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## NYBC calls for new West Side directions

Sarah Trefethen



RICHARD ANDERSON

Patrick Foye, executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, presented his agency's recently approved 10-year capital plan at a Building Congress breakfast yesterday (Tuesday), alongside the unveiling of a report from the congress that emphasizes need for infrastructure investment on the West Side of Manhattan.

"Moving Midtown West" argues that improving Penn Station and creating the planned Moynihan Station for Amtrak in the former Farley Post Office are critical to support the new development planned in and around Hudson Yards.

"The business community, along with the design, construction and real estate industry, understands the urgency of the situation and is ready to support the major investments that will be necessary to upgrade an antiquated transit network, which is ill-equipped to transport the hundreds of thousands of commuters whose daily trips through Penn Station rank among the longest in the nation," Richard T. Anderson, president of the building congress, said in a statement.

"Chokepoints in the system, such as the pair of hundred-year-old tunnels under the Hudson, constrain growth. In addition, three major independent rail operators — Amtrak, New Jersey Transit, and the Long Island Rail Road — all use Penn Station as a key station, operating at full capacity during rush hours, with no flexibility to expand."

Only the first phase of the Moynihan station project is in the capital plan Foye presented Tuesday, but in response to a question from Anderson, Foye confirmed that the PA's budget is a "rolling plan," open to modification over the course of its 10 years.

The approved \$27.6 billion plan includes \$812 million in capital investment for tunnels and bridges, \$180 million for PATH modernization and \$652 million in security operating expenses.

Foye took a moment at the end of his presentation to acknowledge the ongoing scandal of politically motivated lane closures on the George Washington Bridge last year, but only to contrast that story with the contributions of the thousands of professional employees of the PA, none of whom, he said, have been implicated in the scandal.



PATRICK FOYE

The PA police saved approximately 100 lives last year, and the massive transportation system hums along steadily in the background of millions of lives.

“It’s unfortunate that the excellence of the people who work there has gotten lost in the current controversy,” Foye said.

Both Foye and Anderson rejected the idea that the agency should be divided between the two states in the wake of the controversy.

“Any consideration of breaking up the Port Authority is thoughtless, because the consequences are very serious,” Anderson said. “They could potentially jeopardize the economic future of the world’s largest metropolitan economy.”