



Adam S. Levine, P.E., AICP
Executive Director

PROGRAM, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (PFAC)

RESOLUTION #581

AMENDMENT TO THE FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS (FFYs) 2022-2050 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN TO ADD THE INTERBOROUGH EXPRESS PROJECT AS A MAJOR METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT

WHEREAS, the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is the metropolitan planning organization for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to 23 CFR 450.324, NYMTC is responsible for the development of a Regional Transportation Plan for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley; and

WHEREAS, NYMTC's current FFYs 2022-2050 Plan, entitled *Moving Forward*, was adopted by the Council on September 9, 2021, having addressed all federal planning requirements set forth in 23 CFR 450.324; and

WHEREAS the fiscally constrained element includes all projects and strategies proposed for funding under Title 23 U.S.C., Title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 or with other Federal funds; State Assistance; local sources; and private participation; and

WHEREAS per 23 CFR 450.324 (f)(11)(v), *Moving Forward* includes additional projects that would be included in the adopted transportation plan if additional resources beyond those identified in the financial plan were to become available (i.e., vision element); and

WHEREAS, following interagency consultations, the Interborough Express Project is to be amended to *Moving Forward* as a fiscally constrained major metropolitan transportation investment; and

WHEREAS the Statement of Approach for the Interborough Express Project, as shown in Attachment 1, reflects the project costs and financing as required to establish project eligibility for federal funding within the Plan's fiscally constrained component; and

WHEREAS the costs and financing of the Interborough Express Project have been added to Table 5.5 of Chapter 5, the Plan's financial chapter, as shown in Attachment 2, to demonstrate the Plan's fiscal constraint.

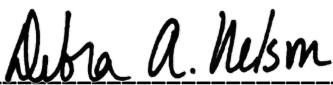
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that PFAC amends *Moving Forward* to include the Interborough Express Project as a fiscally constrained major metropolitan investment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that PFAC amends the Plan's financial chapter to include the Interborough Express Project's costs and financing.

This resolution shall take effect on the twentieth day of June, two thousand and twenty-four.

ADOPTED: June 20, 2024

"I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of Resolution #581, Amendments to Federal Fiscal Years 2022-2050 Regional Transportation Plan to Add Interborough Express Project as a Major Metropolitan Transportation Investment, and was motioned by Patrick Gerdin, representing the Mid-Hudson South Transportation Coordinating Committee, and seconded by Yogesh Sanghvi, representing the New York City Transportation Coordinating Committee. This Resolution was adopted and passed unanimously."


Debra Nelson, PFAC Chair

NEW YORK METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Statement of Approach – Major Metropolitan Transportation Investment

Project Name: Interborough Express (IBX)

Sponsoring Agency: Metropolitan Transportation Authority

Purpose & Need: The Interborough Express is a transformative light rail transit project that will connect areas of Brooklyn and Queens currently underserved by transit. The project will substantially reduce travel times between the two boroughs, reduce congestion, and expand economic opportunities for the people who live and work in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The project would reduce or eliminate the need for transit users traveling between Brooklyn and Queens to travel through Manhattan, with travel times savings expected up to 30 minutes per trip. IBX is especially beneficial for those who need to travel within the corridor itself. Over 55% of Brooklyn residents living within the corridor work in Brooklyn, and 40% of Queens residents living within the corridor work within Queens.

The project also advances equity within the MTA's transportation network. Almost three-quarters of the corridor's residents are people of color, 19% are below the poverty line, and 50% of the households do not own a car. On top of these direct benefits, the increase in transit access will potentially reduce congestion on roads within the communities.

Project Description: IBX is a new 14-mile transit line serving Queens and Brooklyn along an existing freight corridor, connecting to 17 subway lines (2, 3, 5, 7, A, B, C, D, E, F, J, L, M, N, R, Q, Z), the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) and dozens of MTA bus routes. The majority of the corridor (11 miles) is owned by the LIRR, while the northern three miles is owned by CSX. A maintenance and storage facility serving the line would be located in the vicinity of Brooklyn Army Terminal and the 65th Street Yard in Brooklyn.

Alternatives Considered: The Planning & Environmental Linkages study evaluated three alternatives identified for further investigation in the Feasibility Study: Light Rail Transit (LRT), Conventional Rail (CR) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

These three alternatives underwent further engineering, transit planning, and environmental evaluation, allowing MTA to consider additional measures that were not previously assessed in earlier studies. All three alternatives would be electrically powered and would operate primarily within the existing freight rail corridor.

a. Light Rail Transit (LRT) Light Rail uses tram-like trains that would operate both in their own dedicated right of way and on streets. The LRT alternative envisions a two-track service that is alongside but physically separated from the freight rail line, similar to the conventional rail alternative and consistent with FRA requirements. Most of the line would run side-by-side with the freight tracks, with a short segment of the LRT alternative operating on existing streets.

b. Conventional Rail (CR) Conventional Rail would have two dedicated passenger rail tracks running largely alongside the existing freight rail line. CR would use Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)-compliant electrical multiple units (EMUs). The rail cars would be configured similarly to subway cars that allow for faster boarding, alighting and greater standing room while operating at high frequencies.

c. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Bus Rapid Transit describes bus service that mimics LRT by operating in its own dedicated right of way alongside but separated from the freight rail line. As with the LRT alternative, a short segment of the line would operate on existing streets.

MTA identified measures to evaluate and compare the three alternatives from the perspectives of the purpose and need, goals and objectives, engineering, transit planning, and public input. While all measures listed are important for comparing the benefits and challenges of the alternatives, several measures are considered to be major differentiators among the alternatives in the Planning Study. These measures are shown below.

A. Does the alternative meet the project purpose and need?

Project Purpose: Provide fast, direct, and reliable transit service connecting Brooklyn and Queens using the existing Bay Ridge Branch and Fremont Secondary freight corridors between the Brooklyn Army Terminal and Roosevelt Avenue in Jackson Heights.

Project Need:

- Need for efficient, direct, and reliable transit service connecting Brooklyn and Queens – Can the alternative provide reliable passenger service? Is there potential for transfers between stations at Roosevelt Avenue (ease of transfer)?
- Need to connect to existing transit systems that serve Brooklyn and Queens – Would the alternative connect to existing subway and bus lines in the corridor?
- Need to improve access and connections to and among communities and job centers in the corridor that are currently underserved by subway or transit services – Would the alternative improve access and connections to and among communities and job centers in the corridor?

B. Goals and Objectives

- Support the economic health and development of local communities – Does the alternative have the potential to conflict with proposed development plans?
- Maximize the use of the existing right of way for new transit services – Can new transit service operate in the existing freight railroad corridor? Would additional right of way be needed to provide required separation from freight operations?
- Accommodate transit and freight systems within the existing freight railroad corridors – Can new transit service and existing freight railroad service be accommodated in the existing freight railroad corridor? Would intrusion (crossing) of freight rail operations be required to operate transit service? Would the alternative require relocation of freight tracks or other infrastructure?
- Avoid or minimize environmental issues – Would parks, recreation areas, and open space properties need to be acquired for additional right of way? How many historic architectural resources would be directly impacted within existing right of way or within additional right of way? How many potential archaeological sites may be directly impacted? Could the project cause a visual change? How much of the right of way would be in adopted flood hazard areas? Is there potential for operational noise impacts to residences?

- Provide cost-effective transit service improvements (based on preliminary cost estimates) – What would be the capital cost for the alternative? What would be the operations and maintenance (O&M) costs for the alternative? What would be the annualized capital cost per rider? What would be the annualized O&M costs per rider?

C. Engineering Factors

- Tunnel requirements – Can the vehicle for each alternative operate in the existing tunnels and under what conditions can operation occur? Does the alternative avoid construction of a new tunnel under All Faiths Cemetery?
- Street operations in Queens – Does the alternative require operations on Metropolitan Avenue, 69th Street, and Roosevelt Avenue? What is the potential for the alternative to disrupt roadway operations on Roosevelt Avenue?
- Terminal location – Is the alternative constrained in its ability to provide an efficient terminal station at Roosevelt Avenue? Transit Planning
- Ridership – Can the alternative meet 2045 ridership demand? Is the vehicle operating headway sufficient to meet the projected ridership demand?
- Operational complexity and risk – Does the alternative require special operations in tunnels (i.e., mechanical guidance and signalized crossings)? Is there a risk to the operating schedule because of tunnel operating complexity?

EJ-Environmental-Historic Preservation Implications: In keeping with the needs and goals of the project, IBX would bring new transit connections to historically underserved communities. Of the census tracts that fall in the IBX study area, 65% of them are classified as “Environmental Justice Areas,” and a further 21% are classified as “Potential Environmental Justice Areas.”

On the whole, almost three-quarters of the population served by IBX are people of color and one in four people has limited fluency in English. A third of households are below 150% of the poverty line. Providing additional reliable, high-frequency transit options for households in the study corridor, half of which do not own a car, would increase mobility and access to economic opportunities for them.

Additionally, although the right-of-way already exists, substantial reconstruction will be necessary to make the Interborough Express possible while preserving vital freight connections.

Areas of focus along the corridor include over 45 overpass bridges, many of which will need to be reconstructed in order to accommodate the new service, as well as the 125-year-old East New York tunnel that will require rehabilitation. Support facilities for vehicle maintenance and storage as well as power distribution, ancillary facilities, and prospective stations within or near this narrow right-of-way are also required.

Additionally, the project is being designed to not prelude the Cross Harbor Freight Program rail tunnel project, which is currently undergoing its own environmental review.

Total Projected Cost (\$M): \$5.5 billion (in 2027 dollars)

Anticipated Fund Sources & Amounts: At this time, we expect to apply for the FTA Capital Investment Grant “New Start” program. Project funding, including the local match, will also need to be identified in a future MTA Capital Program, the next of which covers the 2025-2029 cycle.

Additionally, funding for the Preliminary Engineering (PE) contract, which we expect to be released in a competitive RFP process later this year, will come from several sources.

- CMAQ funding (\$63M)
- FY2025 New York State Executive Budget (\$52M)
- USDOT RAISE grant (\$25M)

Projected Completion Year: 2032 (estimated)

Table 5.5 -- Financial Summary of System Enhancement Projects in the Fiscally Constrained TIP & Plan

<u>Plan ID#/PIN #</u>	<u>Category/Item</u>	<u>Funding category</u>	<u>TIP</u>		<u>2028-2032</u>	<u>2033-2037</u>	<u>2038-2042</u>	<u>2043-2047</u>	<u>2048-2050</u>	<u>Total \$\$ programmed (in billions)</u>
			<u>Pre-2023</u>	<u>2023-2027</u>						
PLAN ID: NYCMB12190C	Interborough Express Project	Formula federal		\$ 0.073	\$ -					\$ 0.073
		Project-specific: federal		\$ 0.015	\$ 4.325					\$ 4.340
		Project-specific: state/local		\$ 0.052	\$ 1.035					\$ 1.087