

ReThinkPennStationNYC FAQ - June 1, 2022

"What's Going On?"

The Pennsylvania Station Area Civic and Land Use Improvement Project and Master Plan (the "Penn Station Proposal") calls for the demolition of the Penn Station neighborhood as recommended by New York State's unelected ESD. The Master Plan, while the purview of the MTA, is being developed in the context of the Penn Station Proposal.

The Penn Station Proposal is deeply - flawed and makes all the mistakes that discredited urban renewal projects of the recent past have made. It destroys a unique and vibrant New York neighborhood while Penn Station remains buried beneath Madison Square Garden (MSG). It declares the neighborhood "blighted," a self-serving and dishonest trick, considering that the only blighted thing in the neighborhood is Penn Station itself.

The ESD's Penn Station proposal looks to put "lipstick on a pig", reward a particular developer, and leave the true problems at Penn Station largely unaddressed. Penn Station would remain a terminal station and subject tens of thousands of commuters and travelers to crowded, dangerous and soul-crushing conditions – despite the allegedly "world class improvements", the developer is promising to fund.

In addition, the ESD's Penn Station Proposal lacks a coherent transit plan, the project's raison d'être. Also, no one, not even experienced professionals seems able to figure out the [financial](#) aspects of the proposal. Experts have been left scratching their heads.

The City Planning Commission, in a [letter](#) dated January 27, 2022, said:

"The Commission urges ESD to address the financing for the GPP [General Project Plan]. It is a topic that must be concretely resolved prior to affirming the GPP."

In a [Financial Brief](#) issued by New York City's Independent Budget Office, dated May 2022:

"Without more data on projected costs and revenues, it is impossible to know whether revenues will meet debt service costs. The plan does not address

what should occur if revenues fall short of costs, with no details on how those costs would be covered or by what level of government.”

The ESD’s Penn Station Proposal appears to be a mishmash of feel-good statements and fuzzy math to justify [a real estate bonanza for Steve Roth](#), Vornado’s CEO.



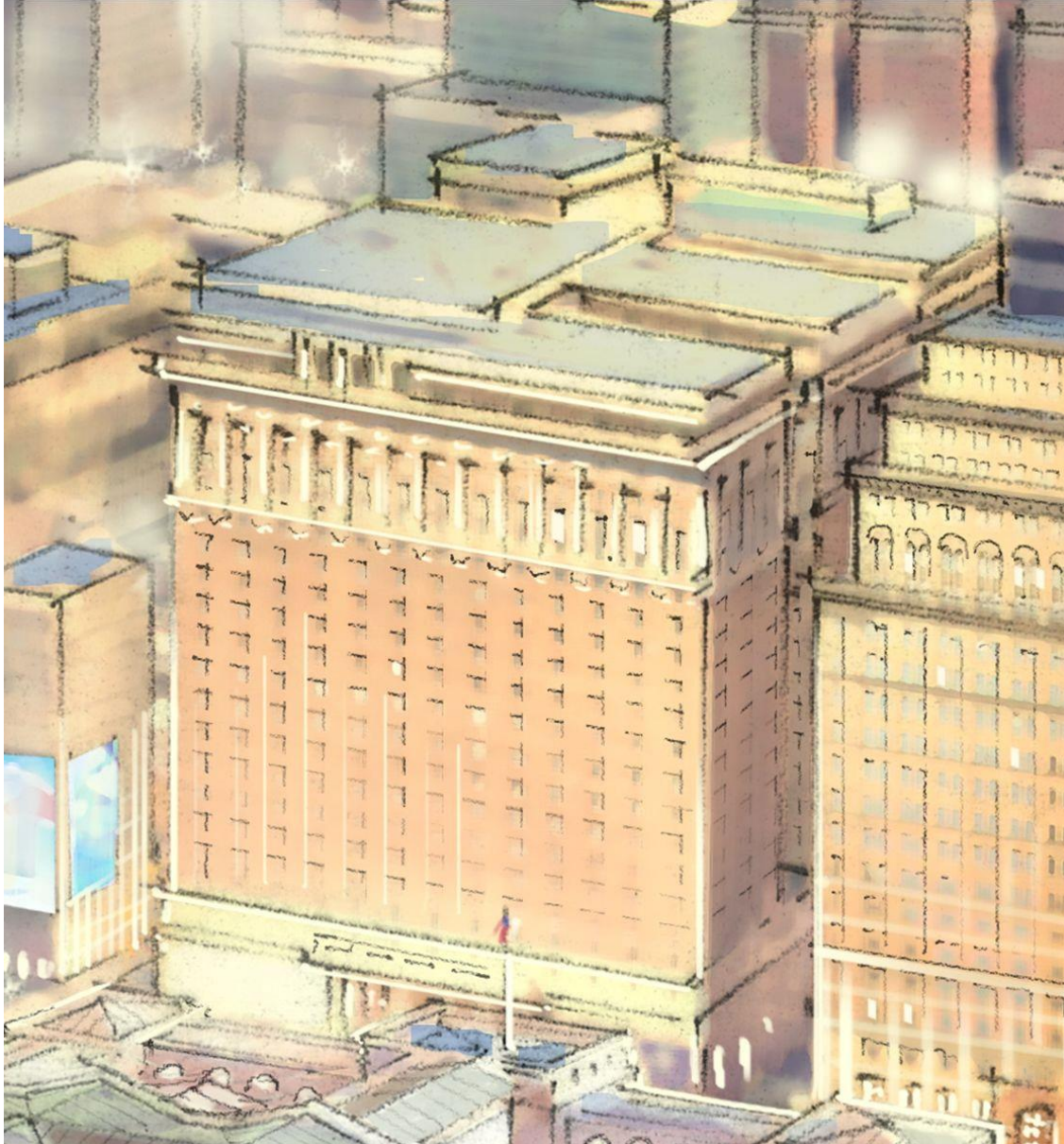
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman

Will we sing "Where Have all the Buildings Gone?" The ESD would demolish all the buildings on the periphery of the original Penn Station – marked here with x's – in order to fund incremental underground station improvements and unnecessarily expand tracks and platforms at 31st and 30th Streets.

The previously mentioned Hotel Pennsylvania, classic Garment Center buildings in the Art Deco style and St. John the Baptist Church will be joined on the rubble heap by the Gimbels Building and Skybridge, the Hotel Stewart, 7 Penn Plaza, the Molly Wee Tavern, Music Street and much more. The buildings will be removed from the tapestry that is our city to be replaced with unneeded Class A commercial office towers which will cast shadows into New Jersey and onto the reputations of all who allow it to happen.

These buildings will join the original Penn Station in the ashes of the discarded buildings and monuments of Lost New York.

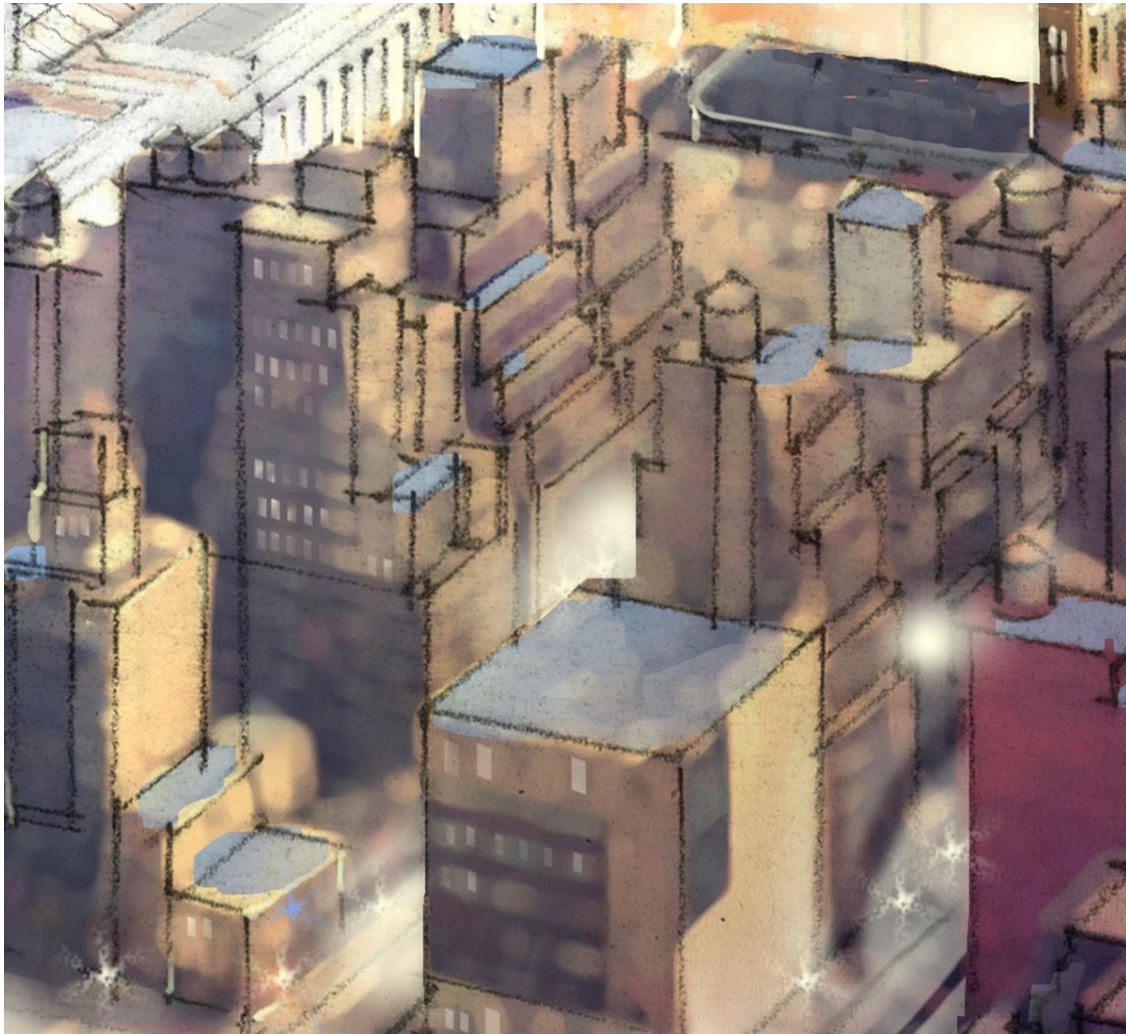
How sad that the Landmark Preservation law, enacted in the wake of the original Penn Station's destruction, cannot save its meritorious neighbors? Has New York's body politic really become that callous?



*Hotel Pennsylvania
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman*

With the ESD's proposed elimination of zoning regulations around Penn Station, the once proud Hotel Pennsylvania is under more development pressure than ever and will be replaced by a Vornado supertall, to be named – oddly – Penn 15. While they are rushing to tear the hotel down today and lock in the deal they cut with our previous Governor, the land will likely remain an unusable vacant lot for years unless and until the commercial real estate market recovers from the phenomenon of a large stay-at-home workforce.

In the implementation of the ESD's plan, thousands of apartment dwellers (many seniors and longtime city residents) and small business owners would be displaced. Historic buildings, many of them irreplaceable (including the fabled Hotel Pennsylvania and the Gimbel's Skybridge), would be demolished.

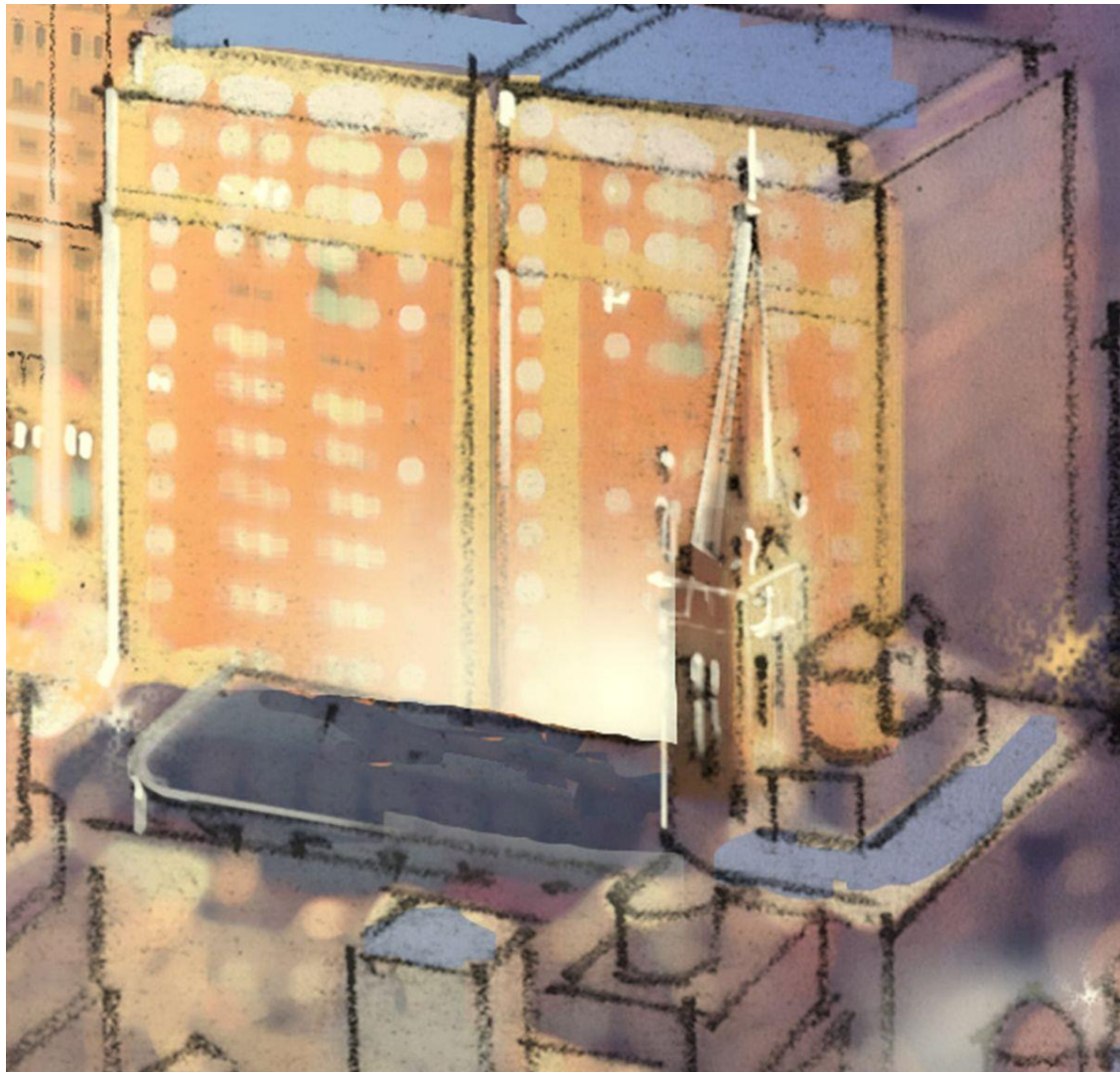


*West 30th Street
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman*

Easy to miss in the drama are the Art Deco and vernacular buildings on the uptown side of W. 30th Street which the ESD intends to "chloroform."

New York City deserves a great above-ground train station with modern transit operations. ReThinkNYC has a plan to bring that about that does NOT

call for the wholesale destruction of a neighborhood, the displacement of thousands, and the demolishing of our architectural heritage.



*St. John the Baptist Church
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman*

The ESD would cast the priests and friars of St. John the Baptist Church to the four winds, to fund incremental changes to a Penn Station that would remain underground.

This 1872 church should have been landmarked a long time ago. Under ReThinkNYC's plan there is no need to demolish this or other buildings on 31st and 30th Streets to create an unnecessary expansion of Penn Station to the south.

We see the ESD's Penn Station Proposal for what it is — a cynical land grab in exchange for political contributions. The plan is corrupt and places the desires of a few well-connected individuals over the needs of the public. The vulgar buildings it would erect will cast shadows over New Jersey's Hudson riverfront and [block views of the Empire State building](#).

We unreservedly oppose it. Our alternative plan would modernize, streamline, and expand transit operations at Penn Station, above all by implementing the through-running of the commuter trains.

We also recommend the building of a great above-ground station, specifically, the original McKim, Mead and White Station, modernized for current needs, on its original foundations, which still exist.

We call for moving MSG to a more suitable location.

Aside from MSG, our plan's less aggressive value-recapture strategies would rescue neighboring historic buildings from demolition as mandated by the ESD's Penn Station Proposal.

Who are We?

ReThinkPennStationNYC is an initiative of ReThinkNYC, a not-for-profit organization, dedicated to applying innovative thinking to the future of New York and its region. We focus integrally on transportation infrastructure, land use, governance, and socio-economic issues.

ReThinkPennStationNYC is a founding member of the Empire Station Coalition (Penn for All), which includes the 29th Street Association, City Club of NY, CNU NYC, Council of Chelsea Block Associations, Environmental Simulation Center, Historic Districts Council, Human-Scale NYC, ReThinkNYC, Limited Equity & Affordability at Penn South (LEAPS), Midtown South Community Council, Penn-Area Residents Committee, The Murray Hill Neighborhood Association, Save Chelsea, TakeBackNYC, and the Victorian Society of New York.

In contrast to the ESD's Penn Station Proposal, ReThinkNYC calls for the following:

- Federal funding be halted and an independent, international infrastructure firm with experience implementing through-running in peer international cities be retained to thoroughly evaluate how through-running can be implemented within the footprint of the existing Penn Station/Moynihan Train Hall.
- The removal of MSG to one of the three locations recommended by ReThinkNYC.
- The rebuilding of McKim, Mead and White's original Penn Station configured as a through-station with a modernized circulation plan and using new transit technologies as part of an adaptive reuse of the 34th Street/Hudson Yards area. It would incorporate space for social services where offices were previously located as well as many of the most up-to-date green technologies:
 - passive heating and cooling.
 - energy efficiency standards.
 - geothermal wells.
 - glass solar panels on the concourse level.
- Preserving or adaptively reusing historic sites on 31st and 30th Streets to the greatest extent possible. So, too, for other impacted sites in the ESD's Penn Station Proposal.
- A new governance model so that the public is not left to respond to infrastructure changes piecemeal and without adequate understanding of the potential impact on the neighborhood. The ULURP process should be utilized before any project, including the present one, moves forward.
- Affordable housing – including *permanent* affordable and middle-income housing.

- And high-quality homeless services staffed by a first-class provider of such services.



*Penn Station
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman*

“Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight...” An American flag graces the mid-block portico of a rebuilt McKim, Mead and White Penn Station, standing vigil over a civic victory of neighbors and lovers of New York over the warped, frustrated, and flawed plan of New York’s ESD, which places the needs of Class A commercial property owners above those of everyone else in post-pandemic New York.

We offer a far better plan offering greater benefits for all, which would enhance New York and help assure its continued leadership as we enter the second half of the 21st Century.

What is our Mission?

We are fighting to replace the present grim, airless, dungeon-like Penn Station with a re-imagined and modernized version of the original, designed for the 21st century and beyond.

This will be done contemporaneously with the implementation of a unified regional transit network, made possible by the conversion of Penn Station to a predominately through-running operating plan for commuter rail.

How does the proposal to rebuild the original Penn Station relate to the new Moynihan Train Hall?

Rebuilding the original Penn Station will serve the estimated 80% of Penn Station's commuting population that the Moynihan Train Hall cannot.

We applaud the Moynihan conversion, but it only serves Amtrak and only a limited proportion of our present and projected commuter population. Before Covid, over 600,000 commuters used Penn Station daily, a number that exceeds the population of the city of Boston.

What is the relationship between a new train station and a modernized transit plan? Just what is "through-running"?

The underground morass that is Penn Station needs to be replaced with an above-ground station worthy of one of the world's great cities.

The present Penn Station and Port Authority Bus Terminal are uninviting embarrassments that humiliate the people who use them, befuddle visitors to the city and are the polar opposites of what one experiences at Grand Central Terminal.

However, a modern transit plan should precede any such construction. The fact is the modern, international standard for cities of New York's size is to have trains run "through" and not terminate at the station.

Through-running can provide capacity similar to what the Penn Station Proposal promises at approximately half the cost (ReThinkNYC estimates \$9.75 billion based on figures provided by the MTA's own study of through-running at Penn Station, compared to the [NEC Future's estimate of](#)

[approximately \\$18 billion budget](#) for Penn Station South a/k/a the Penn Expansion).

It could be implemented within the envelope of the current Penn Station without a need to expand the station's footprint.

This means there is no need to demolish a block and one half of midtown and no need to displace its residents, small businesses, and destroy historic sites.

Through-running would allow us to implement unified regional transit in the New York region and effectively expand the region's core beyond Manhattan's key downtown and midtown business districts.

It would allow for easier reverse commutes, a substantial need before Covid and which is only increasing.

It would enhance connectivity and result in substantially more one seat rides in the region, so that someone living in Montclair, New Jersey could work in the middle of Brooklyn and vice versa.

Our hope is that through-running would dampen the appetite to cannibalize so much of our pre-war architecture and built environment, opting instead in favor of saner, more human-scale approaches to the workplace.

Our model would be adaptive reuse first, demolition second. Google's retrofitting of the St. John's Terminal, a "[groundscraper](#)," is a great example of how 21st century employers are making productive use of our built environment while at the same time preserving our unique New York City "look and feel."

ReThinkNYC has numerous videos answering the question "what is through-running?" Here are two:

- The [overview video](#) sets forth ReThinkNYC's transit solution, describing how the ReThink NYC plan for Penn Station works.

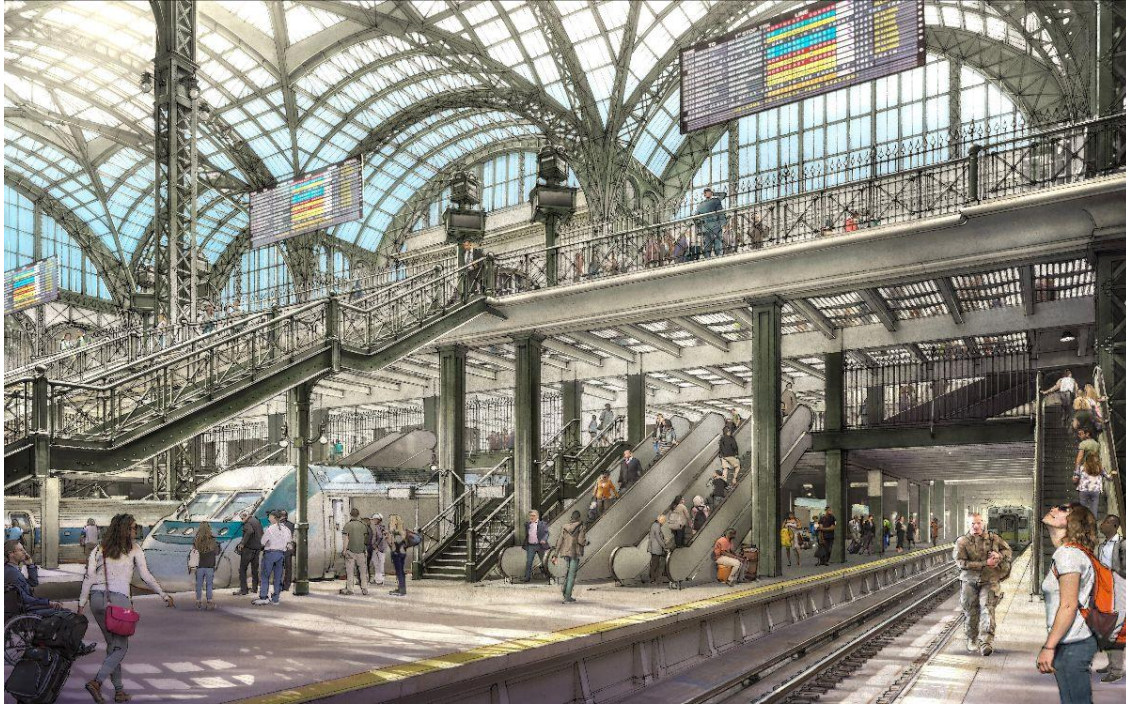
- To show how ReThinkNYC's project fits into the Gateway Program, we have [animated a flyover](#) of the rights of way that our plan uses.

This operating model is in place or being implemented in [London](#), Hong Kong, Paris, Toronto, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles.

This operating model eliminates congestion caused by sending trains back to their points of origin empty (which clogs tunnels), instead sending them through the station – Penn, for example – to other points of business activity.

This allows for fewer tracks, which, at Penn Station, would permit the widening of platforms and staircases and the installation of escalators.

Thus, ReThinkNYC's proposal enhances vertical circulation (see image below) and eliminates overcrowded platforms.



Penn Station Platforms
- Station design modifications by Richard Cameron, Atelier and Cezar Nicolescu
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman

A rebuilt Penn Station configured for through-running would include wider platforms, and desperately needed additional escalators and greatly improved vertical circulation. This image shows the Concourse and track level bathed in natural light.

Why should the design of a new Penn Station be inspired by the original?

The original Penn Station was built not just for its time, but for all time.

Like other great works of art such as Van Gogh's *The Starry Night* or Michelangelo's *Sistine Chapel ceiling*, it is a masterpiece that cannot be surpassed.

There is widespread agreement that demolishing the station was an enormous blunder.

Building a new station will right a historic wrong, inspire civic pride, connect us to the best of our past, and provide residents, commuters and millions of visitors and travelers with a magnificent architectural experience for generations to come.



Penn Station

*- Station design modifications by Richard Cameron, Atelier
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman*

Rebuilding a modernized version of the original McKim, Mead and White Penn Station is considered wildly unrealistic by many, particularly at first blush.

If you are one of them, we ask that you reconsider with the aid of this FAQ. We ask that you be open to the idea that such a station is needed and could provide, in conjunction with through-running and a unified regional rail network, the boost we need to keep pace with our peer cities in an extremely competitive environment.

As Wall Street Journal architecture critic, [Michael Lewis](#) has noted, some of our greatest infrastructure projects have followed pandemics and constituted fine works of art.

He cites London's Thames Embankment, Paris's Champs Elysée and Philadelphia's Fairmount Water Works.

We would do well to retire our skepticism and to build a great train station at 33rd and Seventh.

Few things could do more to improve the brand, the quality of life and the economy of the region. The business community, particularly many of our developers, needs to notice this and move the city forward.

Can the historic design handle today's transportation needs?

There are train stations in use today, built around the same time as the original Penn Station, which have proven more than capable of meeting modern transit needs.

Grand Central Terminal, Washington, D.C.'s Union Station, Philadelphia's 30th Street Station and Denver's Union Station, among others, demonstrate the continuing architectural, cultural, transportation and urban planning benefits of such stations.

Our plans call for significantly wider track platforms, improved vertical circulation and the conversion of the former 33rd and 31st Street [taxi lanes](#) into outdoor arcades for enhanced connectivity to the street and the convenience of pedestrians.

Just as those stations have been updated over time, a rebuilt Penn Station will continue to be updated and improved.



- Station design modifications by Richard Cameron, Atelier and Cezar Nicolescu
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman

Rebuilding and repurposing the original Penn Station's carriageways/taxi ramps as pedestrian walkways shows, in dramatic fashion, how form can follow function.

Such arcades are rare in New York and would be a major amenity in a part of the city as dense and busy as Midtown West.

Rebuilding the station will be exorbitantly expensive. With so many other pressing problems in the region and country, isn't it irresponsible to build such an opulent station?

Rebuilding Penn Station will cost an estimated \$6 to \$7 billion.

With modern construction techniques and computer-generated design, the station's cost is far less than what its opponents would like you to think.

For instance, the columns in the rebuilt station will be cut by CNC (computer numerical control) machines before being hand-finished.

Also, modern panelization technology will allow the station to be built with just one-fifth of the original stone.

This technique was used to recreate the classical architectural features at 90 West Street after the September 11 attacks. 3D printing, currently being used in London's Crossrail project, would also be used to bring the cost of the station down.

The Calatrava "Oculus" PATH Station, which serves 65,000 commuters, cost \$4 to \$4.5 billion dollars.

The ESD Penn Station Proposal calls for in excess of \$7 billion dollars to keep the station underground.

This investment is small considering that more people pass through Penn Station every day than LaGuardia, JFK, and Newark Airports combined.

The equivalent of the population of Boston passes through the station every day.

Given its overwhelming attractiveness, a rebuilt and modernized original Penn Station will pay for itself through its positive economic impact on the neighborhood, the city, and the tri-state area.

It will be a catalyst for economic development, making the region an even more desirable place to visit and in which to live and work.

The value of a rebuilt Penn Station surpasses mere economics.

As the architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable wrote in 1963 about the destruction of the original station, "**any city gets what it admires, will pay for, and ultimately, deserves. We want and deserve tin-can architecture in a tin-horn culture.**"

Instead of a cheap, tin-horn fix, rebuilding Penn Station will result in a priceless, world-class design and will demonstrate that society need not suffer from a poverty of ideas.



Moynihan Train Hall
- Michael Evans *Moynihan Station Project Lead*
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman

The adaptively reused Farley Post Office, now Moynihan Train Hall, sitting across 8th Avenue from a rebuilt and reimagined McKim, Mead and White Penn Station.

Were the Hotel Pennsylvania to be saved and the original station rebuilt, we would be restoring a McKim, Mead and White composition of the highest order as opposed to demolishing the neighborhood to build a banal and random Vornado Campus.

Why rebuild Penn Station? We have Moynihan now.

The short answer is because Moynihan only does twenty percent of the job.

In January 2021, the Moynihan Train Hall opened in McKim, Mead and White's US Post Office building, on the west side of 8th Avenue across from Penn Station.

The former mail sorting facility now houses Amtrak, a single Long Island Railroad concourse, retail stores, and office space.

In his January 2018, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo correctly noted that the construction of the train hall was insufficient to solve the fundamental problems at Penn Station and called for an overhaul of the station.

In view of the threat to terrorism, the Governor noted the urgent need for better security at Penn Station. He also cited its terrible aesthetics, saying, "the architecture and configuration of Penn is substandard - call it the seven levels of catacombs. They do not like it when I say that, but it is true."

By contrast, the Governor previously said that McKim, Mead & White's original Penn Station had "majesty" and was "the grand and triumphant entrance that New York deserved."

The Governor should have also mentioned that Moynihan is insufficient to solve the fundamental problems at Penn Station since only twenty percent of Penn commuters will use it. In particular, New Jersey Transit riders will hardly benefit at all.

What happens to MSG, the arena that currently sits on top of the station?

MSG, which has moved three times in its history, must be relocated in order to "daylight" Penn Station.

This is in the best interest of MSG's ownership, since the aging arena's special zoning permit ends in 2023.

MSG is the oldest arena in the National Hockey League and the second-oldest in the National Basketball Association.

The design suffers from numerous problems, including a lack of premium seating, difficulty loading and unloading trucks, and an arena floor that is five stories above ground.

There is no doubt a new arena will be great for fans and result in much improved logistics at the venue.

Unless MSG moves, any renovation of Penn will leave the majority of the station cramped underground with poor air circulation and without natural light.

It will still be inefficient and dangerous to navigate since MSG's numerous support columns interfere with passenger circulation.

For these reasons, there is a growing consensus that MSG must move — a position supported by *The New York Times*, the Regional Plan Association, and the Municipal Art Society, among others.

There are a [number of proposals](#) for a new location, including the site of the Port Authority Bus Terminal in West Midtown, 34th Street and Sixth Avenue (Herald Square), and over the remaining rail yards at Hudson Yards.

Our proposed above-ground station and other similar plans such as those of Vishaan Chakrabartis, the late Hugh Hardy' and [Alexandros Washburn's](#) (with the Hetteema Group) would at least liberate Penn Station from MSG's basement, to which the ESD would like to keep it consigned.

Moving MSG, a multi-year venture requiring coordination with necessary transit improvements, will be expensive, but now is the time to do it.

Moving MSG should be a component of any effective plan and not viewed as a cost burden.

The horrible decision to demolish the original station and consign its successor to MSG's basement must have struck 1960s planning boards as a "groovy" idea, but it was an unmitigated disaster for the neighborhood, the city, the state, and the region.

Anyone who is serious about this issue knows the MSG must move.

It would be sad if MSG is to stay put for now, only to be moved after many transit and other options have been foreclosed. This will happen if we fail to act now.

Didn't the original Penn Station present an imperial architecture that will not resonate with the diversity of America today?

This question may seem odd but it is raised from time to time and so we will address it here.

The design of the original Penn Station was inspired by the ancient Roman [Baths of Caracalla](#), which were not for the exclusive use of the emperor but were a public space open to all.

The design of McKim's station was no less democratic than the design of the U.S. Capitol, Jefferson Memorial, and New York Public Library, all of which were also inspired by Roman models.

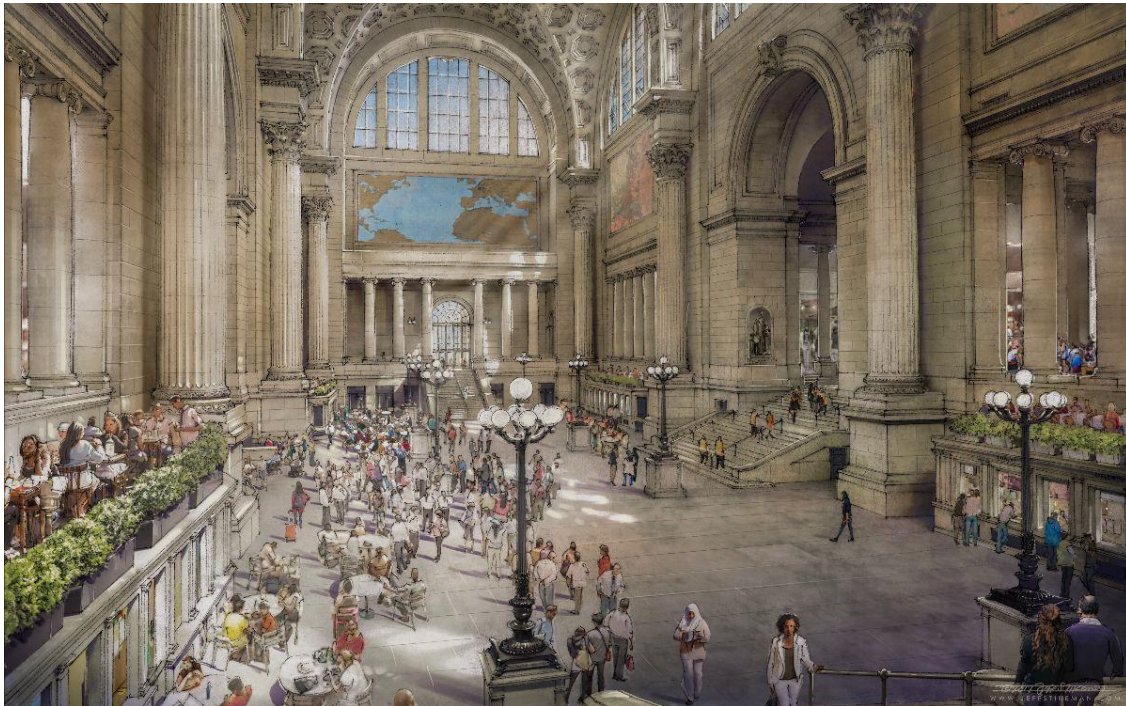
The architecture of the original Penn Station is similar to the architecture of the Statue of Liberty, a work of art closely associated with New York and the immigrant experience. The statue, beloved of all Americans, represents the Roman goddess, Libertas.

Authors and poets of diverse backgrounds have celebrated the original Penn Station. In his ode to the station, Langston Hughes wrote:

“The Pennsylvania Station in New York
Is like some vast basilica of old
That towers above the terror of the dark
As bulwark and protection to the soul.”

While we can digress into more history and explore this further, we hardly think Charles McKim was trying to symbolize our imperial ambitions any more than New York State does by its moniker the Empire State.

McKim’s station was a great gift of public art to the City of New York. It was a people’s station and will be again.



Main Waiting Room at Penn Station
- Station design modifications by Richard Cameron, Atelier and Cezar Nicolescu
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman

The Main Waiting Room, mid-block, at a rebuilt McKim, Mead and White Penn Station, with engaged columns replacing the former wall friezes and other changes and new amenities. Modeled on Rome's public baths at Caracalla, the room serves as both train station and civic forum, much like Grand Central Terminal.

Is it really possible to construct a classical station today? Can we achieve the craftsmanship?

As recent European precedent shows, construction of monumental historic buildings is feasible.

The bombed-out 18th century Frauenkirche church in Dresden was rebuilt in the 1990s, as was the 19th century Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow, which was blown up by Joseph Stalin.

Both reconstructions have been great successes with the public.

Similarly, the historic Berlin Palace was reconstructed, utilizing digital drawings and state-of-the-art stone cutting technology.

Our own Colonial Williamsburg is a home-grown precedent, as is the [North Hall and Library at Bronx Community College](#), which emulates McKim, Mead and White's Boston Public Library and complements the existing Stanford White campus.

Following the fire at Paris' Notre Dame Cathedral, an exacting reconstruction is being pursued.

Closing Thoughts and Summation

There can be no serious question that ReThinkNYC's transit infrastructure and economic strategy proposals – anchored by its proposal to rebuild Penn

Station and adaptively reuse the Station's midtown neighborhood – represent a tremendous opportunity to unlock the New York region's full potential.

With a more integrative approach, New York can correct what mars the region and can soar beyond the COVID tragedy into a less congested, more sustainable, healthier, fairer, and safer city.

Former Governor Cuomo's uninspired rehash of Fifties urbanism, which survives largely intact in the ESD Penn Station Proposal, would freeze-frame some of the worst design elements at the current Penn Station.

If his plan, or some semblance of it, goes forward, New York will have to live with the mistake for most of this and perhaps the next century.

The ESD Penn Station Proposal is a giveaway to myopic real estate interests and represents a massive failure of imagination.

It is a monument to mediocrity with supertall skyscrapers that block out the sun, obscure views of the Empire State Building, displace small businesses and residents, demolish historic buildings, and suffocate the wonder and romance that are so much a part of New York's sense of self.

A new Penn Station could unify regional transit by converting to through-running.

This operating model would allow New York to keep pace with Los Angeles and Philadelphia as well as London, Paris, Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Munich – all of which boast through-running, much to their economic advantage.

The destruction of the original Penn Station in 1963 gave rise to New York's Landmarks Preservation Law.

Unfortunately, it left us with the architectural calamity of today's Penn Station.

We should rebuild a modern version of the original Penn Station, which once stood shoulder to shoulder with New York's Grand Central Terminal,

Philadelphia's 30th Street Station, and London's St. Pancras as symbols of urban excellence.

The Penn Station neighborhood, which in no way meets any fair definition of "blighted," and should not be indiscriminately bulldozed to create a redux of Hudson Yards.

If the Landmarks Law is to remain relevant, numerous sites need to be landmarked, including those threatened with the wrecking ball because of the state's improper use of eminent domain.

We need to see the neighborhood now under threat in Midtown West as an asset that contributes to New York's greatness and vitality and not as cannon fodder for Big Real Estate.

"Silver cities rise, the morning lights, the streets that meet them, and sirens call them on with a song."

-Carly Simon, New Jerusalem



Manhattan Aerial View
- Station design modifications by Richard Cameron, Atelier and Cezar Nicolescu
- Rendering by Jeff Stikeman

Were we to prevail in protecting residents, small businesses and historic sites and reversing the architectural crime-of-the-century by rebuilding a modernized version of McKim, Mead and White's Penn Station, who would win?

ALL WOULD WIN!

Many do not know that yet. True, the above image does not show any new development. We more than recognize that development can and should happen. We strive for a City that promotes the best of the old and the new. But it should happen in harmony with the neighborhood, not in conflict with it. [Manhattan](#) is often one huge collective improvisation. It has created magic that has made New York one of the world's greatest cities, if not the greatest of them all. No one should ever take that for granted. "Let all the dreamers wake the nation..."

The Penn Station debacle presented by New York State's sidestepping ULURP and other unilateral actions should give rise to study and reform.

The governance model that let the EDC's poorly designed behemoth get so far down the tracks (no pun intended) needs serious revision.

We also need to do more to create affordable housing and provide homeless services while solving the problems of Penn Station.

While lip service has been paid to these issues, real commitments need to be made before such a proposal goes forward.

The presence of affordable housing and social services should not be pre-conditioned on the destruction of 31st Street, a pathetic choice that appears to be part of the amended go-forward.

If it is to continue to play a leadership role in the 21st century, New York – a titan in banking, finance, the arts, and entertainment – must rebuild Penn Station, especially after the disproportionate impact of the Covid crisis.

Overcoming the absurd anomaly of a world-class city having its most important transit hub confined to the basement of a hockey rink is one of the most important land-use decisions New York will face for the next one hundred years.

The Penn Station Proposal attempts to mercantile us into mediocrity or worse.

The monolithic madness of Hudson-Yards-thinking must not be replicated at Penn Station.

There are far better alternatives that do not require obliterating our heritage and can actually move us forward.

And so, we close by asking:

Why would one of the world's greatest cities, facing intense global competition, settle for a plan as flawed as the ESD's Penn Station Proposal when there exist viable, dynamic, and compelling alternatives?

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