repair. The project involves the re-
construction of the ferry terminal ramps while maintaining all operations and minimizing disruption to the public. The project is sponsored by NYCDOT. The expected year of completion is 2014 and the projected cost is $175 million.

**North Shore branch of Staten Island Railway Transit Service, New York City**

This project would provide transit service in the right-of-way of the former North Shore branch of the Staten Island Railway.

**Increasing Bus and High-Occupancy Vehicle capacity on East River crossings, New York City**

This project is to increase capacity between Manhattan and the Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens.

**MTA’s Communications-Based Train Control Subway Enhancements, New York City**

This project will expand subway capacity and reliability in the borough of Queens through MTA New York City Transit’s Communication-Based control system.

**MTA’s Expansion of Subway, Bus, Depots, and Stations, New York City**

This MTA New York City Transit’s project will expand the fleet and stations and includes instituting a program of sustainability investments.

**Cross Bronx Expressway Improvements, New York City**

Starting in 2013, approximately $9 million is scheduled to be spent on design work in anticipation of rehabilitating 15 bridges that make up parts of the Cross Bronx Expressway.

**Long Island Motor Parkway Trail, Long Island**

The Long Island Motor Parkway (LIMP), also known as the Vanderbilt Parkway, was the first roadway designed for automobiles only. It opened in 1908 as a toll road and closed in 1938 when it was taken over by the state of New York in lieu of back taxes. Parts of the parkway survive today in sections of other roadways and as a bicycle trail in Queens. Nassau County now seeks to develop an 18 mile continuous, multi-use trailway through the County that will, to the extent possible, utilize the route of the historic Long Island Motor Parkway. When implemented, the new Motor Parkway Trail will once again provide an important recreational connection through Nassau County, but this time for hikers and bicyclists. Furthermore, the Trail will provide an important alternative transportation link between communities, open space resources and employment centers for those wishing to walk or bike through Nassau County to these destinations. The project is expected to be completed in segments by 2030, at a cost of about $25 million.

**MTA LIRR’s Main Line Corridor Planning, Long Island**

In order to improve on-time performance and to accommodate more service, the LIRR needs to add track capacity to the Main Line. This will allow service reliability improvements and reduction in recovery time following service disruptions. The Main Line between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma has for decades been envisioned to contain a full second track, and its construction will improve service reliability by enhancing operating flexibility and speeding recovery time following service disruptions. This project is also part of the Suffolk County’s Connect Long Island initiative.

**Sagtikos Parkway Truck Bypass Construction, Long Island**

The Sagtikos Truck Bypass will support the needs of proposed developments and future growth in the Hauppauge/Brentwood area.

**Nassau County Coastal Evacuation Routes, Long Island**

Nassau County’s coastal evacuation infrastructure has been inadequate for years and Hurricane Sandy’s impact on this infrastructure proved this point beyond any reasonable doubt. This project is to sequentially address this problem by taking the following systematic approach:

- **FFY 2015** – Conduct a study to identify the critical evaluation routes in Nassau County. This study will identify both County and Non-county roads.
- **FFY 2016** – Evaluate the condition, deficiencies and effectiveness of the proposed evacuation infrastructure. This portion will only focus on those roads under county ownership identified in 2015. A request will be made to other owners to initiate plans to improve their facilities.
- **FFY 2017** – Develop a plan for creating a comprehensive coastal evacuation route system in Nassau County, including a timeline and interagency agreements if it is determined the county will initiate improvements to other owner facilities.
- **FFY 2018** – Initiate designs identified above on the most critical county owned elements Post 2018 Nassau County will sequence construction of improvements as identified from the above efforts.
**Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project, Lower Hudson Valley**

The Tappan Zee Bridge provides the only interstate highway crossing of the Hudson River for the 48-mile stretch between the George Washington Bridge (Interstate 95) and the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge (Interstate 84). It is a vital link between the population and employment centers of Rockland and Westchester Counties, is a major route for freight movement, and is an emergency evacuation route. The bridge replacement project will address the structural, operational, mobility, safety, and security needs of the three-mile crossing. The replacement will provide 12-foot wide travel lanes with an oversized shoulder in each direction for emergency vehicle access as well as a share use path for pedestrians and bicycles on the northern span. In addition to addressing the current non-standard elements on the bridge, it will have improved grades and sight distance and meet current seismic design criteria. The project is sponsored by the NYS Thruway Authority and is expected to be completed in 2017. The projected cost ranges from $4.6 billion to $5.6 billion. Additional details are in Appendix 9.

**Southeast Railroad Station Pedestrian Bridge Construction and Parking Capacity Enhancement, Lower Hudson Valley**

This Metro-North Railroad project involves constructing a bridge over the railroad tracks at the Southeast Station and connecting to a new commuter parking lot on the MNR owned property to the east of the tracks.

**I-84 Capacity Improvements between the Connecticut State Line and I-684, Lower Hudson Valley**

This project will improve capacity on Interstate 84.

**Bus Rapid Transit and Transit Signal Priority: Central Avenue – Westchester County, Lower Hudson Valley**

The 14.4-mile long Central Avenue corridor serves Westchester County between White Plains and Yonkers, linking Westchester to New York City. Major destinations along the corridor include downtown White Plains, Westchester County Center, the shopping areas along Central Avenue, Cross County Shopping Center, Yonkers Raceway, the New York City Subway, and Bee-Line routes. The objective of the Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Assessment is to implement components of BRT for the Central Avenue Corridor that will reduce travel times, attract new riders, improve mobility in the corridor, create an integrated and customer friendly transit service, and improve operating efficiency. The BRT concepts being considered for Central Avenue include limited stop operation, intelligent transportation systems, preferential lane treatments, attractive stations with customer amenities, station access, stylized vehicles with low-floor boarding, faster fare collection, brand identity, and alignment with transit-oriented land development. The final report was completed in 2009. Implementation of transit signal priority is in progress.

**I-287 Corridor Transit Enhancements, Lower Hudson Valley**

The Tappan Zee Bridge replacement, which is part of I-287, will have four general traffic lanes and one lane for express bus service in each direction. No specific, official, funded plans yet exist to incorporate a public transportation corridor along the rest I-287, although the concept was studied by Westchester County and in the multiagency Tappan Zee Bridge Environmental Review. An I-287 transit sequencing and prioritization task force made up of 28 members from Westchester, Rockland and Putnam counties is expected to issue a final report in December 2013.

**Port Jervis Line Improvements, Lower Hudson Valley**

MTA Metro-North is installing a new cab signal system along the entire 66-mile Port Jervis Line, including all track-age in Rockland County. Cab signaling provides real-time maximum allowable trains speed information to the engineer’s console, better regulating speed and safely decreasing headways.

**Hudson River Valley Greenway Link, Region-Wide**

The Hudson River Valley Greenway is actually a multicounty network of trails which generally bracket the Hudson River but extend well north of the NYMTC region. The specific link being studied would between Inwood in Manhattan and the Old Croton Aqueduct in the Glenwood section of Yonkers.

**CSX West Shore River Line Safety and Quiet Zone Project, Region-Wide**

This project is an effort to establish Quiet Zones at 21 grade crossings. Quiet Zones are stretches of rail lines with consecutive railroad crossings where locomotives do not regularly sound their horns. By installing some combination of four-quadrant gates, vehicle presence detection systems, signage, or padlocked chain-link fences (generally in low-traffic industrial areas), trains are no longer required to sound their horns at these locations. Localities can also convert two-way streets to one-way traffic or conduct a full grade separation.

**Advance Recommendations of NY-CT-Sustainable Communities Initiative, Region-Wide**

- System Actions and Improvements
A joint planning effort across the NYMTC region and three coastal Connecticut metropolitan planning organizations, this $3.5 million HUD-funded package of initiatives seeks to integrate housing, economic development, transportation and environmental planning by fostering livable, transit-oriented communities. Nine of the 16 funded projects fall within the NYMTC planning area.

**Brooklyn and East River Waterfront Greenways, New York City**

These projects focus on the continued development and design of greenways along the waterfront in Brooklyn and Manhattan.

**Long Island Expressway in Queens High-Occupancy Vehicle / Active Transportation Demand Management New York City**

This project will improve mobility on the LIE by extending a managed-use HOV lane from 58th Street to 99th Street in Queens and explores new ITS variable speed and queue warning signs and associated equipment to help manage traffic flow and improve safety along this corridor.

**Trans-Hudson Bus Improvements, New York City**

This project will improve the efficiency of bus operations across the Hudson River, into and out of Manhattan, including possible roadway and bus terminal improvements.

### Growing the System

Preparing the system for future growth entails not only planning and implementing various transportation investments (projects), but also identifying locations where transportation resources can attract residents and businesses while providing efficient, sustainable and cost-effective mobility. The Shared Land Use Designations component of the shared vision, described in Section 3 of Chapter 1 seeks to establish this connection between land use and transportation which will support the development of a sustainable transportation system over the Plan 2040 timeframe. Future development needs to be aligned with service to the greatest extent possible. Throughout the NYMTC planning area a number of sustainable development centers, sustainable development corridors, transit-oriented development areas, transit corridors, linked development areas, linked corridors and innovation zones have been identified to accomplish this result. Many of these originate from the Counties’ master plans and NYC’s Plan 2040 and are mapped in Section 3, Chapter 1.

Additionally, as mentioned in Chapter 1, the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs) in Long Island, Lower Hudson Valley, and New York City established by the Governor, have identified a number of projects, many of which have implications for transportation planning and growth in the NYMTC region. Notwithstanding the fact that there is overlap between some of the REDCs proposed projects and those contained in Plan 2040, coordination will be required to ensure that growth and development are consistent.
4. Major Studies that will Impact Preservation, Enhancement, and Growth

The following studies will have a notable impact on the transportation system.

**Cross Harbor Goods Movement Improvements, New York City**

In May 2000 a Major Investment Study was completed by the NYCEDC which examined alternatives for improving freight movement across New York Harbor. This led to the completion of a Draft Environmental Impact Study in April 2004 which analyzed various alternatives, including the construction of a tunnel dedicated to rail freight. In the federal transportation bill of 2005, SAFETEA-LU, the Cross Harbor Rail Freight Tunnel Project received $100 million in funding.

In 2008, PANYNJ and the Federal Highway Administration restructured and resumed the NEPA EIS process for the project, using a tiered approach that included a new market analysis, inter-agency and stakeholder outreach, and a broader assessment of rail facilities in both states needed to support enhanced cross-harbor rail service. PANYNJ also received FHWA approval to use much of the earmarked funding for independent improvements to address state of good repair needs for existing rail freight facilities. This program includes rehabilitation of rail car float facilities in Brooklyn and Greenville Yards, Jersey City, to sustain the cross-harbor rail connection provided by the New York and New Jersey Railroad, purchased by PANYNJ. The alternatives evaluated in the EIS process include a rail freight tunnel between Jersey City and Brooklyn with varied operating capabilities, as well as enhanced car float services and other potential improvements.

**Bruckner-Sheridan Interchange, New York City**

The NYSDOT is preparing a Preliminary Design/Environmental Impact Statement on the improvement of the interchange between the Bruckner Expressway (Interstate 278) and the Sheridan Expressway (Interstate 895). The scope of the project also includes improvements to commercial access to the Hunts Point Peninsula in the southern quadrant of the Bronx.

**Nassau Hub Preliminary Regional Study Area Implementation of Transportation Improvements, Long Island**

The Nassau Hub is located in central Nassau County and includes Grumman/Bethpage. The area has a northern boundary just to the north of the LIRR Port Jefferson Branch and the southern boundary lies just to the south of the Hempstead Turnpike. The western boundary runs along Rockaway Avenue and Cathedral Avenue and the eastern boundary is along Merrick/Post Avenue, although Eisenhower Park is included in the study area. The Nassau Hub area covers about 10 square miles and encompasses all or parts of the Villages of Mineola, Westbury, Garden City and Hempstead; the Hamlets of Carle Place and Uniondale; and the unincorporated area of East Garden City. The Nassau Hub lacks a sufficient transit network to absorb the full amount of the projected growth, especially with major roadways in the corridor already suffering from major congestion. Development will continue in the Hub regardless of whether a new transit service is initiated, however, the desired level of growth will likely never materialize without new transit service.

**Suffolk County Connect Long Island, Long Island**

This planning initiative which seeks to connect vibrant downtowns in Suffolk County and improve North-South transit connections includes a number of proposed and ongoing studies including:

- Route 110 Corridor transit options
- Sagtikos/Sunken Meadows Parkways transit options
- CR 97 transit improvements
- MTA LIRR Ronkonkoma Second track
- Wyandanch Rising, Heartland and Ronkonkoma Hub transit-oriented development
- BRT Feasibility Study

**MTA Metro-North Railroad’s Penn Station Access Study, Region-Wide**

This study is evaluating the proposed extension of Metro North Services to Pennsylvania Station via the MNR New Haven Division/LIRR and Hudson Division /Amtrak Empire Line.

**CSX River Line, Second Track, Region-Wide**

Freight access along the Water Level Route, which runs between Chicago and Northern New Jersey via a route parallel to the southern shore of Lake Erie, the Erie Canal and the Hudson River, is routed via the CSX River Line south of Selkirk, New York. Trains dispatched from Selkirk Yard travel south along the west shore of the Hudson River through
Rockland County to North Bergen, Kearny, Little Ferry, and Port Newark yards in Northern New Jersey. Passenger trains are absent from this heavily used route south of Selkirk, which has seen some lengthening and addition of passing sidings to accommodate traffic growth and improve reliability. Recently, CSX announced a new round of capacity expansions along this route, a $26 million effort that will add 18 miles of second main track at various locations.

**Amtrak Gateway Project, Region-Wide**

The Gateway Program is a critical part of Amtrak’s North-East Corridor (NEC) planning that will include provision for planned High Speed Rail access to New York while addressing the need for trans-Hudson tunnel redundancy and added capacity for commuter, regional and long-distance intercity services. It would address critical capacity issues, safety, and operational needs in the congested segment of the NEC stretching from Newark, NJ to the west side of Manhattan. Components include: new trans-Hudson River tunnels; expanded Moynihan/Penn station; new portal bridges; Newark-Secaucus improvements; and Newark and Secaucus station improvements.

**North-East Corridor and Empire Corridor Passenger and Freight Rail Improvements, Region-Wide**

**North-East Corridor (NEC)**

NEC FUTURE is a comprehensive planning effort to define, evaluate and prioritize future investments in the NEC launched by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in February 2012. FRAs work will include new ideas and approaches to grow the regions intercity, commuter and freight rail services and an environmental evaluation of proposed transportation alternatives. The NEC FUTURE program includes both a Service Development Plan (SDP) and a broad environmental analysis known as a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS. These studies will help provide a road map to a better transportation solution for the Northeast.

In April 2013 the FRA issued a Preliminary Alternatives Report which consisted of a summary of the alternatives development process and the list of preliminary alternatives. In the next phase of the alternatives development process, the Preliminary Alternatives will be comparatively evaluated to understand their transportation and environmental benefits and impacts. Screening criteria will be applied to guide the process for identifying the best service and network options to be used to develop the Reasonable Alternatives, which will then be further evaluated as part of the Tier 1 EIS, ultimately resulting in a preferred investment program.

**Empire Corridor**

NYSDOT and the FRA are evaluating potential improvements and projects to intercity passenger rail service within the Empire Corridor, which proceeds north from NYC to Albany, turns west to Schenectady, passes through Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo, then terminates at Niagara Falls, a distance of 463 miles. Work has been ongoing on a TIER 1 EIS analyzing a range of alternatives for introducing high speed passenger rail service on the Empire Corridor. The analysis of the range of alternatives has resulted in a total of 5 alternatives being selected for advancement. The 5 alternatives selected for advancement include the Base alternative and 4 build alternatives which include the 90 mph series (90A & 90B) as well as the 110 mph and 125 mph alternatives.

NYSDOT expects to release the Draft EIS for public review and comment in the first half of 2013. Once released, NYSDOT will host public hearings on the project. With consideration of the public input NYSDOT receives through testimony given at the public hearings and other written comments, NYSDOT will recommend a preferred alternative and prepare the Final EIS. Following completion of the Final EIS, the FRA will have sufficient information with which to issue its Record of Decision (ROD) for the project. The ROD and recommendations will include specific improvement projects that may be analyzed further in Tier 2.

**New York-New Jersey-Connecticut Transportation Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Analysis, Region-Wide**

This project is part of the planning for resiliency brought into focus by recent extreme weather events and is being funded by FHWA. The project partners are: four MPOs - North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority; New York Metropolitan Transportation Council; South Western Regional Planning Agency; Greater Bridgeport Regional Council and three State DOTs - New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. The goals of this project are to: assess the impacts of October 2012’s Hurricane Sandy (and to some extent Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee, and the Halloween Nor’easter in 2011) on transportation assets; identify adaptation strategies to increase the resilience of those assets to the impacts of extreme weather events and the possible future impacts of climate change; and perform a gap analysis for the region, consolidate data sources and information, and identify critical areas and transportation assets generally. The project has 2 phases: Phase one will collect and analyze available data from specific storm-related damage of the transportation system. The second phase of the study will identify critical...
sub-regions and transportation assets at risk from current and future climate stressors. This phase will also include an adaptation analysis for transportation assets in vulnerable sub-areas.

**Southern Westchester East-West Corridor Transit Improvements, Lower Hudson Valley**

The Southern Westchester East-West Corridor stretches from New Rochelle to Yonkers and contains the Cross County Parkway which is a limited access roadway extending from the Saw Mill River Parkway on the west to the Hutchinson River Parkway on the east. An Issues Scan completed in 2013 looked at existing conditions in the corridor, and serves as a framework for developing solutions to addressing some of the challenges related to sustainability planning, including transit oriented development. A transit study will be conducted to look at opportunities for enhancing local bus service.

**Moynihan Station Phase II, New York City**

Phase II is the conversion and construction of the new train hall in the fully renovated Farley Building.

**Tarrytown – Port Chester Local Transit Improvements, Lower Hudson Valley**

This study will examine transit options in the Tarrytown-Port Chester corridor.

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**OTHER PLANNING INITIATIVES**

As part of the NYMTC Shared Vision outlined in Chapter 1, these projects and initiatives include near-term actions within the 2014-2018 timeframe (Category A on page 1-18) and those that will continue through 2023. All of these projects are region-wide unless otherwise noted.

- Evaluate and enhance demand management programs
- Evaluate and enhance mobile source emissions reduction programs
- Inventory greenhouse gas emissions
- Plan for expanded road pricing
- Continue planning for multi-modal access to ports and airports
- Continue planning for multi-modal goods movement and distribution improvements
- Continue local capacity-building through community planning workshops
- Continue planning for transportation sector clean fuels expansion
- Planning for ferry service enhancements and station access improvements
- New cooperative partnerships with multiple government agencies when responding to disasters
- New partnerships through the Federal Disaster Recovery Framework for recovery from disasters
- Develop comprehensive access to safety-related data
- Develop a regional approach to safety-related data analysis
- Develop operating procedures for safety and security considerations
- Enhance Safe Routes to School and Safe Streets for Seniors programs
- Reach consensus on other alternative funding sources to be used individually or corporately
- Advance Bus Rapid Transit and Managed-Use Lane Projects
- Advance Plan 2040 Pedestrian and Bicycle
- Continue Application of Complete Streets Policies
- Pursue agreed upon alternative funding sources
- Expand Park Smart, Commercial Paid Parking, Delivery Windows and other approaches to address congestion in New York City
- Promote and expand DeliverEase in New York City
5. SPECIAL ELEMENTS

PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLES

The NYMTC planning area is in the midst of a shift that is affecting all modes of transportation: the recognition that all users of the road, including pedestrians and bicyclists, should have safe access to the streets and roads. This emphasis on walking and bicycling has contributed to the passage of the Complete Streets legislation in New York State in 2011 that requires state agencies to consider pedestrians and bicyclists in roadway designs. This shift has seen the creation of a plan to extend greenways along the Long Island Motor Parkway in Nassau County and to advance cutting-edge street designs and traffic calming elements in villages such as Southampton. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities have expanded in Westchester County with the successful establishment of off-road multi-use paths throughout the county, the addition of bicycle parking at train stations, Complete Streets policies, Safe Routes to School Programs, the addition of sharrows and bicycle lanes to local roads, and traffic calming initiatives. The Rockland County (Transport of Rockland) Bike-on-Bus program, which continues to expand with the majority of the Rockland County’s bus fleet fixed route, is now capable of carrying bicycles; and the recent construction of sidewalks along NY Route 59 in West Nyack to allow for safe pedestrian crossing over the CSX West Shore Line and Hackensack River. In New York City, close to 3,000 miles of bicycle lanes have been added between 2006 and 2011, and the nation’s largest bicycle share program launched in 2013.

Each NYMTC sub-area has developed its own pedestrian and bicycle plans to guide future investments in non-motorized transportation. These networks are key to providing mobility in the region and to providing transportation options that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote healthy activities, reduce congestion, and maintain overall quality of life. Detailed information on the pedestrian and bicycle plan including existing conditions and facilities, regional strategies for pedestrian and bicycle improvements, initiatives in the NYMTC planning area, and maps of constrained and vision projects, is available in Plan 2040: Appendix 2.

COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT - HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The NYMTC planning area has a diverse, multi-modal transportation environment that includes several layers of public transit, paratransit services, and human service transportation programs. The objective of this Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPTHSTP) is to identify and prioritize coordination strategies that will improve the efficiencies of these varied and complex services. The ultimate goal is to enhance the capabilities of funding that currently supports these community transportation services in the region, enabling the funders to expand service or introduce new mobility options for persons who depend on the services. In the CPTHSTP, “community transportation” refers to public transit and paratransit services, other public transportation services, human services transportation, and non-emergency medical transportation services that focus on older adults, persons with disabilities, and persons below the poverty line.

The CPTHSTP is an update of NYMTC’s previous plan which was developed in 2009 and guided by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the federal transportation act guiding transportation funding at that time. This update is guiding by the current federal transportation Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). One of MAP-21’s central goals was to reverse the proliferation of smaller and more specialized programs and consolidate them into larger programs that give funders more flexibility. The challenge is to create the appropriate balance within a single funding source to meet the diverse needs of these key groups. Accordingly, this plan focuses on identifying 1) demographic changes that occurred since the 2009 plan was issued, 2) the changes in unmet needs of the population groups largely dependent on these services, and 3) coordination strategies to address those unmet needs. Appendix 6 of Plan 2040 has detailed information on existing services and unmet needs, opportunities to address the unmet needs, and updated plan strategies.

FREIGHT PLAN

At the time it was published in 2004, the NYMTC Regional Freight Plan was generally considered to be one of the premiere, state-of-the-art urban and regional freight planning undertakings. NYMTC staff and member agencies have pursued
many of the recommendations set forth in the Regional Freight Plan, however, significant changes have occurred in the regional and national economies and in global logistics patterns in light of the 2008-2009 economic recession and subsequent recovery. Demand for all goods and services is only now getting back to or exceeding pre-recession levels. Growth in household disposable income (and hence, consumer product demand) is generally expected to grow more slowly than pre-recession forecasts had estimated. Fluctuations in the price of fuel, currency values, and labor availability and cost are changing production and raw materials sourcing locations. These changes impact the volume, origins and destinations, and modes by which freight travels.

In addition, the state of the planning practice has changed, with more Federal emphasis and grant selection criteria placed on coordinated freight planning, freight performance measures, coordination with economic development goals, and advancing technology-based and operational strategies. MAP-21 recommends that states and MPOs prepare or update their freight plans to describe how their plans support national freight goals, develop freight performance measures, describe freight trends and issues, inventory needs and bottlenecks, and develop freight improvement strategies.

These developments necessitate an evaluation of the progress made toward implementing the recommendations of the 2004 Regional Freight Plan, for developing a fresh understanding of goods movement trends and forecasts in the NYMTC planning area, and for developing a new program of projects and policies to advance regional freight planning goals.

The Regional Freight Plan Update 2015-2040 Interim Plan (hereafter “Interim Plan”) offers the first step toward achieving this objective. The Interim Plan is an information- and data-supported planning effort, with emphases on agency and stakeholder outreach, data gathering, and analysis. The Interim Plan includes a review of planning studies and projects that have recently concluded or are on-going, an analysis of commodity flow data, assessment of the components and condition of the region’s multi-modal freight network, and documentation and outreach materials that clearly and simply explain a very complex regional freight system to community stakeholders and the public at large. These activities are aimed at establishing a foundation from which NYMTC can address freight in Plan 2040.

Appendix 8 of Plan 2040 establishes a fresh assessment of existing conditions and serves as a convenient launching pad from which the next phase of the Regional Freight Plan Update can advance specific project and programmatic recommendations.