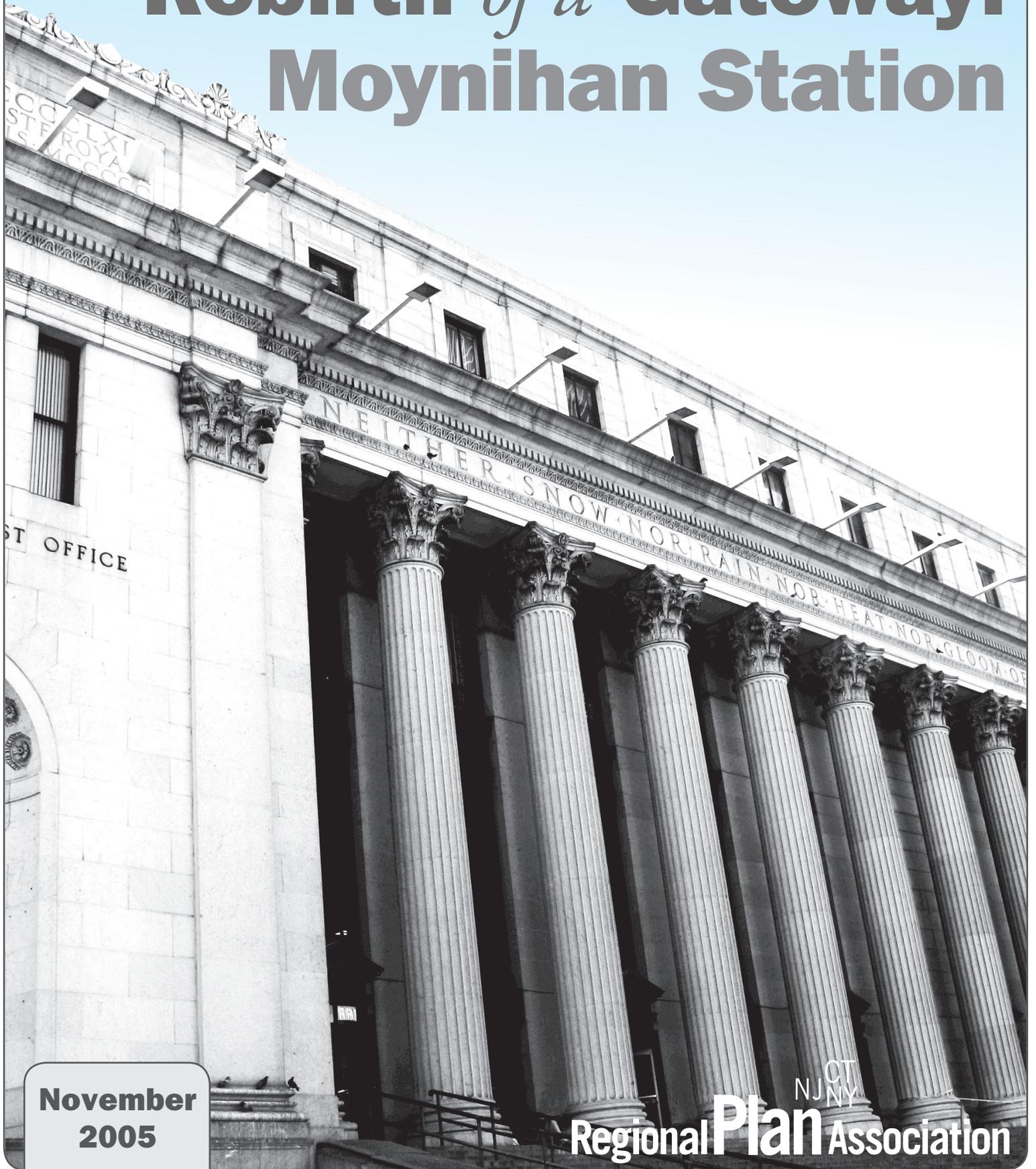


# Rebirth *of a* Gateway: Moynihan Station



**November  
2005**

Regional **Plan** Association

[www.moynihanstation.org](http://www.moynihanstation.org)

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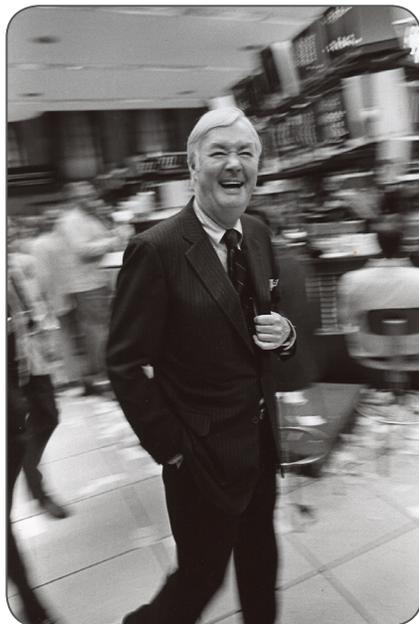
# Foreword

**D**aniel Patrick Moynihan, my late father and for 24 years New York's Senator, spent over a decade championing a modern Pennsylvania Station for New York City. As a child during the Great Depression, he sold newspapers and shined shoes in the old Penn Station. As a Senator, he secured federal, state and city funds and guided an initial architectural plan to rebuild the station in the adjacent James A. Farley Post Office. Following Moynihan's death in 2003, Senator Charles E. Schumer and Governor George E. Pataki proposed re-naming the facility Moynihan Station to honor the Senator from Hell's Kitchen.

This final, unfinished piece of my father's legacy unites landmark preservation, infrastructure, urban planning, transportation policy, architecture, design and economic development in service to the common good. It is a unique public works project that will yield tangible benefits for every citizen of our region. And it will revive a critical swath of midtown Manhattan, for too long blighted by the destruction of the original Penn Station some forty years ago.

The decision to raze Penn Station was made in private boardrooms and finalized by the City Planning Commission. Many alarmed citizens protested with

vigor and eloquence, but the commission ruled in favor of the proposed value, not the existing value of the site. The civic groups were swiftly defeated and on October 28th, 1963, a rainy Monday morning, the destruction of Penn Station commenced. It took a full three years to tear down the marble and granite masterpiece that Charles McKim had built to last forever. Its Doric columns, sculpted angels and Jules Guerin murals were hastily tossed into a New Jersey swamp and soon thereafter pulverized into dust. Ada Louise Huxtable wrote in the New York Times: "Tossed into the Secaucus graveyard are about twenty-five centuries of classical culture and the standards of style, elegance and grandeur that it gave to the dreams and constructions of Western man." Penn Station was only 56 years old.



**Senator Moynihan: The Quintessential New Yorker**

And so for the past four decades, our visitors and fellow citizens have entered America's greatest city not through a glorious replica of the Baths of Caracalla, or any kind of sane, functional thoroughfare, but through "the chill, bleak anonymity of the twentieth century transit catacombs (ancient catacombs softened even death with frescoes)," decried Huxtable.

A walk down 33rd and 8th is a grim reminder that New Yorkers are still paying a high price for the loss

of that civic space and architectural masterpiece. But redemption lies across the street in the Farley Building, a landmark also designed by McKim, Meade and White. Moynihan Station will allow passengers to move through an organized, elegant public space. Moynihan Station will expand capacity in the most heavily used transit hub in the Tri-State rail network and strengthen a critical link between downstate and upstate New York. Moynihan Station will catalyze development of Manhattan's Far West Side, allowing homes and businesses to rise in neighborhoods that have suffered decades of neglect. And Moynihan Station will restore a grand gateway to the nation in our indispensable city, New York. As Senator Moynihan often said, money used for infrastructure isn't spending, it's investing.

Today, we can be more hopeful than at any time for the fulfillment of my father's vision. The selection of the development team of Related Companies and Vornado Realty Trust by the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC), as announced in July 2005 by Governor Pataki, Mayor Bloomberg and ESDC Chairman Charles Gargano, has put the project over a critical threshold. But after years of delays and false starts, we cannot let optimism slip into complacency. Federal funds that are left too long unspent can be rescinded at any time. We face an out-of-control federal deficit, exacerbated by the costs of the Iraq war and Hurricane Katrina's aftermath. We must also be vigilant about what Senator Schumer calls our present "culture of inertia". In spite of broad support for the project among our political leaders, New York has a singular knack for inventing new ways of abandoning great public works.

Senator Moynihan wrote in his book *Counting our Blessings*: "We are a blessed people, but not invincibly elect. We must make our future as we did our past." Moynihan Station has the support of New York's Senators, Congressional delegation, Mayor and Governor. It has the support of our fellow citizens. And now it has a talented, vigorous development team. This is a chance for civic redemption that won't come again. We lost Penn Station once before. Let's not lose it again.

**Maura Moynihan**  
Senior Fellow, Regional Plan Association & Friends of Moynihan Station

Through it (Penn Station) one entered the city like a God. One scuttles in now like a rat.

- Professor Vincent Scully

# The Past, Present and Future of Penn Station

Top to bottom: Original Penn Station, facing 7th Avenue; The escalator entrance under Madison Square Garden; a rendering of the new Moynihan Station

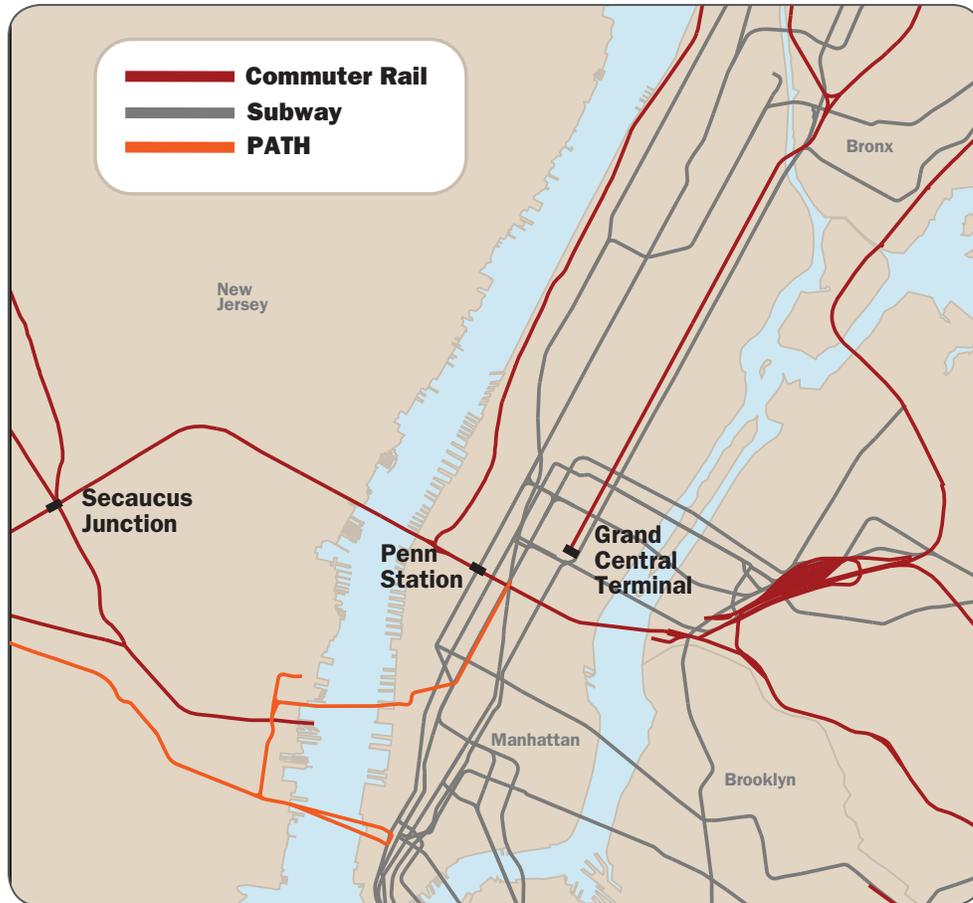


# A Grand Gateway & Catalyst

**P**enn Station is the most heavily trafficked transport hub in North America. It is also a design disaster and a logistical failure, justly condemned by transportation experts and urban planners as a monument to bad planning. Moynihan Station will not only restore much of what was lost with the demolition of the old Penn Station in 1963, it will also greatly enrich the value of this hub as a gateway to the Tri-State region and will become a catalyst for development of the Far West Side of Manhattan.

**Transportation Gateway:** Penn Station is at the nexus of the vast regional rail transit network. The two commuter rail systems of the Long Island Rail Road and NJ Transit converge there, Amtrak runs to and through it, and 14 New York City subway lines and two PATH lines are either adjacent to it or no more than one block away.

## The regional transit context for Penn Station



The intercity rail system in the entire Northeast brings all of its trains there, and two of the Region's three airports – Kennedy and Newark – have a direct ride using AirTrain and a commuter rail line. Moynihan Station will relieve the overcrowding that chokes the existing facility, reducing delays in exiting platforms by as much as a third. It will separate commuter rail and inter-city train travel, and allow passengers to move in a less congested, better organized space.

## Catalyst for Manhattan's Far West Side:

Moynihan Station will be an engine for the rezoned Far West Side. The Governor and the Mayor have forecast that the project will generate over 3,000 permanent jobs just from station activities alone. The new station will also draw commuters, visitors and New York residents alike with quality boutiques, bistros, and other services, just as the revived Grand Central Terminal and Union Station have proven that mixed use inter-modal transport hubs are also magnets for dollars and visitors. This dynamic public

space will link Midtown to the developing blocks to the west, increasing values and accelerating new office, retail and residential development.

**Security:** The 2004 Madrid and 2005 London bombings have tragically demonstrated that mass transit infrastructure is at constant risk of terrorist attack. The present Penn Station is an overcrowded warren of poorly maintained tunnels with limited exit routes. Moynihan Station will vastly improve the transportation system's security with additional egress points and wider and better lit corridors and platforms. Architectural plans for the new facility also include state-of-the-art ventilation and evacuation systems.

**Regional Amenity:** Moynihan Station will yield great benefits for the entire Tri-State region. New Jersey Transit's planned passenger rail tunnel under the Hudson River will double the number of people entering Manhattan from the west by rail. This and other rail services that could be added over time will expand the benefits of Moynihan Station to more residents of the region.

**Civic Redemption and Landmark Preservation:** Moynihan Station is a rare chance for civic redemption that will re-create a grand gateway for residents and visitors to our city. It will reincarnate an underutilized, 1911

From left: Maura Moynihan, the Dalai Lama and Mayor Michael Bloomberg at the Farley Post Office



landmark structure that at present sits empty and silent in the midst of Manhattan. As Senator Moynihan noted: “Where else but in New York could you tear down a beaux arts masterpiece and find another one across the street, built by the same architects?”

Senators Schumer and Clinton, Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg have all voiced unanimous support for the project. On July 18, 2005, the Empire State Development Corporation, in charge of the project and headed by Chairman Charles Gargano, announced the selected development team – Related Companies and Vornado Realty Trust – and displayed new architectural designs by Hellmuth, Obata & Kassabaum in cooperation with James Carpenter Design Associates. On July 29th, 2005, Senator Charles E. Schumer and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton announced that the new

Where Penn Station offers only limited retail and food options, Moynihan Station will house a variety of restaurants and retail stores targeted to commuters and the area’s many office workers. Where the current facility has a limited number of platform exits and a poor ventilation system, Moynihan Station will dramatically increase egress points from the train platforms and improve ventilation in case of fire or terrorist attack.

The project utilizes the entire Farley Building west of the walk-in Post Office facility off Eighth Avenue, which will remain open. The centerpiece of the project will be a new 300,000 square foot train station providing access to each of the eleven train platforms that currently serve Penn Station. The Station will feature a spacious new Intermodal Hall under an elegant glass ceiling that runs mid-block from the southern end of the station to the northern end. The station will include a new full-service pas-



up from the rail platforms, Moynihan Station will be accessible from the western side of all eleven tracks at a total of more than 30 escalators, elevators and stairwells. The west end concourse currently used by Long Island Rail Road will be widened and extended across all of the platforms to provide greater mobility, services and access to the existing station and the subway. These concourses will increase the passenger circulation capacity of Penn Station significantly.

In addition to the train station itself, Moynihan Station will include 850,000 square feet of commercial and retail space. This will include 100,000 square feet of transit-oriented retail,

**Below Left: Proposed platform in new Moynihan Station; Below Right: Proposed Hall of Moynihan Station; Above: Entrance to the old Penn Station**



federal transportation bill includes \$15 million for Moynihan Station, in addition to the funds already secured by the late Senator Moynihan.

## Project Description

Broadly defined, Moynihan Station is the transformation of the current Farley Post Office Building into a world-class intermodal transit facility and retail/commercial complex. Moynihan Station will not replace the existing Penn Station, but rather act as a complement designed to solve many of the existing station’s problems. Where Penn Station is cramped by low ceilings and a lack of natural light, Moynihan Station will feature an abundance of light and public space.

senger station for New Jersey Transit, information and ticketing for Long Island Rail Road and services to speed access to the region’s airports. While Amtrak currently does not plan to offer ticketing or information in the new station, its passengers can still access the platforms from Moynihan and the design allows for greater Amtrak participation in the future.

From the street, the station will be accessible from the west side of Eighth Avenue (on either side of the Post Office lobby), and from Ninth Avenue via a retail-lined pedestrian concourse, but the main entrances will be mid-block between 8th and 9th avenues on 31st and 33rd streets. These entrances will bring pedestrians into the Intermodal Hall. Coming

such as news stands, coffee shops and convenience stores. The western portion of the site provides space for two potential large scale or destination retail stores, with room both on the ground level and the upper floors of the complex. A proposed boutique hotel would have rooms on the upper floors across the facility and will likely also offer meeting rooms. Additionally, one million square feet of air rights can be used to develop space in the vicinity of the station. While there had been discussion of utilizing these air rights in a tower above the Farley Building, the plan put forward by Related and Vornado protects the landmark building and proposes to move the air rights to an adjacent site.

# Transportation Benefits

The primary purpose of a rail transit center is to facilitate the safe, efficient flow of trains and passengers in a comfortable environment. Today, the more than 400,000 passengers who use Penn Station are faced with a series of problems as they make their way from their trains to the neighboring streets and back again, or connect to other modes of transportation. The daily experience is unpleasant. It begins with the chore of leaving the train and platform, often more or less simultaneously with 1,000 or more fellow passengers. Most platforms are narrow and are constrained further by the very stairs and escalators intended to carry the riders upwards. The capacity of these stairs and escalators is often insufficient to accomplish their intended purpose without the formation of what seems like endless queuing in a dimly lit, claustrophobic environment. The process also has its effect on train operations as unloading trains require extra time in the station as passengers leave the train and attempt to squeeze onto platforms.

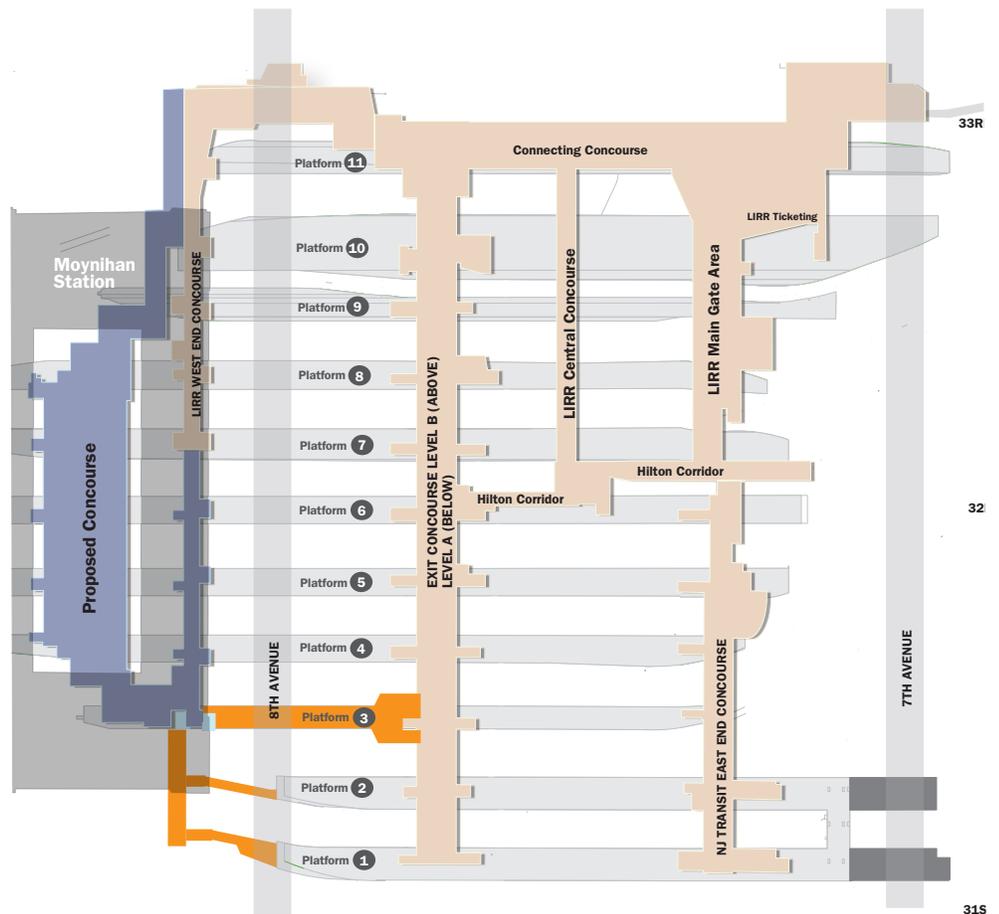
## Track and Platform Configuration

The diagram to the right shows the relationship between egress points and corridors in Penn Station today. The diagram also shows potential additions, which will be discussed later. There are eleven platforms in Penn Station serving 21 tracks:

- Tracks 1 through 4 (platforms 1 and 2) are used exclusively by New Jersey Transit (NJT)
- Tracks 5 through 12 (platforms 3 through 6) are used by both NJT and Amtrak
- Tracks 13 through 17 (platforms 7 through 9) are used by NJT, the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) and Amtrak
- Tracks 18 to 21 (platforms 10 through 11) are used exclusively by the LIRR.

Today, platforms 1 through 6 provide exits into two corridors: the central corridor centered below the main waiting area in Penn Station about 300 feet east of Eighth Avenue, and the NJT East End Corridor about 200 feet west of Seventh Avenue. Platforms 7 through 11 have exits leading to three corridors: the central corridor, and the LIRR Main Gate area aligned with the NJT East End corridor. While platforms 7 through 11 connect to the West End Corridor located just west of Eighth Avenue, providing the potential to connect directly to Moynihan Station, platforms 1 through 6 do not.

Once Moynihan Station is complete the



Above: Layout of current Penn station with the Moynihan Station expansion

north-south corridor west of Eighth Avenue that now serves platforms 7 through 11 will be extended to the south over platforms 3 through 6, which will then make it possible to construct added exits to those platforms and new exits for platforms 1 and 2 into an extended corridor which would be built by NJT. These additions are shown in the diagram, with the Moynihan-built corridors shown in blue and the additions by NJT shown in orange.

## Existing Egress Conditions

A detailed analysis of today's egress conditions for NJT trains was performed to understand the effects of these improvements. Morning peak hour passenger counts from the fourth quarter of 2004 were

used along with typical platform assignments obtained from NJT. The highest consecutive 60 minutes used here runs from 7:34 AM to 8:33 AM. Passengers departing the platforms were assigned to stairways and escalators based on information contained in a consultant report done for NJT's Access to the Region's Core Project. Capacities for the stairways used in this report were modified downward by a factor of 0.83 to reflect the capacity per foot of width of 12 persons per minute found in earlier work by RPA, rather than the 14.4 persons per minute per foot assumed in the report for NJT. With these data the total and average time that passengers wait to leave the platforms was calculated for each

**Table 1**

Morning Peak Hour Platform Delays at Four Penn Station Platforms: Today							
Platform	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Passengers	2,839	1,706	1,222	5,169	3,863	3,448	18,247
Average delay, minutes	0.88	0.89	2.04	1.64	1.81	1.59	1.50
Total delay, minutes	2,498	1,525	2,489	8,490	6,990	5,466	27,457
Longest delay, minutes	3.36	2.49	8.76	7.08	5.38	5.54	8.76

**Table 2**

2010 Morning Peak Hour Platform Delays at Six Penn Station Platforms WITHOUT Added Egress Provided by Moynihan Station							
Platforms	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Passengers	3,535	2,124	1,463	6,435	4,809	4,298	22,664
Average delay, minutes	1.10	1.11	2.59	2.04	2.25	1.96	1.87
Total delay, minutes	3,872	2,363	3,783	13,159	10,835	8,403	42,415
Longest delay, minutes	4.55	3.83	10.91	7.70	7.14	6.78	10.91

**Table 3**

2010 Morning Peak Hour Platform Delays at Six Penn Station Platforms WITH Added Egress Provided by Moynihan Station							
Platforms	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Passengers	3,535	2,124	1,463	6,435	4,809	4,298	22,664
Avg. delay, minutes	0.91	0.97	1.76	1.44	1.58	1.36	1.20
Total delay, minutes	3,220	2,064	2,573	9,259	7,581	5,833	27,309
Longest delay, minutes	3.84	3.37	8.32	5.75	5.24	5.01	8.32

**Table 4**

2025 Morning Peak Hour Platform Delays at Six Penn Station Platforms WITHOUT Added Egress Provided by Moynihan Station Assuming New Station is Built at 34th Street and Seventh Avenue							
Platforms	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Passengers	3,245	1,950	1,363	5,908	4,415	3,952	20,834
Average delay, minutes	0.99	1.07	2.24	1.84	2.11	1.81	1.71
Total delay, minutes	3,209	2,094	3,049	10,871	9,325	7,136	35,685
	3.68	2.67	9.51	7.73	6.53	5.93	9.51

**Table 5**

2025 Morning Peak Hour Platform Delays at Six Penn Station Platforms WITH Added Egress Provided by Moynihan Station Assuming New Station is Built at 34th Street and 7th Avenue							
Platforms	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Passengers	3,245	1,950	1,363	5,908	4,415	3,952	20,834
Average delay, minutes	0.84	0.89	1.60	1.32	1.45	1.25	1.24
Total delay, minutes	2,716	1,739	2,183	7,804	6,390	4,939	25,771
Longest delay, minutes	3.40	2.50	7.63	6.04	5.03	4.60	7.63

**Table 6**

	2010			2025	
	2004	Without Moynihan Station	With Moynihan Station	Without Moynihan Station	With Moynihan Station
Passengers	18,247	22,664	22,664	20,834	20,834
Average delay, minutes	1.50	1.87	1.20	1.71	1.24
Total delay, minutes	27,457	42,414	27,309	35,685	25,771
Total delay, hours	458	707	455	595	430

platform for the typical peak hour. These results are summarized in Table 1 (see the previous page for all tables).

As Table 1 shows, the delays average about 1 ½ minutes, but vary widely by platform. The longest delays, defined as the time that the last passenger will reach an escalator or stairway, are also shown in Table 1 for each platform, with times ranging from 2 ½ minutes to almost 9 minutes. Considerable variations are due largely to the uneven loading of stairways and escalators on some platforms, a result of their placement and to the desire of passengers to exit disproportionately at the more easterly exits, since more riders are destined for points from Seventh Avenue east. The accumulative delay over the one hour is estimated at 27,500 minutes, or about 460 hours. Added, but a lesser intensity of delays, will occur at times other than the peak hour but are not calculated here.

### **Future Conditions, With and Without Moynihan Station**

With projected growth of passenger volumes into Penn Station it can be expected that egress conditions on platforms will deteriorate. To test this and to estimate the extent to which added egress made possible by Moynihan station can ease the problem, the analysis summarized in Table 1 was first carried forward assuming projected passenger growth to 2010, first without and then with Moynihan Station and its corridors connected to Penn Station in place.

NJT has projected the peak hour passenger volumes to surpass 38,000 by 2025. At a constant annual rate of growth from 2004 to 2025 this volume would reach 23,300 by 2010. This growth rate was applied to NJT trains for the 2010 analysis, whose results are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

With the expected growth in passenger traffic, and in the absence of any added capacity to leave the platforms, delays leaving the platform will inevitably grow. Delays averaging 1 ½ today will approach an average of 2 minutes. Total delays of 42,500 minutes, or over 700 hours, will expand the commute times for almost 23,000 riders.

Some passengers could take as long as 11 minutes to clear the platform. Moynihan Station, with improvements to all six platforms, will cut expected delays to less than those that exist today, as shown in Table 3. Average delays will be only about one minute and 12 seconds, and accumulated delays would be about 27,000, about

450 hours, or approximately what they are today but spread over about 25 percent more riders. Still some waits will be quite long; platform 3 in particular will still have some passengers requiring 8 minutes or more to clear the platform.

In sum, in 2010 about 15,000 more minutes or 250 hours of delay would occur without the egress improvements incorporated into Moynihan Station.

What would happen further into the future as rail ridership continues to grow? To test this, the projected morning peak hour NJT traffic of 38,000 was assigned to trains and platforms. Even with the expected capacity increases from the recent NJT purchase of bi-level cars, which have the capacity to carry 1,360 passengers, 17 of the 21 peak hour trains would have their capacity exceeded, some by 50 percent or more. Thus, any analysis of egress is moot, since the trains would be unable to carry the projected traffic. If they were, total delays would swell to 2,100 hours in the peak hour and the longest queue on the platform could rise to 18 minutes!

### **Impact of a New Rail Tunnel**

These data further highlight the need for the proposed new rail tunnel under the Hudson and into the Penn Station area with its first station centered on 34th Street and Seventh Avenue. NJT has estimated that with the new tunnel and station, the 38,000 peak hour traffic would be divided almost evenly between the existing Penn Station and the new station, with some 20,500 arriving at the former during the peak hour. Using this estimate, and allowing for some shift in the distribution to some exits westward, the impact of having or not having Moynihan Station and its platform egress improvements in place were estimated for 2025 and are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

With only about 2,000 more NJT passengers in the peak hour using Penn Station than today, the shift of passengers to the new tunnel helps to keep the egress problem to only slightly worse than it is today; average delay is 1.7 minutes compared to 1.5 minutes today. Still the delays total about 36,000 minutes, or 600 hours in the peak hour.

Table 5 shows the effect of the Moynihan egress improvements. Average and total delays are sliced by 1/3. Average delays fall considerably below today's to about 1 minute and 15 seconds, total delays are reduced to about 26,000 minutes or about 455 hours, and the longest clear time is reduced too.

### **Summary**

The results for Tables 1-5 are summarized in Table 6. They demonstrate the substantial improvement that Moynihan Station will make in reducing the

excessive delays that passengers experience, delays that would worsen considerably in the future without the station. This improvement in passenger flows will also improve the efficiency of train operations, and establish the new Moynihan-Penn Station hub as a central node in both the commuter and intercity rail networks.

- By 2010, average peak hour delays in exiting from the train platforms would be reduced by more than a third with Moynihan Station, from 1.9 minutes to 1.2 minutes. The longest waiting times would be reduced from nearly 11 minutes to about 8.3 minutes, and total delays for the peak hour would decline from 707 hours to 455 hours.
- By 2025, assuming the completion of a new Trans-Hudson tunnel, Moynihan Station would reduce average peak hour delays from 1.7 minutes to 1.2 minutes. The longest waiting times would decline from 9.5 to 7.6 minutes, and total delays from 595 hours to 430 hours.
- Delays would also be reduced in the rest of the peak period and at other times of the day, although the level of use and times of delay are not as great.
- Passengers will be able to exit the station a block farther west, at Ninth Avenue, an option that will become increasingly important as the Far West Side redevelops.
- Train delays could be reduced, since trains would not have to spend as much time unloading passengers, freeing up platform space for trains to enter the station. This could also make it possible to run additional trains in the peak hour.
- The risk of both major and minor service disruptions, whether due to breakdowns, natural disasters or terrorist acts, would be greatly reduced with the additional station and expanded number of stairways, escalators and elevators. Emergency egress would also be improved, both because of the number of exit points and improved design and lighting throughout the station.
- The prospect of additional services, including airport access, expanded inter-city rail or new commuter rail, would be greatly expanded by Moynihan Station. Along with the improved passenger environment and amenities, these services would further solidify this West Side transportation hub as a key node in the Northeast corridor and the Tri-State region's transit network.

# Historic Preservation

New Yorkers ruefully acknowledge that the only good thing that came out of the demolition of Penn Station was the national preservation movement. The Landmarks Preservation Commission was established in 1965 by Mayor Robert Wagner, largely in response to the shock and dismay New Yorkers felt as they watched the wrecking ball crash into their most central and monumental public space. What was lost in those years was not merely a building, or a standard of ornamentation and design that only Victorian artisans could produce, but a sense of grandeur and pride in the city and nation. The great New York critic Lewis Mumford commented that Penn Station imparted nobility to the observer – “or did, until that structure was converted by its thoughtful guardians into a vast jukebox.” Senator Moynihan



Penn Station under demolition

took the loss of Penn Station personally, stating: “It was the best thing in our city and we knew it.” Moynihan believed that sterile, ugly public spaces fractured the social order, saying: “Men who are bad builders are bad governors.”

Today city planners, politicians and developers acknowledge the value of both public transport infrastructure and landmark buildings. The James A. Farley Post Office is one of the few landmark structures left standing in midtown, which gives hope to a neighborhood scarred by decades of poor planning and ruinous urban policy - or lack of policy. Historic preservation has proven to be an excellent investment. Landmark buildings lift property values

in their neighborhoods as they enhance the quality of life and establish standards for architecture and design. In the 1967 book, *Lost New York*, author Nathan Silver wrote: “(Penn) Station was sacrificed through application of the real estate logic that often dictates the demolition of the very building that makes an

area desirable.” A 2003 study by New York City’s Independent Budget Office on the effect of local historic district designation and regulation of real estate prices found “evidence of a statistically significant price premium associated with the inclusion of a property in a historic district.” Historic preservation investments also generate more jobs and wealth than an equal investment in highway construction or new buildings. A 1998 study conducted by David Litsokin and Michael Lahr of Rutgers’ Center for Urban Policy Research found that “each \$1 million spent on non-residential historic rehabilitation creates two jobs more than the same money spent on new construction. It also generates \$79,000 more in income, \$13,000 more in taxes, and \$111,000 more in wealth. Our research showed that preservation was often a superior economic catalyst compared with other investments.”

Preservation unites communities, as it imparts a sense of a shared history and common values. As Senator Moynihan wrote in the 1980’s, “the point about public space is that it is public. And people who own nothing much in their own right have a part of that space. The notion of *civitas*, of a citizen, of a person with a right and responsibility to be there and participate in a public space, that is what it means to be a republic.”

For a long while we just weren’t paying attention. **We let Pennsylvania Station disappear into the Jersey Marshes. We let ourselves go broke. We let a lot of things go to hell.** But by God, that is all behind us. There is nothing we cannot do when we really are as good as we know how to be. We have saved Grand Central.

- Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan

# Economic Benefits

The benefits of Moynihan Station to the economy of New York City and the Tri-State region flow from three sources. The first is the immediate creation of jobs and income from the construction and activities of the station itself. The Empire State Development Corporation estimates that the station, the commercial space and a residential tower to be constructed with air rights from the terminal will result in 3,300 permanent jobs once the station is completed, and \$50 million per year in tax revenues for the city and state.

The second source of value is derived from the transportation benefits. The reduction in passenger delays represents time savings that have a monetary value for workers, their employers and others who use the station. This translates into increased productivity or employer cost savings that benefit the economy as a whole. The commuters and businesses that are likely to reap the largest share of these benefits are in the vicinity of Moynihan Station, where users of the station are more likely to work.

The third basis for economic value is the most difficult to quantify but the most important over time. Moynihan Station would be among the most important public spaces on the West Side of Manhattan, offering a refurbished landmarked exterior, a grand hall and an inviting setting for a host of retail, restaurants and cultural venues. The two most comparable projects – Union Station and Grand Central Terminal – indicate that Moynihan Station could provide the stimulus to enliven the surrounding district.

Union Station in Washington, D.C. was redeveloped following decades of neglect and declining train ridership that led to the station closing in 1976. Passengers were funneled through an adjacent structure while the station cost taxpayers \$1 million per year to keep boarded up. Toadstools were growing through the marble floors and water damage was destroying the ceilings. The building was sealed in 1981. From 1985 to 1988, Union Station underwent extensive rehabilitation. Union Station now has 125 shops, 214,500 leasable square feet, maintains an occupancy rate above 96% and annual sales exceed \$130 million. Over 29 million people each year visit Union Station: 14.5 million local residents, 2.5 million office workers,

8 million tourists, and 4 million commuters.

Its renovation spurred development at the post office across the street, the Thurgood Marshall Judicial Center, and the new office building behind the station. It has met all projections, always made money, increased in value and made a great contribution to the neighborhoods and the life of Capitol Hill.

In New York, the renovation of Grand Central Terminal had substantial economic development impact. Starting around the 1960s, Grand Central suffered from deferred maintenance. The building was crumbling, the roof leaked, stonework was chipping away, and structural steel was rusted. Pollution and dirt had stained surfaces. Metro North started reconstruction in the 1980s, but a comprehensive revitalization plan began in 1996 with the cleaning of the Main Concourse Sky Ceiling. As restoration

and renovation continued, the project generated more than 2,000 construction and construction related jobs. Grand Central Terminal now has five fine restaurants and cocktail lounges, 20 casual international eateries in the lower level Dining Concourse, the gourmet Grand Central Market and 50 specialty shops throughout the concourses. In all, there are 119 stores and restaurants on 170,000 square feet, with an additional 60,000 square feet of leasable area developed from previously dormant, decaying space in the balconies and the basement. The renovation in 1998 made Grand Central New York's most stylish entry point and is widely proclaimed an economic and architectural triumph.

## Catalyst for West Side Development

The new amenity of Moynihan Station, in addition to the transportation benefits, will increase the value of real property in its vicinity. This is particularly important considering the recent Hudson Yards rezoning, perhaps the most ambitious redevelopment initiative undertaken by the City of New York in decades. The action, along with complementary infrastructure and open space investments, anticipates 40 million square feet of development over the next 30 years.

Moynihan Station occupies a critical location in this redevelopment zone, often called the "last frontier" in the Manhattan Central Business District. The Farley Building is located on the eastern edge of the district, providing a portal to blocks west of Ninth Avenue

and the type of landmark, central gathering place and amenity that can anchor new activity. It is also a connecting point along one of the two east-west corridors (32nd-34th and 42nd) that defines the district. It connects the Hudson Rail Yards and the Hudson Waterfront on the western edge to Penn Station, Madison Square Garden and Herald Square to the east.

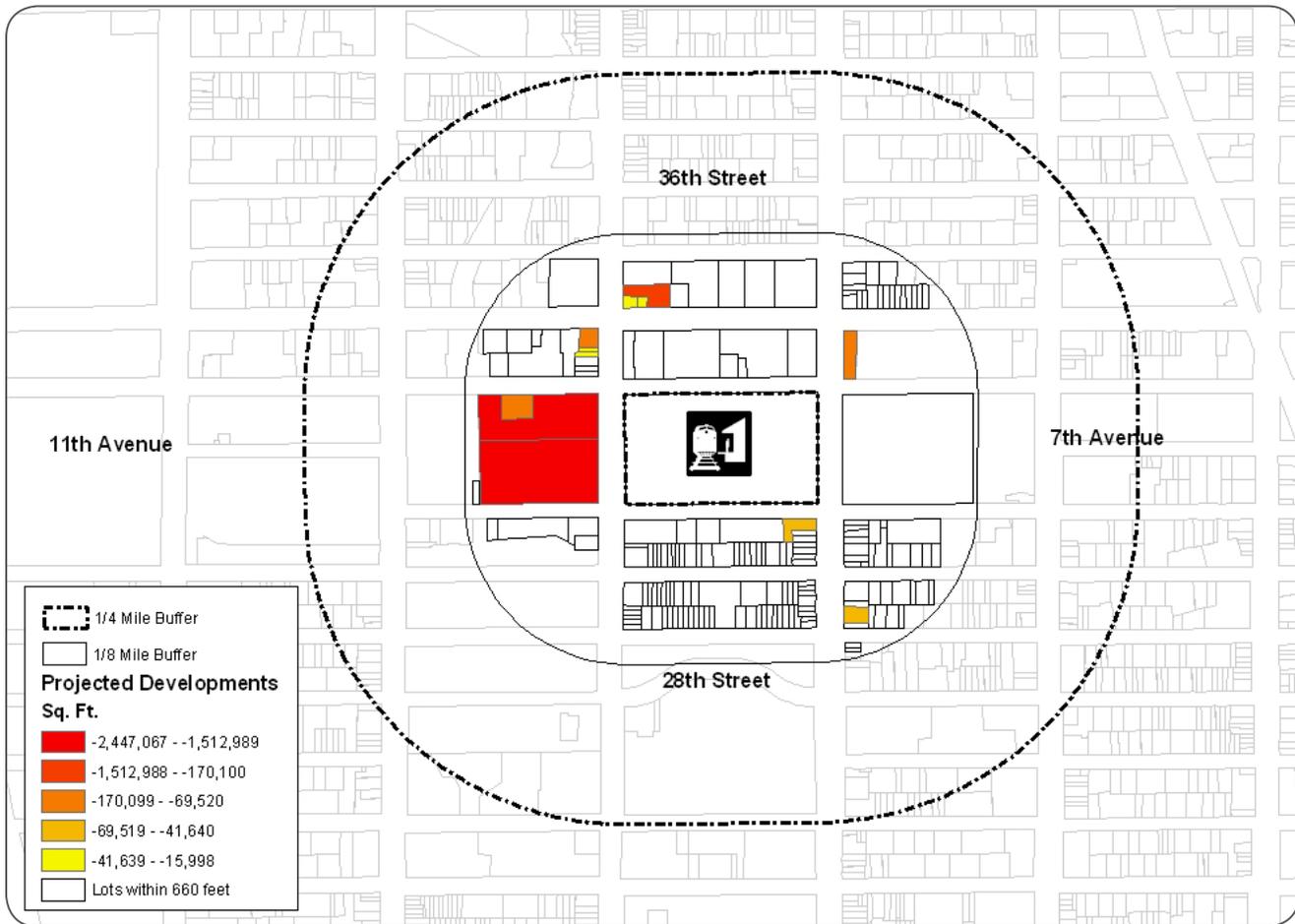
## Development Potential Near Moynihan Station

As a commuter hub, Moynihan Station's biggest development impact will be as a catalyst for office development. It will also enhance the value of residential, retail, cultural and entertainment activities in its vicinity. The areas that the station is most likely to affect are the rezoned areas to the west and north.



**Above: Union Station retail complex**  
**Below: Retail store in old Penn Station**





**Above: Development Potential within 1/8 mile around Moynihan Station**

Clearly, the closer a potential development site is to the station, the greater the station's impact is likely to be. In a 1993 report to the Federal Transit Administration (Land Value and Transit Access: Modeling the Relationship in the New York Metropolitan Area) Regional Plan Association estimated that a transit station will have its greatest impact on locations within 660 feet, or 1/8 of a mile, before gradually declining in influence. However, some increase in land values can be expected as far as a mile from a station. To put this in context of the Far West Side, 11% of the total development expected in the rezoned Hudson Yards District, stretching from 8th Avenue to the Hudson River, and 15% of the office space, would be within 1/8 of a mile of Moynihan Station. At 1/4 of a mile, 31% of total new development, 33% of office development and 23% of residential development would be within the envelope. And the entire rezoned area

would be within one mile of the station.

The area within 1/8 of a mile of the station is also significant because it contains all of the sites that would be eligible to receive air rights from the Farley Building under current Transfer of Development Rights statutes. Some of these sites are within the Hudson Yards District, and others are not. In assessing the likelihood of development within this area, we have relied on the methodology and results of the Hudson Yard EIS, which identified projected development for individual parcels.

The analysis below includes any parcel within the district, and within 1/8 of mile of Moynihan Station, that was identified as a projected development site in the EIS. For parcels outside of the district, but within 1/8 of mile of Moynihan Station, a simplified methodology was applied. The major differences

are that criteria related to recent investment in the properties could not be included because of data availability, and no assumptions were made regarding lot assemblage. Lots were included if they were at least 5,000 square feet in size, were at least 50% underbuilt under existing zoning, and, in the case of residential properties, had 6 or less residential units.

Of the 12 parcels identified, 5 are projected for commercial development and 7 for residential. For the 10 parcels in the Hudson Yards district, projected use was taken from the EIS. For the remaining two sites, both east of the Farley Complex on 8th Avenue, commercial uses were assigned.

The result is total development capacity of 4.5 million square feet. However, the bulk of the capacity is on two commercial sites immediately to the west of the station, leading to projections of 4.1 million square feet of commercial space

and 374,000 square feet of residential (374 residential units). The table below and the map on the previous page show the results of the analysis on a parcel-by-parcel basis. In addition to this potential development, 1 million square feet of air rights can be transferred from the Farley Building to a number of underdeveloped sites immediately adjacent to Moynihan Station. The plan calls for transferring all of the air rights to a site on the east side of Eighth Avenue between 33rd and 34th Street as part of the overall redevelopment plan for the station. The development would result in a residential tower and hotel adjacent to One Penn Plaza and across the street from Madison Square Garden and Penn Station. Including these air rights increases the development potential near the station to 5.5 million square feet.

Looking at a broader area of ¼ of a mile around the new Moynihan Station (or 1,320 feet), existing land use indicates a strong potential for redevelopment. A total of 7.6 million square feet of development is projected by the Hudson Yards EIS. About a quarter of the parcels are commercial buildings, industrial and manufacturing buildings represent 21% of lots, while parking facilities, vacant lots and transportation/utility uses represent 16%. The remainder

is either residential or mixed commercial-residential. There is scarce open space or one and two family uses in the area. In all, there are 9,000 residential units reported in the city's tax roll for the ¼ of a mile buffer, but 66% of lots have no units. The average number of stories in the area is 7, with a maximum of 55 for the office buildings.

### Summary

The economic benefits of Moynihan Station will flow throughout the region, but the development impacts will be most intensively concentrated in the area around the station itself. These benefits come from a combination of new economic activity within the station itself, time savings for commuters who will benefit from new egress capacity in the station, and the new public amenity that will attract visitors, residents and businesses to the West Side of Manhattan. More specifically, these include the following:

- 3,300 permanent jobs and \$50 million in tax revenue from commercial, residential and other development to be created as part of the Moynihan Station redevelopment project.
- Productivity and cost savings from the shorter, more reliable and less stressful commutes resulting from improved egress from trains into Penn and Moynihan Stations.

- Increased land values and taxes from properties in the vicinity of the station. Values will increase most within 1/8 mile radius of the station (equivalent to about two north-south city blocks), but some impacts are likely to be felt as far as a mile from the station.
- Accelerated development of the rezoned Hudson Yards district, stretching approximately from 8th Avenue to the Hudson River and from 28th Street to 42nd Street. The impacts will be greatest within 1/8 of mile of the station, where 4.5 million square feet of development was projected in the Hudson Yards EIS, and where an additional 1 million square feet of development could be added from development rights transferred from the Farley Building.
- Anchor for an east-west corridor centered along 32nd Street and stretching from 6th Avenue to the Hudson River. Moynihan Station could be the central public space and transportation node in a corridor that would facilitate the westward development of Midtown. The corridor would include Herald Square, Madison Square Garden, Penn and Moynihan Stations, redevelopment of the Hudson Rail Yards and a revitalized Hudson River Park.

Parcel Development Capacity									
Tax Lot Number	Area Sq. Ft.	Existing Building Sq. Ft.	Zoning	FAR	Existing Land Use	Capacity	Sq. Ft. Underbuilt	% Underbuilt	Projected Use
7830001	10,360	14,145	C6-4	10	Commercial Buildings	103,600	-89,455	-86%	Commercial
7790002	6,940	0	C6-3X	6	Parking Facilities	4,1640	-41,640	-100%	Commercial
7290050	128,793	0	HY-B2	19	Other	2,447,067	-2,447,067	-100%	Commercial
7290060	79,631	0	HY-B2	19	Transportation & Utility	1,512,989	-1,512,989	-100%	Commercial
7290163	12,960	165,600	HY-B2	19	Commercial Buildings	246,240	-80,640	-33%	Commercial
7310043	1,975	4,738	HY-C	12	Mixed Residential & Commercial Buildings	23,700	-18,962	-80%	Residential
7310044	1,580	2,962	HY-C	12	Commercial Buildings	18,960	-15,998	-84%	Residential
7310048	6,320	6,320	HY-C	12	Commercial Buildings	75,840	-69,520	-92%	Residential
7540044	8,636	0	C6-3X	6	Parking Facilities	51,816	-51,816	-100%	Residential
7580001	2,888	5,776	HY-C	12	Commercial Buildings	34,656	-28,880	-83%	Residential
7580005	2,047	5,654	HY-C	12	Commercial Buildings	24,564	-18,910	-77%	Residential
7580007	14,175	0	HY-C	12	Parking Facilities	170,100	-170,100	-100%	Residential

# Remaining Actions

**M**oynihan Station is in its home stretch. The funding is in place. The development team has been selected. The Governor, Mayor and other political leaders are committed to the project. The Empire State Development Corporation has articulated a schedule that would have construction starting by the summer of 2006. Even so, we cannot be complacent about the final round of approvals and negotiations that are needed to get the jackhammers started. Unforeseen legal impediments or an unraveling of funding agreements in Washington could still derail the project. After eight years of false starts and delays, another postponement could leave the project in limbo if any of the players – Congress, the developers, the transportation agencies, Albany or City Hall – lose interest or move onto other priorities.

In addition, the fulfillment of Moynihan Station's promise does not end with its construction. Its impact on the Far West Side will be greatly enhanced by additional public investments and actions along the corridor stretching from 30th to 34th Street. Its full potential as a regional transportation center will also depend on the eventual inclusion of additional services, including Amtrak and airport access services. All of these objectives will require continued energy, commitment and resources devoted to the following actions.

**1. Until construction begins, there needs to be a single-minded focus on completing the remaining project design, environmental reviews, agency approvals and negotiations.** The project design, which is still to be completed, needs to protect and prioritize the public spaces that are at the heart of the project. In terms of process, the most important priority is to expeditiously produce an Environmental Impact Statement that responds to public input and will withstand any legal challenges. The draft EIS is projected to be completed by the first of the new year, and a final EIS approved by June 2006. With little opposition to the project, a strong challenge is unlikely, but cannot be discounted. Other agency approvals, including the approval of the Public Authorities Control Board

in Albany and the National Park Service in Washington, and the approval of construction contracts are also needed before construction begins. Reaching these milestones and beginning construction by the summer of 2006 is ambitious but achievable, and requires that the responsible agencies and interested civic organizations continue to give the project their priority attention.



**Senator Moynihan: 'Money used for infrastructure isn't spending, it's investing.'**

**2. Implement public improvements along the 30th-34th Street corridor.** Moynihan Station can greatly improve the pedestrian environment for commuters, visitors and residents to points west of the station, and connect these areas to the office, retail and entertainment assets east of Eighth Avenue. Among the more important considerations are the restoration of a 32nd Street pedestrian corridor through the superblocks west of Ninth Avenue that would connect to the Ninth Avenue exit of Moynihan Station. The segment of Hudson River Park immediately west of the

station should also be completed to create a public amenity at the terminus of the corridor. Ultimately, the development of the Hudson Rail Yards is the key piece for the redevelopment of this corridor. RPA's recommendations for the site can be found in Urban Development Alternatives for the Hudson Rail Yards (December 2004). Whatever the disposition, a new round of planning that includes the community, City, State and MTA should proceed expeditiously.

### **3. Consider the future of Penn Station.**

While the benefits of Moynihan Station are many, as this report illustrates, it is also clear that Moynihan cannot solve all of the problems with the existing station. Over the past decade Madison Square Garden has considered moving to a number of alternate locations, thereby opening the Penn Station site for intensive commercial development and a new train station. These discussions have reportedly begun anew in recent months, with the annex of the Farley Building a potential site for the arena. There are not enough details available to weigh in on a specific site, but the benefits of moving MSG are tremendous and any opportunity to do so should be explored, assuming the relocation did not negatively affect Moynihan Station. A new, improved station between 7th and 8th Avenues would be a terrific complement to Moynihan Station.

**4. Pursue intermodal service enhancements.** Moynihan Station increases the capacity for ticketing, baggage handling and other customer services by the region's transportation providers. Amtrak use of the station could help increase the use and value of their Northeast Corridor service, the prime asset of their intercity rail service. The airport access services envisioned for the project still need to be specified, and different options need to be explored that would improve and speed service provided by Long Island Rail Road and New Jersey Transit to Kennedy and Newark Airports. Eventually, Metro North service could also come to the West Side, making Moynihan-Penn Station the only hub with all three commuter lines.

Architecture is inescapably a political art, and it reports faithfully for ages to come what the political values of a particular age were.

**– Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan**

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**Regional Plan Association (RPA)** is an independent regional planning organization that improves the quality of life and the economic competitiveness of the 31-county, New York-New Jersey-Connecticut region through research, planning, and advocacy. Since 1922, RPA has been shaping transportation systems, protecting open spaces, and promoting better community design for the region's continued growth. We anticipate the challenges the region will face in the years to come, and we mobilize the region's civic, business, and government sectors to take action.

**RPA's current work** is aimed largely at implementing the ideas put forth in the Third Regional Plan, with efforts focused in five project areas: community design, open space, transportation, workforce and the economy, and housing. For more information about Regional Plan Association, please visit our website, [www.rpa.org](http://www.rpa.org).

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