

meetings with a Regional Citizens' Liaison Committee (RCLC) established for the study, as well as meetings with interested parties or small groups. Those wishing to participate in the RCLC may do so by registering on the Web site at <http://www.accesstotheregionscore.com> or by calling toll free 1-877-ARC-0999 or by e-mailing info@accesstotheregionscore.com. As part of the public participation process, the study Web site, <http://www.accesstotheregionscore.com>, will be periodically updated to reflect the project's current status. In addition, newsletters will be circulated to a broad constituency to ensure people are informed about the project. Additional opportunities for public participation will be announced through mailings, notices, advertisements, and press releases.

II. Description of Study Area and Transportation Needs

The primary project study area is defined as the travel corridor from Newark Liberty International Airport Station, through PSNY, to Sunnyside Yard in Queens. The market area for the proposed ARC transit service is a much larger area that encompasses all of the individual market areas of the existing and planned passenger rail lines that serve PSNY from west of the Hudson River.

The goal of the ARC EIS is to examine alternatives that provide new transit capacity to meet the growing demand for travel between midtown Manhattan and west-of-Hudson points in New Jersey and New York. The rail and highway networks, as well as commuter bus services and facilities, in this corridor are at or near capacity. As shown in the MIS increased trans-Hudson transit capacity would help to meet the growing demand on existing lines and additional demand that would be created by other ongoing capital improvements such as the opening of the Secaucus Junction station and the recent inauguration of Midtown Direct service via the Montclair Connection. It is anticipated that these improvements will open new markets, attracting additional riders on trains between west-of-Hudson markets and PSNY, adding pressures to capacity and service reliability. The ARC MIS conducted from 1995 to 2003 indicated that a new rail tunnel is needed because: (1) Trans-Hudson rail lines are already at or near capacity; (2) commuter rail can best provide the high transit capacity and geographic coverage that is needed; (3) train capacity constraints exist at PSNY; and (4) long-term growth trends in

population, employment, and regional development are expected to continue.

III. Alternatives

The alternatives proposed for evaluation in the EIS include:

1. The No Action Alternative, which includes the current transportation network and the other projects in the long-range transportation plans of the both metropolitan planning organizations (North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority and New York Metropolitan Transportation Council) that will be completed by the design year of the ARC project.

- Two long-term build alternatives (Alternatives P and S) to be developed by 2015:

2. Long-Term Build Alternative P (Penn Station), which includes a new two track rail line from Secaucus Junction and a new tunnel from a portal near Tonnel Avenue in Union City, adjacent to the existing North River tunnel, continuing under the Palisades and the Hudson River to Penn Station New York. Alternative P also includes increased station capacity at Penn Station New York. Alternative P would significantly increase the transit capacity to midtown Manhattan for west-of-Hudson commuters and would also achieve the additional goals of meeting the growing demand generated by commuters on existing transit lines and highways, providing capacity for expansion of transit service into new markets, improving service reliability and reducing travel times for existing riders, and providing improved access to planned activity centers on Manhattan's far West Side. As initially proposed, key features of this alternative, from west to east include: (a) A track connection at Secaucus Junction permitting direct service from the Main/Bergen, Pascack Valley, and Port Jervis lines via the Northeast Corridor to PSNY; (b) a storage yard in Secaucus, New Jersey for the additional NJ TRANSIT trains operating in the new tunnel; (c) a fifth track at the Secaucus Junction to accommodate the additional trains from the Main/Bergen, Pascack Valley, and Port Jervis lines; (d) two additional tracks on the Northeast Corridor High Line east of the Secaucus Junction to accommodate additional trains operating in a new tunnel; (e) a new two track tunnel under the Palisades and Hudson River; (f) a new lower level 8-track, 4-platform station directly beneath the existing tracks of PSNY; (g) new passenger circulation corridors, designed to link the new tracks and platforms with the street and with existing passenger concourses; and (h) A short length of tunnel designed for

future use and concealed behind a breakout wall. This feature would facilitate a future extension of service north to the vicinity of Grand Central Terminal or east to Sunnyside Yard in Queens with minimal disruption to existing train operations.

3. Long-Term Build Alternative S (Sunnyside Yard) is identical to Alternative P (Penn Station) west of the Hudson River. Alternative S includes a new two track rail line from Secaucus Junction and a new tunnel from a portal near Tonnel Avenue in Union City, adjacent to the existing North River tunnel, continuing under the Palisades and the Hudson River to Penn Station New York. Alternative S also includes increased station capacity at Penn Station New York. Alternative S would significantly increase the transit capacity to midtown Manhattan for west-of-Hudson commuters and would also achieve the additional goals of meeting the growing demand generated by commuters on existing transit lines and highways, providing capacity for expansion of transit service into new markets, improving service reliability and reducing travel times for existing riders, and providing improved access to planned activity centers on Manhattan's far West Side. As initially proposed, key features of Alternative S from west to east are: (a) A track connection at Secaucus Junction permitting direct service from the Main/Bergen, Pascack Valley, and Port Jervis lines via the Northeast Corridor to PSNY; (b) a fifth track at the Secaucus Junction to accommodate the additional trains from the Main/Bergen, Pascack Valley, and Port Jervis lines; (c) two additional tracks on the Northeast Corridor High Line east of the Secaucus Junction to accommodate additional trains operating in a new tunnel; (d) reconfiguration of Tracks 1-5 and extension of Platforms 1 and 2 in Penn Station New York; (e) a second new two track tunnel breaking out of Tracks 1-5 at the east end of Penn Station New York, continuing under 31st Street in Manhattan and under the East River to Sunnyside Yard in Queens; (f) a short length of tunnel designed for future use and concealed behind a breakout wall. This feature would facilitate a future extension of service north to the vicinity of Grand Central Terminal with minimal disruption to existing train operations. Alternative S differs from Alternative P by providing an additional new tunnel under 31st Street in Manhattan, continuing under the East River that will enable additional NJ TRANSIT and possibly Amtrak trains to access the storage yards at Sunnyside in Queens.