

MIDDLESEX COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 26, 2019

Attendance

Officers

Acting Chairman, Tom Vigna – North Brunswick Township

Municipal Representatives

Sanford Gardner, East Brunswick Traffic Advisory Board

Brian Tobin, Metuchen

Dorian Kerber, Councilwoman Milltown

Miriam Cohen, Monroe Township

Brendan Kaplan, New Brunswick Office of Innovation

Frank Hoffman, City of Perth Amboy, Director of Public Works

Bask Patel, Woodbridge Township Engineering

State Legislative/Congressional Representatives

Brian Tobin, Assemblyman Wayne DeAngelo – 14th District

Michelle Timoni, Assemblyman Roy Freiman – 16th District

Carlo Socio, Assemblyman Joe Danielson – 17th District

Juan Carlos Nordelo, Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez – 19th District

Donald Newton, Assemblyman Craig Coughlin, Speaker – 19th District

Jael Davis, Representing Office of Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr., - NJ 6th District

Special Guest/Presenter

Neile Weissman, Complete George Coalition

Others

Peter Bilton, NJTPA

Zenobia Fields, Director, NJDOT Division of Community Relations

Morteza Ansari, KMM, Inc.

John Ferguson, Office of Emergency Management

Donald Drost, Middlesex County Community College

Staff

George Ververides, Director of County of Planning

Louie Greenwell, Director Comprehensive Planning

Denise Nickel, Middlesex County Office of Planning

Bruce McCracken, Middlesex County Office of Planning

Anthony Gambilonghi, Middlesex County Office of Planning

Marnie Sucher, Information Technology Support Specialist

Total in Attendance: 26

I. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman, Tom Vigna.

- **Statement on Open Public Meetings Act**

Mr. Vigna noted that the meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975 and that appropriate notices have been sent.

- **Pledge of Allegiance**

Acting Chairman Vigna called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

- **Moment of Silence**

Acting Chairman Vigna commented that having a moment of silence for prayer or quiet reflection at our meetings is a continued opportunity for giving thanks and gratitude for our many blessings. Tom shared that his wife recently returned from serving in refugee camps in the Middle East where people including children often face harsh living conditions.

II. January 22, 2019 Minutes Highlights

The January 22nd Minutes were moved by Sanford Gardner with a second from Mike Kruimer. Minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Welcome Remarks

Acting Chairman Vigna reported the status of the TCC reorganization was progressing, and that we are still awaiting appointments from some 10 municipalities and a number of legislative offices.

IV. Correspondence

Tony Gambilonghi reported there was no correspondence.

V. Special Presentations

A. Trans Hudson Tunnel video by Governor Andrew Cuomo.

The video presentation was made by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo and directed to President Donald Trump. The following points and statements were made:

there are two tunnels approximately 13,000 feet long that between New York and New Jersey, and which are owned by AMTRAK. They are central to the entire Northeast Corridor. They are 107 years old, built using cast iron tubes on top of the river bed and now are about 20 feet in the silt in the river bed. There is water from the river which intrudes into the cast iron tubes. The intrusion of the salt water over time has been continuing to deteriorate and continues to corrode reaching the rebar which is actually breaking apart the cement which is then falling onto the track. The ceiling of the tunnels has a high-power electric cable which powers the trains. The tracks below are between two bench walls on both sides of each tunnel. In that bench wall run terracotta duct work and, in the terracotta, ducts run the power cables that serve each train and serve Penn Station. Those bench walls are cement and are also corroding and decomposing aggravating the entire situation. Superstorm Sandy filled the entire tunnel with saltwater. Once the saltwater was pumped out of the tunnel, much of the salt residue remained. That salt is still sitting on the cement, decomposing the cement and eroding the copper cable.

The new tunnel project proposes building two new tunnels near the old tunnels. Once the new tunnels are constructed, we will then go back and take one of the old tunnels out of services and rebuild it, put it back in service and finally go back and rebuild the other old tunnel. Given that these are complicated engineering feats, if we were to start today, it will take 7 or 8 years. The cost of building two new tunnels is estimated in the range of 12 to 13 billion dollars. Part of that includes rebuilding the old tunnels. We worked out with the former Obama Administration which had agreed to pay 50% of the total project cost, while New York and New Jersey would pay the other 50%. To save time and money, the new Tappan Zee Bridge is a model that served us well. We bid that project internationally for engineering design, materials, labor and oversites. The result was a billion-dollar savings, with a year timesaving involving breakthrough design innovations and overall excellence. Time was of the essence with incentives for meeting deadlines. This project requires a cooperative performance as

Amtrak owns the tunnels and the rail corridor; financing would be cooperatively done with Governor Murphy, NJ and New York, and the Federal Transit Administration of the USDOT. Governor Cuomo ended the video with a plea for President Trump to maintain the former agreement and move forward with the joint funding of this \$13 billion project which is considered by many in Congress as the nation's most urgently needed infrastructure project.

B. Special Presentation Proposal to Widen Pedestrian – Bicycling Paths of the George Washington Bridge (the George).

Neile Weissman, Complete George Coalition

Complete George Coalition is 200-member affiliate organizations all aligned on urging the Port Authority to widen Pedestrian-Bicycling Paths of the George Washington Bridge while the bridge is under construction through 2025 with work that includes the restoration of the 1931 era 7-foot paths. Neile Weissman has asked the Middlesex County Freeholders for supporting his proposal to expand the widening of the sidewalks so that they provide bicycling and pedestrian paths on both sides of the bridge in compliance with AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials). The Transportation Coordinating Committee as advisory to the Freeholders is considering Mr. Weissman's request and will consider a Resolution of support tonight. Mr. Weissman proceeded with his advocacy power point and request, as well as background of broader underlying materials of relevance to all bridges globally with respect to the cycling and pedestrian facilities anywhere.

The George is the sole bikeable connector between New York City and New Jersey. It is already overcrowded at 3,700 cyclists per day, on weekends and growing 10.4% per year between 2010 and 2015.

Attached to these minutes is the "Complete George" power point presented by Mr. Weissman and which are incorporated into the minutes.

Mr. Vigna led a Questions and Answer session on the resolution under consideration urging the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to widen the George Washington Bridge's sidewalks on both sides of the bridge.

Mr. Weissman noted that the Middlesex County municipalities of Carteret and Woodbridge have already supported the Complete George Coalition and that now the TCC has also the opportunity to support widening the paths in compliance with National Standards in accordance with ASHTO. After reading the Resolution, it was moved for a vote by Mike Kruimer, NJ Representative of the East Coast Greenway and seconded by Dorian Kerber, Councilwoman from Milltown and passed unanimously. The signed resolution is attached to these minutes along with the power point presentation.

Mr. Vigna led the TCC in thanking Mr. Weissman for a remarkable presentation and creating a unique opportunity for our TCC to support the bicycle pedestrian community of Middlesex County New Jersey and New York.

VI. Staff Reports

A. Denise Nickel reported on the NJDOT's response to a problem that has been reported to the TCC by the Woodbridge Engineer involving pedestrian crossings to the Metropark Train Station on NJ-27 between the section from Wood Avenue to Oak Tree Road and Green Street. She made the point that the Numeric Crash Analysis Tool would be a useful place to identify crash patterns by time of day, day of the week, train times, etc. The problem statement at that location was approved by NJDOT for the next level of analysis and concept development. Denise reviewed 15 years of police reports which noted that the source of incidents was varied from alcohol to various distractions of pedestrians and drivers as well as joy walking.

B. New Jersey Department of Transportation – Zenobia Fields

Zenobia Fields, the new Director of the NJDOT Office of Community Relations announced that NJDOT representative to the TCC will be Megan Fackler who will be attending future meetings. Mr. Ververides gave a grateful thank you to Zenobia who was recently the Director of the Department of Planning at NJTPA and is now with NJDOT.

C. NJ Transit – Tom Clark

Not present

D. North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority – Peter Bilton

Peter announced meetings on March 11 and 19th, the latter a Safety Voyager Tech demonstration on crash analysis for bicycle and pedestrian incidents.

E. New Jersey Turnpike Authority – Kevin Dunn

Not present

F. Rutgers, The State University – Jennifer Stuart, Leigh Ann Kimber, Brendan Torres

Not present

G. Middlesex County College – Donald Drost, Jr.

No report

H. Keep Middlesex Moving, Inc. – William Neary, Morteza Ansari

No report

I. Middlesex County Area Transit Services – Laila Caune

Not present

J. County Engineering Office – Ron Sendner

Not present

K. Middlesex County Business Development and Education – Kathleen Shaw, Carla Cefalo

Not present

L. East Coast Greenway New Jersey Alliance – Mike Kruimer

Mr. Kruimer also announced the following bicycling related events:

- National Bike/Ped. Summit in Washington, DC is March 9 through 12 will be in Arlington, VA.
- East Coast Regional Summit in Philadelphia on April 4th through 6th will include many guests.
- Tour De Franklin will be Sunday, April 28th a fundraiser for the Franklin Food Bank.
- Farmlands Bike Tour out of Brookdale County College – Saturday, May 4th
- Five Borough Bike Tour – Sunday, May 5th with 35,000 participants.
- Bike MS Bike Tour from Monmouth University to Belmar May 18 – 19. Denise Nickel will be involved in this ride. It is for a good cause. It is along the oceanfront with a flat terrain and makes for a nice spring day ride and is flat.

- Bike Tour of Edison – 3rd Sunday in May week after Mother’s Day.
- High Point to Cape May – June – Saturday after Father’s Day.

M. Middlesex County Office of Emergency Management – John Ferguson

The County received a mitigation grant of \$125,000 from FEMA which Middlesex County matches 25% of that accounting to \$42,000.

All 22 municipalities must review all their responsibilities that their Offices of Emergency Management have set up a structure of support for applying for project grants locally due in June 2019. Any national emergencies which were declared are eligible for project funding.

Second, there is an oversight action to see that our freight rail companies shipping all oils and petroleum-based products have emergency response plans in place and ready to go. This effects CSX, Norfolk Southern (NS) and Conrail with respect to training the contractors who are responsible for implementing the plans. There is a new standard for hazardous materials also known as (HM2150). The training is specific to the job that the contractor is doing. No longer is general training enough alone. This requirement is going to tie into a lot of our big shippers and include them in training.

Mike Kruimer noted that as a CDL driver, he often is involved with Emergency Management actions and often a barrier to effective action is communications and language barriers.

N. Academy Bus Co. – Chuck Kassinger

Not present

O. Suburban Transit...Coach USA – Michael Beltranena

Not present

P. CPM – County Master Plan 2040 – Louie Greenwell

The feedback reports on the two questions we were asking were (1) What do you like about living/working in Middlesex County? and (2) What would you change? We have received 1,400 comments. We have had ten events, talked to some 1,100 people during November to December 2018. Of all the comments we received about what would you change, about 1/3 of them were transportation related, such as too much traffic, quality of the roads, and wanting better access to public transit. Of the 5 most requested things, 3 of them were transportation related. A total of 1/3 of comments related to how we could improve transportation related matters.

This relates to much of the work of the TCC and a big take away for the Plan Destination 2040 team as we work on creating solutions that respond to what the public wants.

Q. Transportation Report - Bruce McCracken

1. Bruce provided information on TransAction, the State Transportation Conference in Atlantic City April 16, 17, 18 including the descriptions of the sessions and info on how to register also in the packets.
2. A copy of the Star Ledger Editorial on New Jersey lawmakers requesting tunnel funds as well as Governor Murphy reaching out to President Trump on the Gateway Tunnel. Finally, Governor Murphy calling for the \$2 billion Air train replacement at Newark Airport, an item in the Port Authority's 10-year capital programs.

R. Staff Activities – George Ververides

Freight Investment Committee at NJTPA met and a key concern to Middlesex County was the intention to facilitate bringing more freight by water and barges as well as rail into that area. The biggest impediment to access to the Port there is the North Jersey Coastline Bridge which has preliminary designs to be replaced to accommodate barge movement. The Port facility at Raritan Center also will need to be upgraded.

The global scale and volumes of container ships going through the Suez Canal is about equal to those going through the Panama Canal. East/West freight expansion is estimated to continue to grow. Freight access to Raritan Center is important and Freeholder Kenny chairs that committee which can make a difference there.

VII. TCC Member Comments

1. Mirian Cohen, Councilwoman Monroe Township reported that Monroe Township has established a commuter council. It is chaired by the Township's business administrator who is also a commuter. The township is looking at schedules and bus service by bus companies.
2. Mike Kruimer said Frank Wong Rutgers Planner provided the preliminary plans for replacing the Landing Lane location of the Delaware & Raritan Canal Bridge. Mike said the proposal does not expand the sidewalk width which will remain at 5 feet. Mr. Ververides explained that Landing Lane Bridge was restricted when the County rebuilt it on the historic piers in the river according to the historic preservation requirements at the time. Mike made the point that the East Coast Greenway is a Transportation Corridor which has to be accessible at the D & R

Canal Bridge at Landing Lane and that the possibility for improvements in designing its replacement is important.

3. Next meeting will be March 26 at 3:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

C o m p l e t e G e o r g e

Neile Weissman, completegeorge.org, neileweissman@gmail.com

Remarks to the Middlesex County Transportation Coordinating Committee, 2/25/19

Between 2017 and 2025, the Port Authority will rip out and restore the 1931-era paths on the George Washington Bridge as part of a \$1.9 billion recabling and restoration project.

The GWB is the sole bike-able connector between North Jersey and NYC and the nexus of the 1650 mile Tri-State Trail Network. Its 7 foot paths are dangerously overcrowded at 3700 cyclists per day on weekends and growing 10% per year.

There's no precedent for crowding so many cyclists onto such a narrow facility, yet this is the PA's plan. If not widened to comply with national standards – AASHTO – the mile long GWB will degrade to a "walk-your-bikes" facility. This will hobble the growth of cycling across the region for generations, impacting tourism, public health, property taxes, affordability, competitiveness, sustainability and resilience annually worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

Conversely, wider GWB paths would spur development of a connected grid, such as envisioned in the Bergen Parks Master Plan - three of which are shared with Essex.

The combination would afford the region new trans-Hudson commuting capacity – one that met PA criteria for a successful strategy to reduce bus trips into the mid-town Manhattan.

Over the coming decades we face periodic, widespread disruptions to mass transit resulting from planned replacement of the PA Bus Terminal and Penn Station, and unplanned weather or man-made events. Emergency repairs to Hudson rail tunnels would reduce bi-state train service 75% for two years.

In any of those scenarios, wider GWB paths could sustain 20,000 commuters per day, drawing first from communities close by, but reducing congestion and freeing up capacity for the rest of the region.

240 organizations and communities have called on the PA to widen the GWB paths, including 60 municipalities (in Middlesex, Woodbridge Township, Carteret), Sierra Club NJ, and the Union, Hudson, Bergen and Passaic Freeholders.

Attachments:

Complete George - Summary

NJ Spotlight Op-Ed - Expanded cycling across GWB will mitigate closing of the Hudson rail tunnels

Tributaries - Bergen County and NYC DOT are each both embarking on plans that will dramatically expand cycling on either side of the GWB

80 by 50 - Calls on the PA to include emissions of tenants and customers in CO2 reduction goals

Two Degree World - Calls on the PA to invest in transportation assets whose value will appreciate in a low-carbon economy.



"Where did the metal pole come from that punctured an NJ Transit train?" NJ.COM, 9/9/18

C o m p l e t e G e o r g e

Neile Weissman, completegeorge.org, neileweissman@gmail.com

Between 2017 and 2025, the Port Authority will rip out and restore the 1931-era, 7 foot paths on the George Washington Bridge as part of a \$1.9 billion recabing and restoration project.

The GWB is the sole bike-able connector between North Jersey and New York City and linchpin of Region Plan Association's 1650 mile Tri-State Trail Network. Its already dangerously overcrowded at 3700 cyclists per day on weekends and growing at 10% per year.

There's no precedent for crowding so many cyclists onto such a narrow path, but it is the PA's plan is to restore the paths to their 1931-era, pedestrian configuration (ADA).

Unless the PA leverages this once-in-a-lifespan opportunity to widen the paths to comply with national standards (AASHTO), the GWB will become a choke point, hobbling the growth of cycling across the region for generations.

This will jeopardize durable enhancements to tourism, public health, sustainability and resilience annually worth hundreds of millions of dollars. Conversely, wider paths will spur construction of connected bikeways and draw bike share systems north on both sides of the Hudson.

George Washington Bridge



Current GWB. (1) 7 foot wide path for pedestrians, runners and cyclists. Photo Hassan Diop.

- In 2015, the GWB was NYC's #3 most-biked-bridge at 3700 trips per day on weekends.
- Also, the fastest growing at 10.4% per year.
- At 7 foot the GWB would have by far the narrowest path.

Growth of Cyclist Use - 12 Hour Counts	Brooklyn	Ed Koch - Queensboro	Williamsburg	George Washington	Manhattan
2010	2,066	2,549	4,202	2,252	2,911
2015	2,687	3,239	5,391	3,699	4,524
2010-2015 Annual Growth Rate	5.40%	4.91%	5.11%	10.43%	9.22%
2024 (projected)	4,314	4,986	8,442	9,034	10,006
Cyclist Path Widths	10-17'	12'	14'	7'	12'

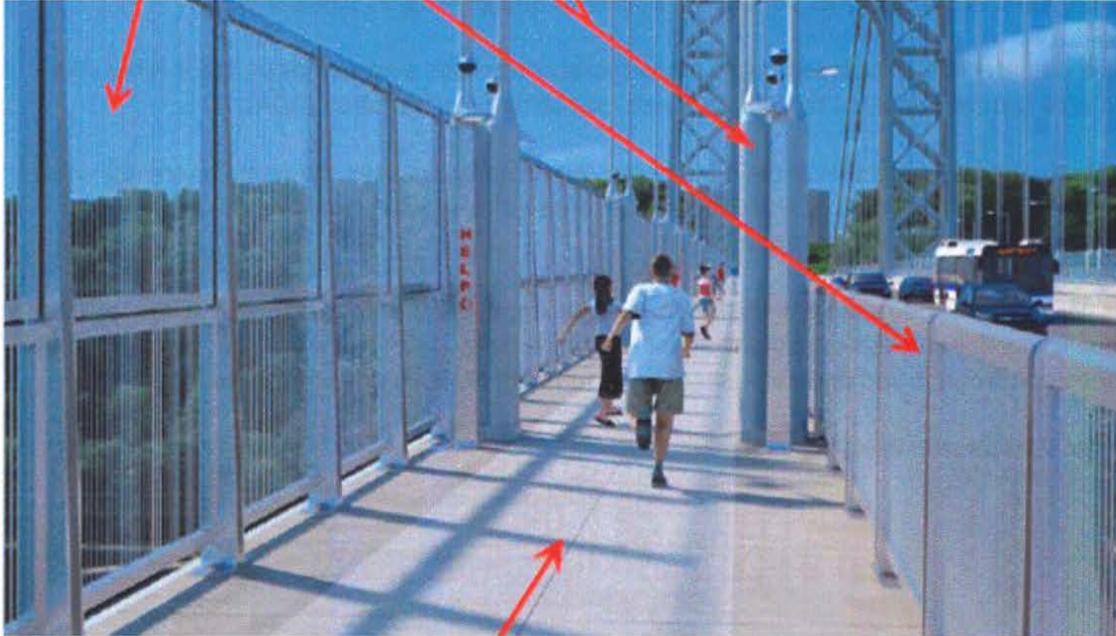
Data source: NYCDOT and PANYNJ. Measurements by Neile Weissman.

- At 521 users per hour, current travel well exceeds AASHTO's 300 UPH threshold to widen the paths to 14 foot. Its FHWA level of service grade is **"F – Failing"**.

	Path Width	Centerline	50% of Bi-directional Users Per Hour / Split Mode					Level of Service	
			521/hour + 2	Bicyclists	Pedestrians	Runners	All Modes	Score	Grade
GWB South Path 2015									
417 cyclists per hour + 25% peds-runners	6.8 feet	0	261.0	75.0%	12.5%	12.5%	100.0%	1.71	F

FHWA grading for current GWB path.

Port Authority's ADA-compliant plan



Port Authority's Plan: (1) 7 foot path for peds-runners plus (1) 7 foot path for cyclists. 11' high anti-suicide barrier. Rendering Amman & Whitney.

- Replace the stairs on the North Path with ramps.
- Widen the NY-NJ approaches.
- Restore paths as ADA-compliant, 7 foot pedestrian paths.
- Assign one path to peds-runners and another to bicyclists.

However, the PA's plan will fail to improve the GWB's current level of service.

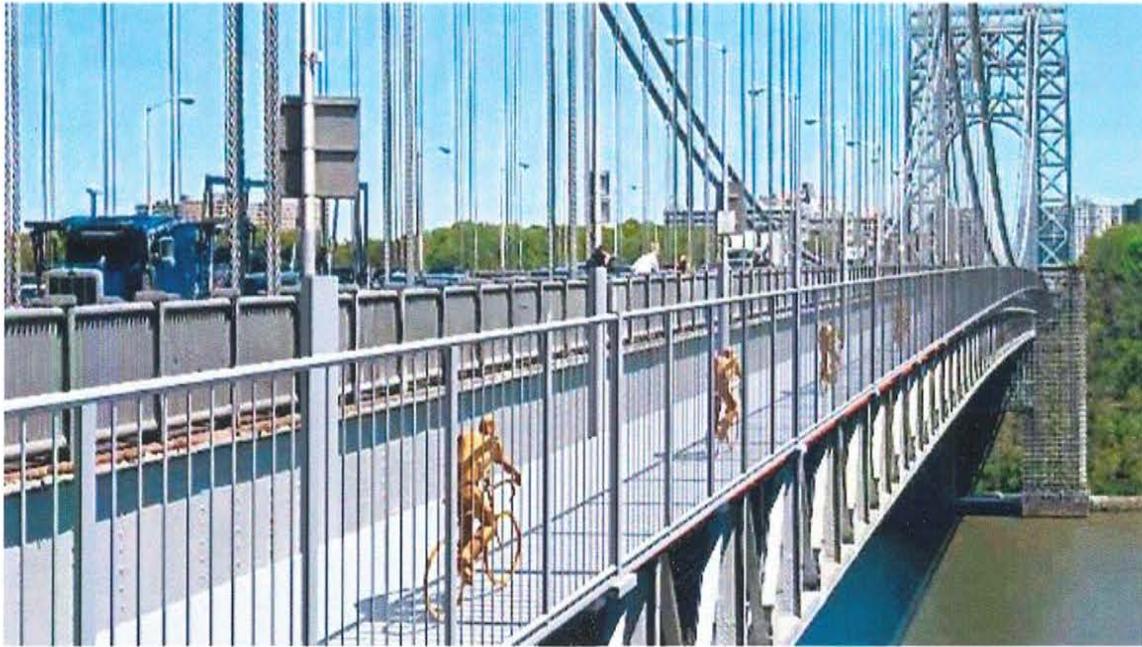
- Peds-runners comprise just 25% of current peak use.
- 5-10% peds-runners will *still* use the bike path.
- ADA does not insulate the PA from liability in accidents involving cyclists.
- Freeze-melt of snowdrifts between the cables will continue to restrict winter access.
- The PA design for the anti-suicide barriers will compromise the view
- FHWA grade for the GWB in 2024 under PA's Plan remains **"F – Failing"**.

Port Authority's ADA Plan for GWB - (1) 6.75 path for cyclists on the North Path

GWB North Path 2024	Path Width	Centerline	1069/hour + 2				Level of Service		
			535.0	Bicyclists	Pedestrians	Runners	All Modes	Score	Grade
10.44% growth * 5 years + 5% peds-runners	6.8 feet	0	535.0	95.0%	2.5%	2.5%	100.0%	1.91	F

FHWA grading for PA's ADA-compliant plan.

Complete George's AASHTO-compliant proposal



Complete George: (2) 10' paths for cyclists. (2) 7 foot paths for peds-runners. 9' high anti-suicide barrier set below pedestrian paths. Rendering Joseph Lertola.

As an example of an AASHTO-compliant facility, the Complete George proposal would comprise:

- Four paths totaling 33.5 foot for pedestrians, runners and cyclists
- AASHTO-compliance ensures capacity and insulates from liability
- No cables intrude on bike paths. They can be snowplowed to full width
- The 9' high anti-suicide barrier on the lower level preserves peds' unobstructed view
- A widened North Path would increase capacity as soon as 2021
- FHWA grade in 2024 is: **"A – Excellent."**

Cyclists' Proposal - (2) 10' paths for bicyclists + (2) 6.75' paths for peds-runners

GWB North-South 2024	Path Width	Centerline	50% of Bi-directional Users Per Hour / Split Mode					Level of Service	
			Bicyclists	Pedestrians	Runners	All Modes	Score	Grade	
NVCDOT/PA: 10.44% growth + 5% peds-runners	20 feet	0	535.0	95.0%	2.5%	2.5%	100.0%	4.12	A

FHWA grading for AASHTO-compliant Complete George proposal.

Regional Tourism

Biking and walking added \$497 million to NJ's economy in 2011. NYC has 828,000 adult cyclists and no recreational facilities not shared with pedestrians and represent a core market for cycle tourism across the region – North Jersey, Low-Mid Hudson Valley, Long Island, Connecticut.

With the completion of the Mario M. Cuomo, the GWB would form a 44 mile loop drawing cyclists from across the region. Between the Cuomo and the 750 mile Empire State Trail, New York will spend \$500 million to grow cycling in the Low-Mid Hudson Valley.

Local Tourism

Using economic impact studies used to fund Walkway Over the Hudson as a model, a linear park across the GWB with unobstructed views and discrete paths for pedestrians, runners and cyclists would attract \$42 million per year in tourist spending and sustain 675 jobs.



Walkway Over the Hudson. Image: WOTH

Public Health

Applying a World Health Organization model, the increased physical activity spawned by wider GWB paths would annually prevent twenty deaths worth \$195 million in health care spending.

Doctors from the Columbia School of Public Health have determined the GWP path expansion to be an incredibly cost effective public health intervention at \$883 per quality adjusted life year (“QALY”) – or 14 times more cost effective than vaccinating kids against the flu.

Sustainability

Bike trips offset twice the CO2 as low emission vehicles (“LEV”). If current bike trips across the GWB were subsidized as the PA does low-emission vehicles (\$2.75-\$6.75 per trip), the annual CO2 offsets would be worth \$5.8 million.

Increased bicycle mode share will help the region to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals and the states’ commitment to the Transportation Climate Initiative.

Resilience

Expanded cycling across the GWB, meets the PA’s criteria, as detailed in its Trans-Hudson Commuting Capacity study, for a strategy to draw down bus traffic into mid-town Manhattan. If we need to repair the Hudson rail tunnels before replacements can be built, wider GWB paths can support 20,000 bike commuters per day.

When bike traffic across East River bridges surged from 13K to 30K per day after Sandy. In 2019, to offset the loss of the “L” Subway, it is expected that daily bike traffic across the Williamsburg would triple to 21,000.

Transportation Equity / Environmental Justice / Connecting Communities / Affordability

Key beneficiaries of widened paths are communities who have borne the brunt of bridge congestion, unsafe streets and degraded air quality for generations. For comparison, Los

Angeles, will spend \$100 million a year over the next 40 years to extend cycling infrastructure to its transit deserts in low income communities.

A revitalized GWB would draw bike share up to Washington Heights and Fort Lee; bike grids across Bergen, Manhattan, the Bronx; spur projects like Hudson Valley Greenway and River Road Corridor; and connected bikeways across the Harlem River and Bronx “transportation deserts.” It’s easier to fund a facility that gets a thousand users per day than one that gets a hundred.



Hudson Valley Greenway. Image RBA.



River Road Corridor. Image RBA and Louis Berger Group.

Competitiveness

For NYC and environs to retain its ranking as World’s #1 Most Competitive City, it must attract a millennial workforce – a cohort that favors bicycling over driving and mass transit. Fifteen Amazon finalists are included in the Best 50 U.S. Cities to Bike. Newark, is not rated, but it could be – it has the density, terrain and proximity to recreational roads.

Property Taxes

National studies correlate increases in home prices to their proximity to bike paths, ranging from 4% in Delaware to 23% in Chicago. If we credit NYC’s thousand mile bike grid with a “Delaware” multiple, its current share of annual city property taxes would be \$150 million. If we accord the GWB another *half a percent* for connecting the grid to the rest of the U.S., the incremental revenue would be \$19 million per year.

Green Dividend

European Cyclists’ Federation credits the cycling across the E.U. with adding \$27.7 billion per year in reduced noise, emissions, gas use and healthcare costs. That’s \$546 per person.

In Tokyo, a city of 13 million, 90% use mass transit for their daily commute. Of those, 30% bike the first-and-last mile.

London is in the midst of a 10 year, \$1.4 billion build-out of its bike network. By 2019, it is expected that more than half the trips into Central London will be by bike.

Portland, a city of two million credits its bike grid with a “green dividend” that reduces spending on cars, mass transit and health care, saving by \$2.6 billion per year from leaving the region.



Tilikum Crossing, Portland with (2) 14' paths. Completed in 2015 for \$135 million. Image Tedder.

Cost Comparisons

- \$118 million to restore the GWB paths to a pedestrian standard (ADA) 7 foot width
- \$39 million for Walkway over the Hudson
- \$55 million for a bikeway on the Kosciuszko Bridge
- \$60 million to renovate the High Bridge
- **\$90 million to widen GWB paths to national standards (AASHTO) for high use bicycling**
- \$135 million for a bikeway on the Bayonne
- \$135 million for a bikeway on the Goethals
- \$400 million estimated to add bikeways to the Verrazzano
- \$380 million, or 20% of the total \$1.9 billion resoration, is what USDOT recommends to upgrade bike-ped paths on bridges during renovations.
- \$440 million for a bikeway on the Mario M. Cuomo

Considering that its paths may need to sustain more trips than the other bridges combined, the GWB should be considered a "best buy."

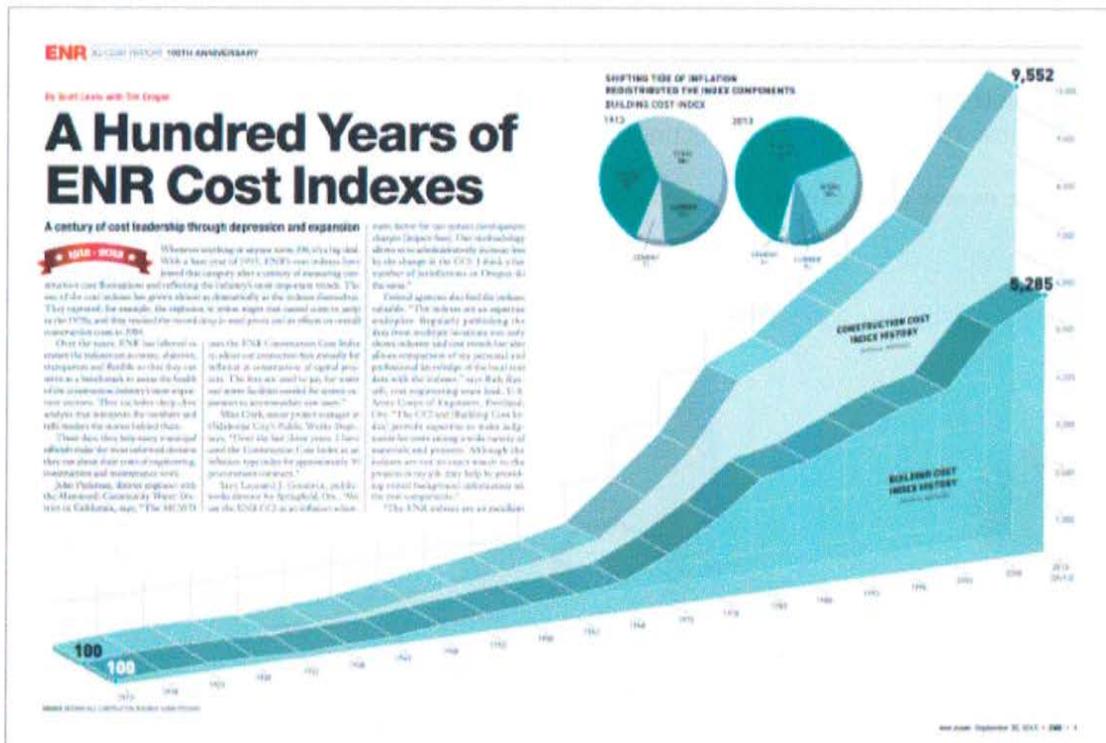


High Bridge – Getty. Goethals Bridge – PANYNJ. Bayonne Bridge – Ramlogue.

Cost Savings

Widening the GWB during recabbling vs. later as a stand alone project:

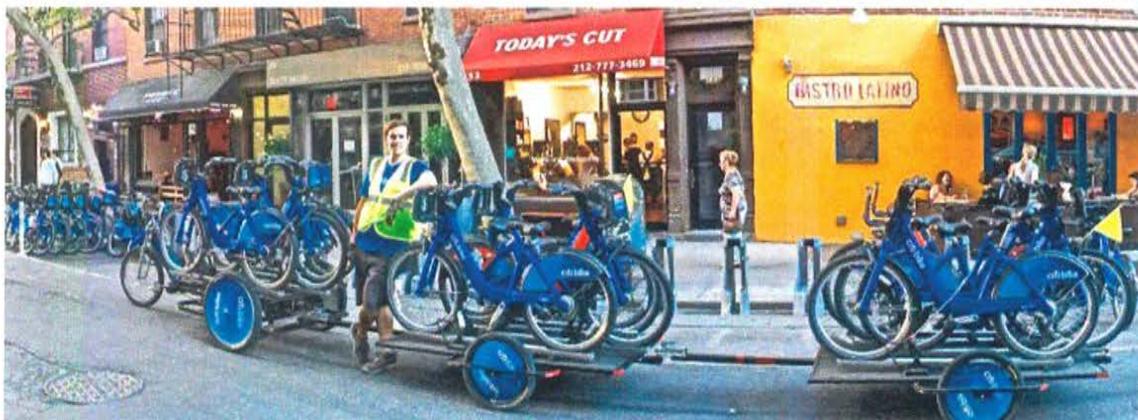
- Historically low interest rates allow the PA to finance construction cheaply and without affecting their credit rating.
- Saves decades' worth of Construction Cost Index increases.
- Cantilevers for bikeway can double to support scaffolding during recabbling.



Construction Cost Index 1913-2013. Engineering News Record.

Questions for the Port Authority

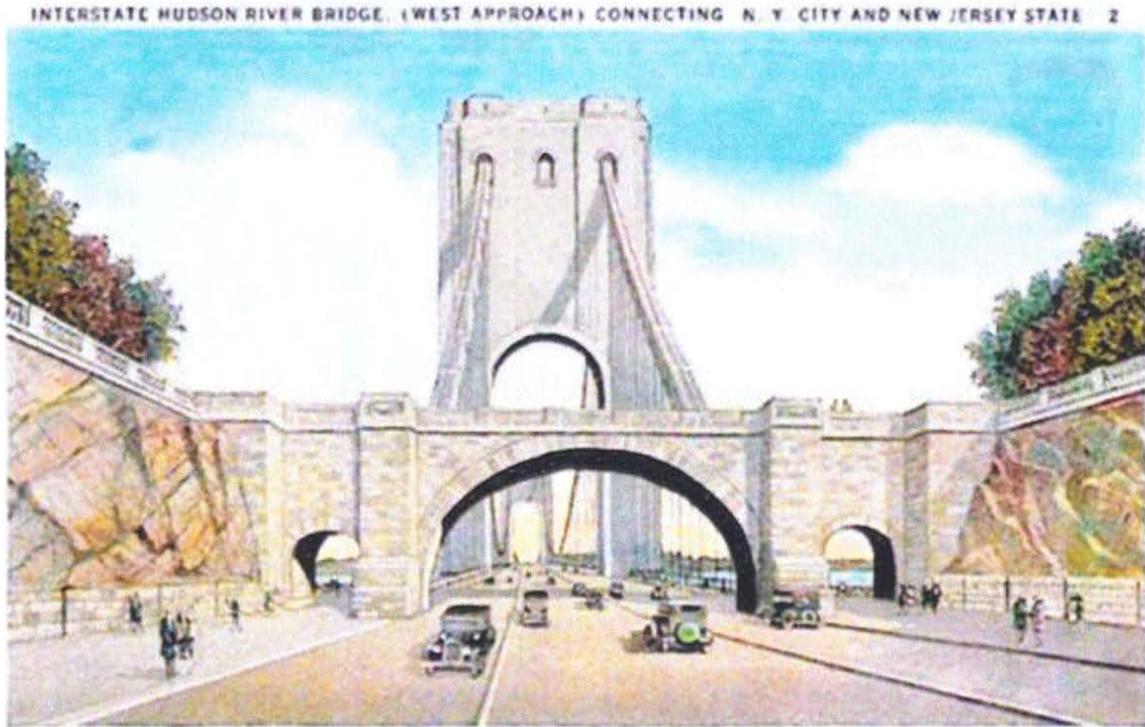
- If 3700 cyclists per day and 10% growth rate are insufficient to warrant widening the 7 foot paths now, then what *is* PA's threshold? How crowded does it need to get?
- If the PA regards the cost of widening the paths *during* recabbling as too high, then what's the likelihood that a standalone job, at greater cost, will find acceptance later?
- If 240 organizations, businesses, communities and public officials are not enough to persuade the Agency to get this project moving, then who is?
- DOTs across the U.S. adhere to AASHTO for the design of shared use paths, to insure safety and adequate capacity, as well as to insulate themselves from liability. How can the PA continue to guarantee bicyclists access if it restores the paths to an ADA standard?
- With bike share is working its way up both sides of the Hudson, how can providers be expected to load-balance rush hours if cyclists are allocated a single 7 foot path?



CitiBike 12-unit transporter. Image Susan Brenner.

High Line on the Hudson

As indication that the GWB's designers considered its potential as a public space, original drawings show 16' paths and use projections with a higher rate of growth for foot travel than car.



Early GWB rendering with 16 foot pedestrian portals. Image Cass Gilbert.

Supporters

240 organizations, businesses, communities and public officials have called for widening the GWB paths to comply with national standards as part of the \$1.9 reconstruction.

- 40 cycling organizations including: Transportation Alternatives, New York Cycle Club, Century Road Club Association, Five Borough Bicycle Club, Empire Tri Club, Kissena Cycling Club, NYS Bicycle Racing Association, Westchester Cycle Club, Mid-Hudson Bicycle Club, Women's Woodstock Cycling Grand Prix; International Mountain Bike Association, Jersey Off-Road Bicycle Association, Palisades MTB, Long Island Streets, New York City MTB
- 60 bike shops including Bicycle Habitat, Strictly Cycles and Piermont Bicycle Connection
- NJ Sierra Club, NJ Association of Rail Passengers, WEACTION-Harlem, StreetsPAC, Alternatives, Regional Plan Association
- Representatives Carolyn B. Maloney, Sean Patrick Maloney, Eliot L. Engel, Nita M. Lowey, Kathleen M. Rice, José E. Serrano, Lydia M. Velazquez, Yvette D. Clarke, Bill Pascrell, Jr.
- 60 North Jersey municipalities and Bergen, Hudson, Union, Passaic Freeholders
- NJ State Senator Brian Stack, Assemblywoman Valerie Huttle
- NYC Council Members Ydanis A. Rodriguez, Mark Levine, Andrew Cohen, Keith Powers, Carlina Rivera, Helen K. Rosenthal, Ben Kallos, Paul A. Vallone, Daniel Dromm

- Rockland, Orange, Dutchess, Westchester, Manhattan, Bergen and Hudson Executives
- Manhattan Community Boards #4, 7, 9, 12, Bronx #1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12; City of Yonkers



60 NJ municipalities and 12 NYC community boards alone represent 2 million residents.

Quotes

"We would encourage the Port to continue to think aggressively about planning for adequate bike facilities in all of its projects. Specifically, about the long-term need for additional capacity on the George Washington crossing. – NYC Deputy Mayor Anthony E. Shorris

"The Borough has installed bike lanes, promoted bicycle safety and has hosted bicycle races and similar functions. Widening the paths would serve as a perfect compliment to improvements and policies that we, and neighboring communities, have implemented." – Borough of Fort Lee, NJ

"As one of the densest metropolitan areas in America, NYC and NJ cannot afford to ignore aging infrastructure. We must commit to shore up 20th Century infrastructure that cannot keep up with the demands of the 21st Century." - Letter signed by eleven members of the U.S. Congress

"We acknowledge the logistics and expense, but we firmly believe that the benefits will justify these costs many times over." - NYC Council Members Ydanis Rodriguez and Mark Levine

Before construction begins, the plans must be revisited to ensure that this once-in-a-lifetime project is planned to optimum standards, not just good enough. – Transportation Alternatives

"With new off-road opportunities opening up in Sterling Forest, Harriman State Park and other public lands, paths that meet federal guidelines will insure that cyclists can commute to and from New York City with ease." - International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA)

"The PA's Plan to allocate a 7 foot path for pedestrians and runners and a 7 foot path for cyclists will inevitably cause runners to move over to the cyclists' path". - NY Road Runners

"Despite being the only bike route over the Hudson leaving NYC, the proposed 7-foot paths seem more like an afterthought than a true civic amenity." - Regional Plan Association

The New York City Council Resolution 0103-2018



The New York City Council - File #: Res 0103-2018

Resolution calling upon the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to widen the George Washington Bridge's sidewalks.

By Council Members Ydanis A. Rodriguez, Mark Levine, Andrew Cohen, Keith Powers, Carlina Rivera, Helen K. Rosenthal, Ben Kallos, Paul A. Vallone, Daniel Dromm (9)

Whereas, The George Washington Bridge's sidewalks are the only connection across the Hudson River between New York City and New Jersey for pedestrians, runners, and bicyclists; and

Whereas, The paths are heavily used, with an average of 1,700 cyclists and 900 pedestrians crossing each day; and

Whereas, The sidewalks are ten feet wide except where the bridge's suspender ropes pass through, where they are less than seven feet wide; and

Whereas, According to Federal Highway Administration guidelines, shared-use paths should be at least ten feet wide and up to fourteen feet wide if they are heavily used; and

Whereas, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is planning an extensive renovation that will replace all of the bridge's suspender ropes beginning in 2017 and lasting until 2024; and

Whereas, As part of the project, the sidewalks will be replaced and new ramps that will provide access to the sidewalks will be constructed, but the sidewalks will not be widened; and

Whereas, New York City has made efforts in recent years to make its roadways safer and more convenient for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly through the Vision Zero street safety initiative and the expansion of the bicycle lane network; and

Whereas, The Port Authority's own Bicycle Policy states that its goals are to integrate "improved bicycle access" and "safe bicycle lanes," and to "promote the safe co-existence of motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians" at its facilities; and

Whereas, The width of the bridge's sidewalks do not meet federal standards for high-use pedestrian and bicycle paths, and

Whereas, The planned renovation project presents a unique opportunity to build sidewalks that would be able to safely and comfortably accommodate the increasing number of pedestrians and bicyclists expected to use the bridge in the decades to come; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to widen the George Washington Bridge's sidewalks.

OP-ED: WITH TUNNEL REPAIRS IN OFFING, BIKES ARE KEY TO KEEPING PEOPLE ON THE MOVE
Neile Weissman, July 23, 2018,

It's imperative to make contingency plans for a shutdown of Hudson rail tunnels. Step one: Widen bike paths on George Washington Bridge to accommodate far more riders



Over the coming decade, there's a significant chance that the aging, salt-damaged Hudson rail tunnels will be shut down for restoration before new tunnels are complete.^{1 2} If so, the region's transport providers would need to enact major contingency plans to move 200,000 travelers.

L-pocalypse

Bicycling can move a significant portion cheaply, healthfully, and on their own schedules. But to make this happen, the paths on the George Washington Bridge — the only bikeable connector between northern New Jersey and Manhattan — must be widened to accommodate substantially more users. Consider how New York City is handling a similar scenario, fittingly known as the "L-pocalypse."

In 2019, L-subway service between Brooklyn and Manhattan will be suspended for 15 months to refurbish the century-old Canarsie Tubes, which, like the Hudson rail tunnels, were flooded after Superstorm Sandy. The closure, affecting 225,000 commuters daily, will not be preceded by new tunnels. Rather, riders will be rerouted onto new and beefed up subway, bus and ferry service.

They will also be encouraged to bike.^{3 4}

To that end, the city will stripe new paths across the two boroughs. Fourteenth Street, which straddles the L, will be reserved exclusively for buses and bicycles. The number of cyclists accessing the Williamsburg Bridge is expected to double to 14,000 per day and thousands more will stream over other East River bridges.

Hudsogeddon!

New York City's subway boasts considerable redundant capacity, crossing numerous bridges and tunnels. By contrast, the Hudson rail tunnels comprise a single point of failure for Amtrak and NJ Transit. This makes contingency planning for their loss far more difficult, expensive — and necessary. ("Hudsogeddon!")^{5 6}

Adding buses would require considerable staging and on-street storage. Proposed expansions to PATH services would not be ready in time.⁷ Ferry utilization, now at 25 percent, could be increased; the challenge is getting commuters to the water.⁸ Which brings us to cycling.

Bicycling provides crucial “last-mile” connections to ferries, trains and buses. It can also provide true one-seat rides from people’s homes without burdening mass transit or congested streets.

Six towns in Hudson County have inaugurated bike share, whose continued development would increase ferry utilization.⁹ ¹⁰ State-of-the-art paths across the Bayonne and Goethals bridges, due by 2019, will enable 45- and 60-minute commutes to Wall Street via the Staten Island Ferry.¹¹

Critically, George Washington Bridge paths — widened to comply with national standards developed by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (“AASHTO”) — would safely support 20,000 cyclists per day, plus pedestrians and bike share.¹²

Port Authority plans for GWB are a problem

Communities near the GWB now send tens of thousands of bus riders a day into Midtown Manhattan.¹³ Many would opt for a 60-minute bike ride rather than sit in traffic for hours.¹⁴ Bergen County’s plan to link its parks with bikeways will connect its million residents.¹⁵ And New York’s legalization of electric-assisted bicycles (“E-bikes”) will further extend catchment.¹⁶ ¹⁷

As an indicator of widespread support, 60 municipalities from Middlesex to Passaic counties have called for greater GWB cycling capacity.¹⁸ So too have the Union, Hudson, Bergen, Passaic Freeholders and Gov. Phil Murphy.

The obstacle to this scheme, however, is the Port Authority. As part of its \$1.9 billion GWB restoration, the PA plans to return the paths to their 1931 configuration and allocate to cyclists a single 7-foot path.¹⁹ This may conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), but that’s a low-use pedestrian standard — inadequate to support even current use, let alone growth or emergency demand.²⁰ ²¹

The PA states that the constraint is cost, which it puts at \$90 million. But this is far less than it would cost later as a stand-alone job, or what’s being spent on bridges across the region — many of which won’t see a fraction of the George’s activity. If started now, half capacity would be online by 2021, the remainder by 2025.

“Doing nothing is not an option.”

NJ would do well to adopt NY’s mantra for its L-pocalypse: “Doing nothing is not an option.”²²

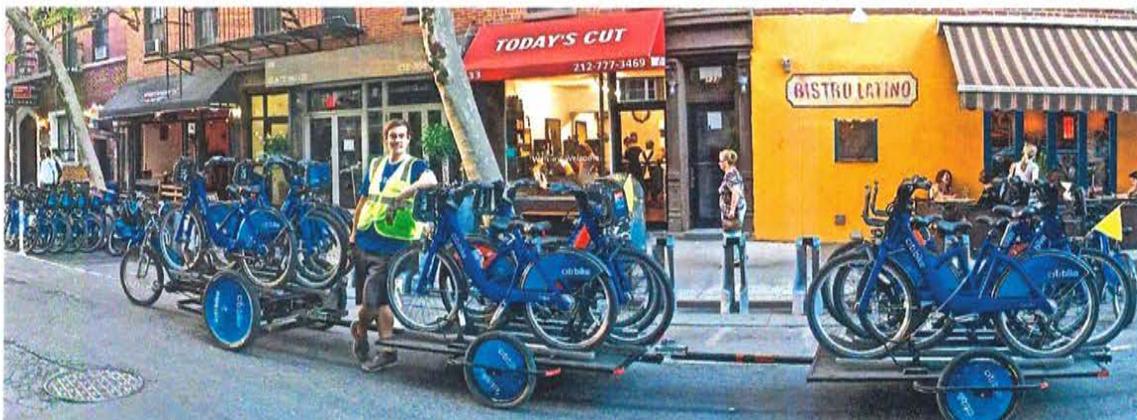
History demonstrates the role cycling can play in a transit emergency. The day following Superstorm Sandy, bike trips across New York’s East River bridges surged from 13,000 to 30,000.²³ This wasn’t happenstance. It was preceded by decades of planning and investment, during which the public became accustomed to cycling.²⁴

The sooner these investments are made, the sooner people will incorporate them into their daily travel habits, providing resilient new capacity for the changes down the road. We may have survived the “summer of hell,” but winter is coming.²⁵

Neile Weissman (neileweissman@gmail.com) heads up Complete George, a coalition of 240 organizations, businesses, communities, and elected officials, which is asking the Port Authority, as part of its \$1.9 billion restoration, to widen bikes lanes on the George Washington Bridge to comply with national standards. Op-ed with images and sources: <https://tinyurl.com/ya8ffz3e>

Notes

- 1 The chances of the existing tunnels needing to be shut down for repair rise to 75% by 2026, Billions for Red Tape, May 2016, *Common Good*, <https://tinyurl.com/ydf8v3mr>
- 2 FAQ, *Hudson Tunnel Project*, <https://tinyurl.com/yc8wj42a>
- 3 City Plans for L-Train Closure, *MTA-NYC DOT*, <https://tinyurl.com/yc9dtbhc>
- 4 L-Train Shutdown Video, *MTA-NYC DOT*, <https://tinyurl.com/hkarh7r>
- 5 “Even partial tunnel closure would put 50,000 additional cars on the road, pushing Manhattan into gridlock and backing up New Jersey traffic 25 miles.”, Billions for Red Tape, May 2016, *Common Good*, <https://tinyurl.com/ydf8v3mr>
- 6 “Martin Robins, of the Voorhees Transportation Center says he is ‘terribly’ worried about NJ real estate values, and Nicole Gelinias, transportation expert at the Manhattan Institute, says she may ‘start advising friends to move to Long Island, not New Jersey’ ”, Gateway news reporting from 2014, 2016, 2018 by Dana Rubinstein, *Politico New York*, <https://tinyurl.com/ydff6fbc>, <https://tinyurl.com/y7cf5akz>, <https://tinyurl.com/ybvq4e2v>
- 7 “The (Newark-WTC) 10-Car Program would likely not be operational until 2028 if approved today. ... Another potential initiative, the Hoboken-WTC 8-Car Program with an estimated cost of \$550 million, is not currently under consideration.” Trans-Hudson Commuting Capacity Study, Appendix B Multi-Modal Strategies, 2016, pp. 6-8, *PANYNJ*, <http://tinyurl.com/y7ejduqz>
- 8 *Ibid*, p.19
- 9 Five New Cities Choose Hudson Bike Share, Leaving Jersey City Alone With CitiBike, *Jersey Diggs*, <https://tinyurl.com/y9zre298>
- 10 “Bicycles may provide another means of accessing ferries for commutation between New Jersey and New York City.”, THHCS, Appendix B Multi-Modal Strategies, p.20, *PANYNJ*, <http://tinyurl.com/y7ejduqz>
- 11 *Google Maps*, <https://tinyurl.com/y98uu2fl>
- 12 (2) 10’ bike paths operating in peak direction; (1) 7’ path operating cross peak to rebalance bike share; (1) 7’ bi-directional path for pedestrians would yield an FHWA “E” level of service for 4000 peak cyclists per hour or 20,000 per day., National Standards, *Complete George*, <https://tinyurl.com/y7p25wlj>



CitiBike 12-unit transporter. Photo by Susan Brennan.

13 The share of PABT commuters from Edgewater, Fort Lee, Cliffs Park amounts to 8.5% of 232,000 total or 19,720, THCCS, Appendix B, p. 16, *PANYNJ*, <http://tinyurl.com/y7ejduqz>

14 *Google Maps*, <https://tinyurl.com/yazc733u>

15 Bergen Park Master Plan, *CUES, Rutgers*, <http://tinyurl.com/ydctmpph>

16 De Blasio Moves to Permit E-Bikes in NYC, *Streetsblog*, <https://tinyurl.com/yax2o2kp>

17 L train shutdown: Electric bikes pitched as option for stranded commuters, *AM New York*, <https://tinyurl.com/y9v8rsdn>

18 Mayor & Council, *Complete George*, <https://tinyurl.com/y8mvgvs7>

19 Restoring the George, Bicycle Pedestrian Access, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/y8evmac6>

20 Capacity and Demand, *Complete George*, <http://tinyurl.com/jpcfphqr>

21 Safety, Litigation and the Demise of Cycling on the GWB, *Complete George*, <https://tinyurl.com/yd2fvoag>

22 Following the L-subway example, schedule repairs over the warmest months to reduce the public's exposure to the elements and minimize opportunities for additional weather-related outages. Partner with state and local DOTs to expand cyclist access to bridge and ferry crossings and to conduct outreach to raise awareness and reduce fear.

23 Sandy caused a Mini Bike Boom, *Transportation Nation*, <https://tinyurl.com/yalsj74u>

24 Between 2011 and 2016, the number of active adult New York cyclists grew 11.2% per year 828,00. From 2016 to 2017, bike share trips rose from 10 to 16 million. Cycling in New York City, 2018, *NACTO-NYCDOT*, p. 7, <https://tinyurl.com/hcu5yaz>

25 By that Game of Thrones allusion, I include periodic, widespread disruptions to transit systems over the coming decades, resulting from planned upgrades to the Port Authority Bus Terminal and Penn Station and rollout of positive train control cross NJ Transit. Also, unplanned weather or man-made events including early shut down of the Hudson rail tunnels and an extended delays in the hiring and training of NJ Transit train conductors.



Game of Thrones. Image HBO.

C o m p l e t e G e o r g e

Neile Weissman, completegeorge.org, neileweissman@gmail.com

Remarks to PANYNJ, 5/24/2018 - Tributaries

Chairman O'Toole. Director Cotton. Commissioners. Today, I would bring to your attention developments poised to significantly grow cycling across the region and, consequently, across its sole bike-able connector, the George Washington Bridge.

Bergen Parks Master Plan



The Bergen Parks Master Plan¹ would connect its parks via streets, trails and utility right of ways in order to form a County Greenway Network.

Developed by the Rutgers Center for Urban Environmental Sustainability, this project references Atlanta's Beltline.²

In concert with groups including the NY-NJ Trail Conference and Jersey Off Road Bike Association, Bergen County will seek to develop a model for the design and construction of sustainable hiking and biking trails within designated parks.

And by establishing a network of bikeways, the County would extend park

access to all of its municipalities. These include some of the most densely populated in the U.S. – many of which face a parkland deficit.

Harlem River Bridge Access

New York City DOT just announced a \$90 million program to expand bicycle-pedestrian capacity across seven Harlem River bridges connecting Manhattan and the Bronx.³

Its goal is to reduce the distance between bicycle crossings from every three miles to one mile, so that no detour would require more than a 10-minute ride.

Peak use across all the Harlem River bridges was 3900 cyclists per day in 2015.⁴ For comparison, the daily total for NYC's four East River Bridges is 20,000. That's up from 3000 per day 20 years ago, before DOT began a similarly dramatic expansion of access.⁵



Hastening the George's Obsolescence

The Bergen and NYC plans connect to, and extend, the East Coast Greenway⁶ and Empire State Trail,⁷ and help to realize the Regional Plan Association's vision of a 1650 mile Tri-State Trail Network.⁸

Together, they hold enormous potential to grow cycling across the region and to satisfy the public's desire for high-quality recreational space and for safe, cheap, efficient, sustainable and healthy modes of transport.

From a cyclist's perspective, they're flat out awesome.

However both plans will flow, like tributaries, to an already swollen river.

Unless the Agency upgrades its plans, their realization will only hasten the George's obsolescence as a cycling facility.

Notes

¹ Bergen County Parks Master Plan, *Rutgers Center for Urban Environmental Sustainability*, p. 139-145, 181-192, <https://tinyurl.com/ydx4xm6m>

² About the Atlanta Beltline, <https://tinyurl.com/ybfcflqv>

³ Connecting Communities, *NYC DOT/AECOM*, p. 3, <https://tinyurl.com/yc5ac9h2>

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 4.

⁵ In 2015, NYC DOT recorded GWB weekend use at 3700 cyclists per day - the equivalent of all the Harlem River bridges., *Capacity and Demand, Complete George*, <https://tinyurl.com/jpcfphq>

⁶ East Coast Greenway, <https://www.greenway.org>

⁷ Empire State Trail FAQ, *Parks & Trails New York*, <https://tinyurl.com/z64j55m>

⁸ "Creating an effective network also means improving major crossings between the greater region and NYC, including the Brooklyn and George Washington Bridges."; *Regional Plan Association*, <http://tinyurl.com/ydba4gk5>

C o m p l e t e G e o r g e

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Remarks to the NJTPA 9/10/18 (PANYNJ, 7/26/2018), "80 by 50"

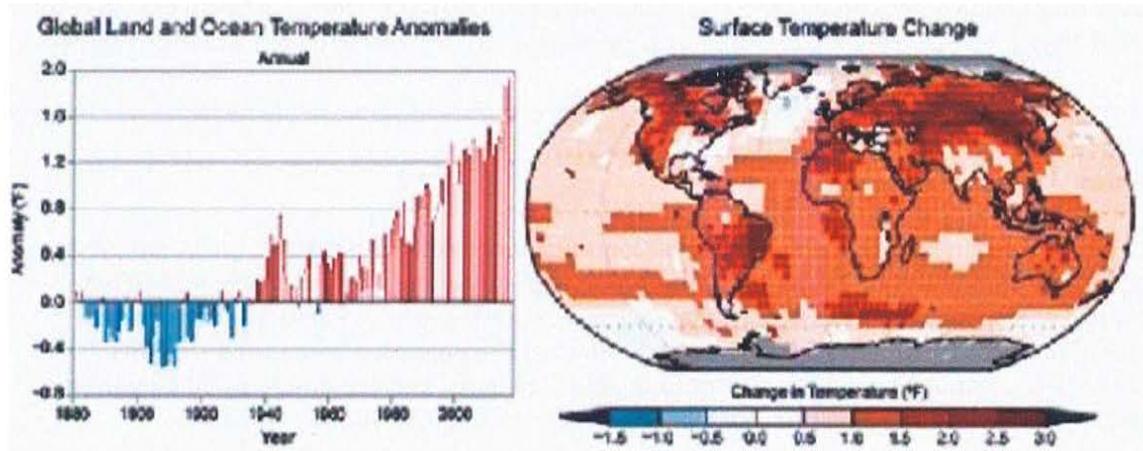
The Port Authority was founded a hundred years ago to coordinate travel between New York and New Jersey. If it is to continue for the next hundred years, it must accept the challenge of climate change, and to coordinate the states' transition to sustainable modes of transportation.

In 2008, it tried, resolving to reduce greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions from facilities, tenants and customers 80 percent by 2050.¹ But just two years later it gave up, declaring emissions of tenants and customers, 95% of total, beyond its "boundary of influence." The Agency further declined to inventory its emissions for years,² or quantify their impact beyond its own facilities.³

That's like Willie Sutton filing a 1040 and omitting miscellaneous income.

By 2015 we find total Agency emissions (facilities, tenants, customers) unchanged from 2006.⁴ Had it adhered to its "80 by 50" regimen it would have achieved a 28% reduction.⁵

A correlation has been established between the rise of temperatures and CO2 levels since the 1950s.⁶ So too the expansion of Port facilities and the growth of air and automotive travel across the region – which speaks to the PA's wherewithal to influence tenants and customers.



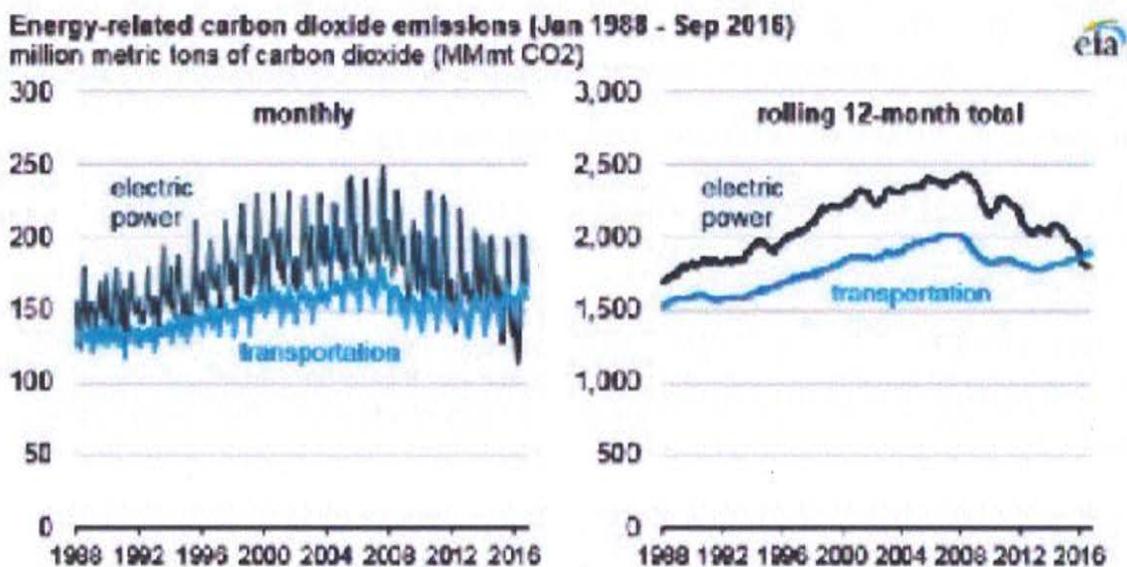
Images, NOAA.

The Agency's current Capital Plan⁷ strongly favors its heaviest GHG emitters – airports, terminals, bridges and tunnels – while underinvesting in systems, like PATH, that reduce emissions.

Proposals to expand PATH station capacity go largely unfunded.^{8 9} And emission reductions resulting from its extension to Newark Airport would be offset by the increase in air travel.¹⁰

Cycling, the most cost-effective means to reduce emissions, is categorically excluded.¹¹

In December 2015, PA Chairman Degnan declared environmental concerns "incidental" to the Agency's transportation mission.¹² His timing was unfortunate. In 2016, greenhouse emissions from the transportation sector surpassed power generation for the first time since the 1970's.



Images, U.S. Energy Information Agency.

In context, the Board of Public Utilities has undertaken an Energy Master Plan, which will include transportation.¹³ As may future iterations of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (“RGGI”).¹⁴ Both New York and New Jersey are signatories to the Transportation and Climate Initiative.¹⁵

Over the coming decades, the states must significantly realign their transportation priorities to meet their 80-by-50 obligations. So must the Port Authority if it is to remain a relevant player.

Notes

¹ “On March 27, 2008, the Board of Commissioners expanded the PA’s environmental policy to include a sustainability component that explicitly addresses the problem of climate change and ensures that the Agency maintains an aggressive posture in its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. **The cornerstone of the policy is a goal to reduce GHG emissions stemming from Port Authority facilities, tenants, and customers by 80 percent by 2050.**”, Air Quality and Emissions Reductions, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/ycefpve4>

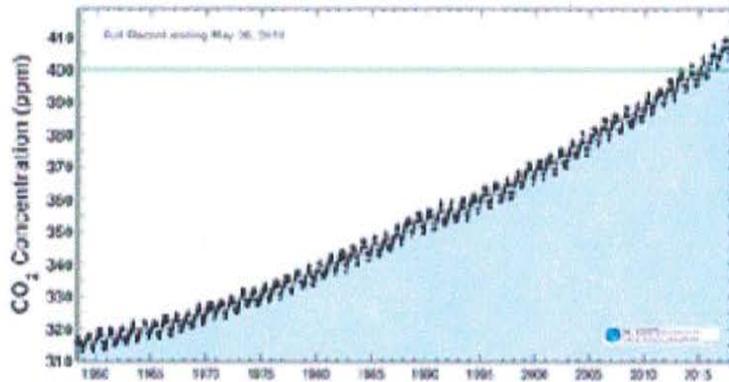
² “Scope 3 emissions (tenants and customers) will be reported every five years. Scope 1 and 2 inventories (PA facilities) will continue on an annual basis.” 2010 GHG and CAG Inventory, Executive Summary P.x, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/yddtsrjz>

³ “[Use of] airplanes, up to 3,000 feet. (Automotive) emissions based on vehicle volume, the roadway length of each facility, and the vehicle hours of delay in toll lane queues.”, Boundaries for each Department in the GHG Emissions Inventory, 2007 GHG and CAG Inventory, P. 4, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/yd8yrsu8>

⁴ Total PA GHG emissions in 2015 were 5.9 million metric tons, as compared to 5.8 million tons in 2006. Air Quality and Emissions Reductions, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/ycefpve4>

⁵ To put the PA on target to reach its 80% target by 2050 of 1.2 million tons, it would have to reduce emissions by 3.6% per year to 4.2 million tons by 2015. Discount Rate and Compound Interest Calculators, *Moneychimp*, <https://tinyurl.com/4ghj6>, <https://tinyurl.com/46syn>

6 “The Keeling Curve plots the ongoing change in concentration of carbon dioxide in Earth’s atmosphere since the 1950s, based on continuous measurements taken at the Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii that began under the supervision of Charles David Keeling. The most recent publicized measurement on 5/26/18 is 411.89 parts per million.” *Wikipedia*, <https://tinyurl.com/yalroak3>



Keeling Curve. Image, Wikipedia.

7 2017-2026 PA Capital Plan, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/yckjvmvc>

8 Out of \$32.2 billion, the allocation to PATH is \$4.3 billion. Of that, \$1.0 billion is Sandy Recovery funds and \$1.7 billion is to extend access to Newark Airport., *Ibid*.

9 “The (Newark-WTC) 10-Car Program would likely not be operational until 2028 if approved today. ... Another potential initiative, the Hoboken-WTC 8-Car Program with an estimated cost of \$550 million, is not currently under consideration.” *Trans-Hudson Commuting Capacity Study, Appendix B Multi-Modal Strategies, 2016, pp. 6-8, PANYNJ*, <http://tinyurl.com/y7ejuqz>

10 The Need To Increase Travel Options to Newark Liberty International Airport – PATH Extension Scoping Document, Section 2.5.3, 2017, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/y85xlvrn>

11 “[The Bicycle Master Plan’s] recommendations are wholly independent of the funding and prioritization decisions outlined in the agency’s Capital Plan.”, *Bicycle Master Plan, 2017, PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/ycnaac8k>

12 “The [Sustainability Report] itself in my mind confuses that core mission by elevating other matters to the status of objectives. **In my mind sustainability has got to be incidental to be consistent with, and foster, the core mission.**”, PA Chairman John Degnan, 12/10/15 PA Board meeting, *PANYNJ Videos*, <https://tinyurl.com/znlnpjq>

13 BPU Goes Giddyap as Murphy Wants NJ on Fast Track to Clean Energy, *NJ Spotlight*, <https://tinyurl.com/y8uhpdz4>

14 New Regional Initiative, RGGI for the Transportation Sector, *NJ Spotlight*, <https://tinyurl.com/y7knty5>

15 Declaration of Intent, *Transportation & Climate Initiative*, <https://tinyurl.com/y87pm5fy>

C o m p l e t e G e o r g e

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Remarks to NJTPA 1/14/2019 (PANYNJ, 12/13/2018) - Two Degree World

The paradox of climate change is that those who emit greenhouse gases have little incentive to reduce the significant costs they impose on future generations.¹

To address this dilemma, Bank of England President Mark Carney, in a speech to Lloyds of London, proposed the concept of a “carbon budget” – one that the world could “afford” – that would hold temperature increases to two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.²

Mr. Carney cautioned, however, that organizations adapting to a “2-degree world,” should prepare to face three channels of risk: physical, liability and transitional. I believe the Authority is starkly vulnerable to all three and needs to overhaul itself within the timeframe of its current capital plan.

Physical Risk

Physical risk results from climate-and-weather events that damage property or disrupt trade. It threatens Authority assets despite the measures it has implemented.^{3 4}

And even if Authority assets are “hardened,” access to them will be threatened as events increase in frequency and intensity. Use patterns, growth trends, and consequently, revenue streams, will all be affected.^{5 6}

Liability Risk

Liability risk arises when parties who have suffered loss or damage seek compensation from those they hold responsible.

While the Agency may not like the characterization, it *is* in the fossil fuel business.^{7 8}

That case is supported by its capital allocation, revenue streams and historic support for car travel and aviation.^{9 10 11 12}

2017 Operating Revenues by Business Segment



Image PANYNJ.

Transition Risk

Transition risk occurs when movement towards a low-carbon economy triggers a repricing of assets. Energy producers who need to write down reserves are one class of a business-at-risk.¹³ Car companies transitioning away from domestic sedan production are another.^{14 15}

Triggers for re-pricing include legal challenge,¹⁶ legislation (carbon tax, congestion pricing), regulatory guidance (EPA), executive order and cabinet appointment (“Energy Secretary Ocasio-Cortez”). Also, extreme weather events and weather-induced infrastructure failure.¹⁷

Success is Failure

Mr. Carney further cautions that “success is failure.” Meaning that rapid transition to a two-degree world could trigger a sudden, major collapse of asset value.¹⁸

He advises businesses-at-risk to disclose exposure, develop a mitigation plan and establish a timetable for implementation.¹⁹

Revisit the Ten-Year Capital Plan

The Authority’s current Ten-Year Capital Plan heavily weights fossil fuel-oriented activities: aviation and automotive. Although such assets generate the bulk of Authority revenues, they are also the ones most at risk.

Following Mr. Carney’s advice, the Agency would be wise to rebalance its portfolio with assets whose growth in use would reduce emissions: mass transit (PATH, Gateway) and active transportation (paths on bridges, bike share systems and bike parking at transit hubs).

Their value will only increase as the region accelerates towards a low-carbon economy²⁰ and new channels of funding come online.²¹

Notes

¹ “The horizon for monetary policy extends out two to three years. For financial stability it is a bit longer, but typically only to the outer boundaries of the credit cycle – about a decade. In other words, once climate change becomes a defining issue for financial stability, it may already be too late.”, 2015 Address to Lloyds of London: Breaking the Tragedy of the Horizon – Climate Change and Financial Stability, Mark Carney, *Bank of London*, p. 4, <https://tinyurl.com/yapkmear>

² “The desirability of restricting climate change to 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels leads to the notion of a carbon ‘budget.’ Such a budget highlights the consequences of inaction today for the scale of reaction required tomorrow.”, *Ibid*, p. 5

³ Climate Resilience Design Guidelines, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/yaurhc8j>

⁴ “The region’s three major airports, plus its major business jetport, are affected by sea level rise (“SLR”) by varying degrees, and all are affected by storm surge. Teterboro faces potential inundation with as little as three feet of SLR. EWR and LGA withstand three feet but are vulnerable to six feet. JFK is able to withstand both threes and six feet, but will need to be hardened for future storm surges., *Upgrading to World Class, The Future of the Region’s Airports Revisited*, p.20, *Regional Plan Association*, <https://tinyurl.com/ybuvzf99>

⁵ Fourth National Climate Assessment (Northeast), *U.S. Global Change Research Program*, <https://tinyurl.com/ybfnk6d3>

⁶ “Climate change can cause operational disruptions that lead to a decrease in business activities and revenue. For example, higher temperatures alter airplanes’ aerodynamic performance and lead to a need for longer runways. In the face of consistently higher temperatures, airlines may seek airports with longer runways, shifting revenue from those that cannot provide the necessary facilities.”, *Lenders’ Guide for Considering Climate Risk in Infrastructure Investments, 427MT*, <https://tinyurl.com/ycn9zuvw>

⁷ “Volkswagen Emissions Scandal” aka “dieselgate”, *Wikipedia*, <https://tinyurl.com/p65oxrz>

⁸ “Washington Heights is one of the most polluted areas in the City.” ... “The most important transportation issue in CB12M is the traffic flow. During the peak hours we face traffic jams on the main streets. CB12M has the most bridges connecting Manhattan with the Bronx over the Harlem River and to New Jersey over the Hudson River.”, *Statement of Community District Needs, Manhattan Community Board #12*, p. 86, 129, <https://tinyurl.com/y77zhmpr>

⁹ Out of \$32.2 billion total, the allocation to PATH is \$4.3 billion. Of that, \$1.0 billion is Sandy Recovery funds and \$1.7 billion is to extend PATH access to Newark Airport, 2017-2026 PA Capital Plan, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/yckjvmvc>

¹⁰ 2017 Annual Report, *PANYNJ*, <https://tinyurl.com/yd2zsf3>

¹¹ In 1931, 5.5 million cars crossed the GWB. In 2016, it was 103 million., *Wikipedia*, <https://tinyurl.com/5x4naq>

¹² PA Airports Set New Record with 132.6 million Passengers Traveling in 2017, *New Jersey Business*, <https://tinyurl.com/y8rsfmh6>

¹³ “Cases like Arch Coal and Peabody Energy – where it is alleged that the directors of corporate pension schemes failed in their fiduciary duties by not considering financial risks driven at least in part by climate change – illustrate the potential for long-tail risks to be significant, uncertain and non-linear.”, *Breaking the Tragedy of the Horizon*, p. 10

¹⁴ GM's job cuts are another sign of a future with fewer cars, *Wired*, <https://tinyurl.com/yb2qupja>

¹⁵ Ford Smart Mobility, LLC established to develop, invest in mobility services; Jim Hackett named subsidiary Chairman, *Ford Media Center*, <https://tinyurl.com/j24sxx4>

¹⁶ *Juliana v. United States, U.S. District Court, District of Oregon*, <https://tinyurl.com/hfaukeh>

¹⁷ This past summer, a loose electrical bracket hanging from the roof of a Hudson rail tunnel pierced the passenger compartment of two trains. Had the incident resulted in loss of life, the tunnels would have been closed immediately, for an extended period., *Where did the metal pole come from that punctured an NJ Transit train? nj.com*, <https://tinyurl.com/y9xfns6a>

¹⁸ “The speed at which such repricing occurs is uncertain and could be decisive for financial stability. ... Risks will be minimized if the transition begins early and follows a predictable path, thereby helping the market anticipate the transition to a 2 degree world.”, *Breaking the Tragedy of the Horizon*, p.6.

¹⁹ “The key factor that’s missing is urgency,” Feltmate declares. “Every single day we don’t adapt is a day we don’t have. People think we have the luxury of time to embrace adaptation, but the reality is the extreme weather is here now.”, *The fantasy of two degrees and why we may have to adapt to climate change, National Observer*, <https://tinyurl.com/ybb4a5x6>

²⁰ ‘We are in trouble.’ Global carbon emissions reached a record high in 2018., *Washington Post*, <https://tinyurl.com/ybx3wh2q>

²¹ “New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli today announced a \$3 billion increase to the New York State Common Retirement Fund’s (Fund) Sustainable Investment Program, raising its total commitment to \$10 billion.”, *Ceres*, <https://tinyurl.com/yawerra3>

Middlesex County Transportation Coordinating Committee Resolution urging the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to widen the George Washington Bridge's sidewalks

Whereas, the George Washington Bridge's sidewalks are the only connection across the Hudson River between New York City and New Jersey for pedestrians, runners, and bicyclists; and

Whereas, the paths are heavily used, with an average of 1,700 cyclists and 900 pedestrians crossing each day; and

Whereas, the sidewalks are ten feet wide except where the bridge's suspender ropes pass through, where they are less than seven feet wide; and

Whereas, according to Federal Highway Administration guidelines, shared-use paths should be at least ten feet wide and up to fourteen feet wide if they are heavily used; and

Whereas, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is planning an extensive renovation that will replace all the bridge's suspender ropes beginning in 2017 and lasting until 2024; and

Whereas, as part of the project, the sidewalks will be replaced and new ramps that will provide access to the sidewalks will be constructed, but the sidewalks will not be widened; and

Whereas, New York City has made efforts in recent years to make its roadways safer and more convenient for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly through the Vision Zero street safety initiative and the expansion of the bicycle lane network; and

Whereas, the Port Authority's own Bicycle Policy states that its goals are to integrate "improved bicycle access" and "safe bicycle lanes," and to "promote the safe co - existence of motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians" at its facilities; and

Whereas, the width of the bridge's sidewalks does not meet federal standards for high-use pedestrian and bicycle paths, and

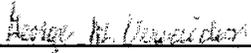
Whereas, the George Washington Bridge pedestrian and bicycle paths also serve as a critical link across the Hudson River between New York and New Jersey for the East Coast Greenway project which runs through Middlesex County as well as through other parts of northern and central New Jersey; and

Whereas, the planned renovation project presents a unique opportunity to build sidewalks that would be able to accommodate safely and comfortably the increasing number of pedestrians and bicyclists expected to use the bridge in the decades to come;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Middlesex County Transportation Coordinating Committee calls upon the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to widen the George Washington Bridge's sidewalks in accordance with AASHTO standards;

Be It Further Resolved, that copies of this resolution be sent to the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Governor Philip Murphy and Governor Andrew Cuomo, and the East Coast Greenway Alliance.

Attest:



George M. Ververides
Director, Office of Planning
February 26, 2019



Tom Vigna, Acting Chairman
Middlesex County
Transportation Coordinating Committee