

# COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



## OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

**Steven Bellone**  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Chairman Lieber and President Torres Springer:

As travel rebounds and our economy recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, commuters across New York are desperate for a transit hub that meets modern travel demands. We, the undersigned elected officials, representing nearly 8 Million people, ask that you urgently commence work on the reconstruction of Penn Station to revitalize the station and the surrounding neighborhood for the hundreds of thousands of our constituents who use it every day.

Penn Station as it stands is a relic of the past. Originally constructed to service only 200,000 travelers, it is a decrepit, dark and cramped cavern that served over 600,000 commuters every day pre-COVID<sup>1</sup>. Commuters from across the region face delays, crowds, and an impenetrable layout that diminish their quality of life, resulting in widespread inconveniences, and greatly reducing the region's economic activity.

It is necessary to build a modern Penn Station that not only meets current travel patterns but accommodates future projections as well. The MTA's upcoming Penn Station Access project will bring online a one-seat ride via Metro-North Railroad directly into Penn Station for hundreds of thousands of Bronx and Westchester residents, adding to the Queens and Long Island residents that already use the station. These residents will seek to access jobs, educational opportunities, health care services, and recreational activities throughout Midtown. Commuters who move through Penn Station each day must also be front and center in any project to redevelop the transit hub, and it is imperative that such work take place following a robust and comprehensive public engagement process that sufficiently addresses the stated needs of residents from across downstate New York.

We owe it to not only Penn Station's current commuters but its future ones as well—they deserve nothing less than a modernized Penn Station. Furthermore, we must do so now while we're presented with a window of opportunity between the opening of Grand Central Madison later this year, and the opening of Metro-North Service in 2028 or sooner.

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<sup>1</sup> "The Case for Penn South", *Regional Plan Association*, <https://rpa.org/work/reports/the-case-for-penn-south>

In the last decade, New York has undergone massive infrastructure upgrades, bringing airports, subways, and commuter rail into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. But Penn Station, the busiest transit hub of them all, remains woefully outdated.

We urge you to immediately begin transforming Penn Station into a modern transit hub that will efficiently service hundreds of thousands of commuters every day for generations to come.

Sincerely,



Steven Bellone  
Suffolk County Executive



Donovan Richards Jr.  
Queens Borough President



Vanessa L. Gibson  
Bronx Borough President