



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

ANTHONY E. SHORRIS
FIRST DEPUTY MAYOR

February 3, 2017

John Degnan, Chairman
Office of the Chairman

Patrick J. Foye, Executive Director
Office of the Executive Director

Commissioners Bagger, Fascitelli, James, Laufenberg, Lipper, Lynford, Pocino, Schuber, Steiner

The Port Authority of NY & NJ
4 World Trade Center 150 Greenwich Street, 23rd Fl.
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman Degnan, Executive Director Foye, and Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed 2017-2026 Capital Plan. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey ("PANYNJ") proposed capital budget represents a \$32 billion investment in the New York Metropolitan region, a large piece of an estimated \$266 billion that this region will collectively spend over the next ten years as we all work to invest in a growing, equitable, sustainable and resilient future.

Particularly in the current environment of uncertainty around federal resources, we must identify and prioritize public investments that are critical to the region's future and the common needs and interests of communities throughout the region. The future of New York City and of the region depends on our ability to continue to attract people and jobs from across the world, remain affordable and connected to make economic opportunity available to existing and future residents, and be a world leader in combating and planning for climate change. As outlined in *OneNYC*, New York City is refocusing our capital planning process to align neighborhood, city and regional planning and investments, and to evaluate our investments based on the triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental results.

We appreciate our ongoing partnership with the Port Authority and offer our comments on the capital plan in light of the City's own existing plans and policies.

1. INVESTMENT IN CORE ASSETS

The PANYNJ plan includes \$8.8 billion for state of good repair including multi-billion dollar investments in New York City and surrounding areas' roadways, bridges, port facilities, airports, and vital transit connections. Maintaining the existing transportation infrastructure and assets is critical to the future of

the city and the region, and we support significant investment in state of good repair as critical investments central to the responsibilities of the Port Authority.

We particularly want to recognize PANYNJ's commitment to restoring assets damaged by Hurricane Sandy, in particular the \$1.14B for the PATH system and the \$331M for the Holland Tunnel. The City encourages the expedited spending of these resiliency funds to ensure that these critical assets are protected prior to the end of the budget timeframe (2026) and encourage the agency to plan and design each capital project in consideration of a changing climate.

We also recognize important investments in the rehabilitation of the George Washington Bridge, GWB Bus Terminal, interim improvements to the Port Authority Bus Terminal, as well as significant investment in the PATH system as investments important to regional connectivity.

2. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND INVESTMENT IN TRANS-HUDSON TRANSPORTATION

OneNYC highlights the urgent need for a regional strategy to address the growing number of commuters arriving to New York City from West of the Hudson River. New York City and New Jersey are economically reliant on each other, and it is essential that we continue to invest in infrastructure that accommodates increasing demand for commuting from growing New Jersey communities.

The Port has responded to this planning challenge with funding in two areas –committing \$2.7 billion in support for the Gateway Program, and \$3.5 billion in funding for a replacement Port Authority Bus Terminal.

Gateway Program. The Gateway Program is rightly considered by many the highest priority transit project in the nation, and its full funding and implementation is critical to the future of New York City and the region. The City has had a productive working relationship with the Gateway Corporation membership on the Hudson Tunnel project, and we look forward to assisting further in the implementation of this critical piece of infrastructure. In the current phase, we encourage PANYNJ to ensure that any of its expenditures for Gateway require that Climate Resilience Design Guidelines are applied to the Program. As a 100+ year investment, this vital rail link must be protected for the long term against future extreme weather and sea level rise.

Additionally, we encourage you and the Gateway members to embark expeditiously on planning for future Gateway phases including much needed capacity improvements at Penn Station. It is important to start work and public engagement on this planning effort soon to allow for robust public process around transportation options. Additionally, the Amtrak ROW Preservation project at the Eastern and Western Railyards demonstrates the need to think proactively about the interaction between land use and infrastructure in this area, so it is imperative we begin planning so future land use decisions are informed by a full understanding of alternatives and important transportation options are not precluded by development.

Port Authority Bus Terminal. We understand that the existing bus terminal is structurally deficient and obsolete, and planning its replacement is well past due. A robust planning process for the terminal area should begin expeditiously so that, like with Gateway, we retain the potential for all possible options and can inform future land use decisions with the best possible information regarding site and infrastructure needs. However, we have expressed to you serious concerns regarding the local land use impacts of a terminal of the size proposed by the Port Authority, and with the planning process to date which has prematurely focused on a narrow range of design options prior to substantive engagement with stakeholders and agreement on fundamental project parameters such as site selection or terminal size.

Specifically, we have called for a more comprehensive planning process that considers replacing the terminal as one element of a long range, integrated, efficient and cost-effective Trans-Hudson transit strategy. Such a strategy should study a range of transportation investments that can be developed over time, including expanding trans-Hudson rail capacity, as well as increased ferry, bike and pedestrian connections, and connections to the NYC subway system.

Moving increasing volumes of trans-Hudson commuters with bus service implies the dedication of increasing amounts of space within the core of Manhattan to bus movement, which not only impacts the surrounding area but also exacerbates the challenge of delivering commuters as close as possible to employment centers. We believe the Port should further study a full range of rail alternatives that might bring additional rail service to growing parts of NJ and permit future bus terminal needs to be addressed without adversely affecting the surrounding area. As the Port Authority proceeds towards environmental review, we believe a “Tiered” NEPA EIS process that sequences a broader look at a wide range of transportation alternatives prior to more specific impact review of individual projects, would be a sound way to ensure a full range of transportation alternatives are analyzed. We look forward to working with you and our colleagues in New York and New Jersey to develop a path forward that both addresses the most urgent and pressing needs of trans-Hudson movement today, while also planning comprehensively for the next generation of commuters.

3. INVESTMENT IN AIRPORTS

Our region’s primary three airports consistently rank as the most delay-prone in the nation and forecasts show demand at these airports increasing from 123 million passengers today to 186 million by 2040. To maintain our competitiveness as a center of tourism and the global economy, we committed in *OneNYC* to working with you to expand flight capacity, and improve airport facilities, airport transit access, and freight and cargo operations at the airports, particularly LGA and JFK.

Airport Facilities. We are pleased with the improvements currently underway at LaGuardia to replace obsolete terminals, and are supportive of taking a similar serious look at JFK’s long term investment needs. We would welcome working further with you on how to maximize the identified investment in a way most conducive to fully realizing JFK’s economic potential while also taking into account the impacts any investments may have on local land uses or transportation patterns. We note that the current budget collapses LGA and JFK funding into a single pool, and we would welcome more clarity regarding the specific allocations intended for each facility. We also believe that any large redevelopment investments at JFK and LGA should be designed to incorporate substantial resiliency measures to coastal storm surges and sea level rise. LGA is especially vulnerable even to today’s coastal storm events and notably the capital budget does not include any fortification to the existing berm protecting the airport. Finally, in conjunction with major terminal rehabilitations, we encourage PANYNJ to continue its long term capacity expansion studies, identify strategies to accommodate additional passenger demand while mitigating local impacts, and seek operational and capital investments that improve the efficiency and sustainability of terminal operations, such as working with the FAA on continued implementation of NextGen traffic control upgrades, wherever possible.

Airport Access. Improved transit access to our airports is an important goal, and has the potential to be both a contributor to economic development and a boon to residents of the region who commute to the airports for flights and employment. PANYNJ has proposed significant investments in airport access to all three airports, and we look forward to working with the Port to plan for the most effective ways to accomplish these long-sought transit connections in a manner conducive to encouraging ridership. We also encourage the Port to continue to work with the MTA to ensure that any improvements are developed with an understanding of capacity constraints on the rail network, so that any service improvements are not made at the expense of local travel within Queens- either on the A or 7 lines, or on the critically

important Q70 and M60 bus lines. The bus lines in particular have suffered during LGA construction, and we encourage the Port to consider dedicated layover space or other accommodations to improve the reliability of the M60 bus both during redevelopment and going forward.

Freight/Airport Cargo. As you know, over the past decade, cargo volumes at JFK have declined by almost a third. Today, over 15,000 people at JFK work directly in air cargo related jobs. Regionally, the air

cargo industry supports over 50,000 jobs, \$8.6 billion in sales, and almost \$3 billion in wages. The City remains committed to supporting the air cargo industry and continuing our work with PANYNJ to increase the capacity of our air freight systems to expand JFK's share of the air-freight market. We are pleased to see the inclusion of \$900,000 for redevelopment of the north cargo area, but are concerned that these funds will be insufficient to support construction of new facilities or rehabilitation of existing facilities. We are eager to see more details regarding the specifics of this particular investment. We encourage the full funding through the capital plan of all ongoing air cargo capital investment needs such as airside and landside investments that support private facility investments.

4. INVESTMENT IN PORT AND FREIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE

Through the GMAP program, the NYC Rail Freight Council, and other collaborative means, the city has committed to working with PANYNJ to improve freight mobility and reduce our truck dependency by encouraging investment in the reactivation of rail and waterborne freight options.

NYC Ports. The city has made significant investments in port facilities in Howland Hook and is pleased to support the \$76.2M proposed to continue to improve facilities there, as well as smaller investments at other facilities. While not in this budget, an expansion of the ExpressRail terminal at Port Ivory, which we believe will be necessary if the terminal's container volumes increase in the future, remains a priority for the city. We also support the investment in the clean truck program, and encourage the port to continue to identify investments that move the Port's facilities toward global standards for clean port operations.

We also note the lack of funding for the Goethals Bridge East Bound Ramp to serve Howland Hook Marine Terminal and adjacent warehouse distribution facilities being developed at the former GATX property. As these facilities represent major components of the region's freight distribution network, managing access in an efficient and environmentally sustainable manner is critical. At a minimum, funding should be restored for the already designed interim "Forest Avenue" intersection project. The City recently successfully obtained NYS Regional Economic Development Council funding to close the funding gap for that project.

Rail Freight. We also support the \$164M to completely rebuild the rail yard in Greenville, NJ to support the NYNJ Railroad and create a new "on-dock" rail yard supporting the Global Container Terminal in Bayonne. NYNJ provides a cross-harbor railroad service in which trains are disassembled in NJ and barged to 65th Street Yard in Brooklyn, under NYCEDC management. We look forward to working with the Port to continue investment in increasing the viability of this and the Sunset Park waterfront rail system.

5. BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN PLANNING

The City has made tremendous investments in improving its bicycle infrastructure, as part of the Vision Zero strategy to improve safety for all road users. We are encouraged by the Port Authority's recent investments in bike access on the Goethals and Bayonne Bridges, and with some improvements to access proposed for the George Washington Bridge, but we would encourage the Port to continue to think

aggressively about planning for adequate bike facilities in all of its projects. Specifically, we encourage the Port to continue to think about the long term need for additional capacity on the George Washington crossing, and for provision of bike share and bike infrastructure at the World Trade Center, GWB Bus Station, other transit stations, and the Jamaica AirTrain station. The city would welcome the opportunity to partner with PANYNJ to identify opportunities for integrating with the city's infrastructure.

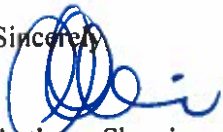
6. FISCAL PROCESS

The City is especially appreciative of the Port Authority's recent efforts to hold public hearings and move towards a transparent budgeting process for these critical investments, and supports the Board's desire to impose fiscal discipline on the Port's budgeting process. We encourage the Port to continue to improve upon these techniques and consider, in future budget proposals, sharing more information on selection criteria and evaluation methods for PA projects and programs. In this way, stakeholders might have more information on the relative costs and benefits associated with the mega-investments, as well as more appreciation for smaller dollar but highly impactful investments that the Port proposes.

We would also encourage the Port to create more clarity around existing lump sum programs, such as the New York Regional Transportation Program. This funding group has historically been used for many specific high impact investments, but the current budget provides little detail on any specific intended projects.

We thank the Board again for the opportunity to provide comment, and welcome continued engagement and partnership.

Sincerely,



Anthony Shorris
First Deputy Mayor

cc: Alicia Glen, Deputy Mayor, Housing & Economic Development
Carl Weisbrod, Chair, City Planning Commission
Polly Trottenberg, Commissioner, NYC Department of Transportation
Daniel Zarrilli, Office of the Mayor
Maria Torres Springer, President, NYC Economic Development Corporation