

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;

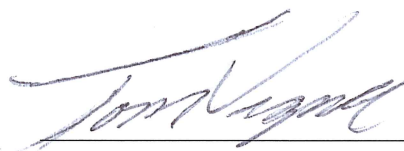
Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Middlesex County Transportation Coordinating Committee calls upon the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to widen the George Washington Bridge's sidewalks in accordance with AASHTO standards;

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

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



Tom Vigna, Acting Chairman
Middlesex County
Transportation Coordinating Committee