



# AIA New York Project Policy Statement

*Amtrak Gateway Program and Infrastructure Plan*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The economic vitality and quality of life for the regions served by Amtrak's Northeast Corridor route between Washington, D.C and Boston depend on a robust transportation system. Hundreds of thousands of riders on NJ Transit and Amtrak pass through the rail tunnels under the Hudson River each day. The Gateway Program would construct much needed additional rail tunnels to supplement the currently existing ones, which are overcapacity and damaged from Hurricane Sandy. President Trump's resistance to providing federal funding for Gateway represents a serious threat to the future of the project. Without Gateway, it is impossible to repair the existing tunnels without dramatically reducing capacity.

Moreover, the Trump Administration's infrastructure plan has signaled its intent to reduce federal investment in all infrastructure projects. The President's infrastructure plan would provide only \$200 billion in federal grants over 10 years to fund up to only 20% of approved project costs.

The success of our nation's cities and towns are dependent upon their access to transportation. For too long, our federal, state, and local governments have not invested in infrastructure. As cities and towns with good transit options have witnessed remarkable construction booms, those with worse infrastructure have remained stagnant.

Withdrawing or minimizing funding for Gateway represents a threat to the continued vitality of one of our nation's most dynamic regions, the Northeast. Meanwhile, a federal withdrawal from infrastructure spending would further punish those regions most in need of substantial investments to spur development.

Recognizing the importance of robust transportation networks to the growth and vitality of the City, region, and nation, AIANY strongly supports Amtrak's Gateway Program and the continuation of the Federal Government's role in significantly funding infrastructure projects.

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AIANY supports the following as necessary actions by program sponsors and government bodies at all levels to realize Amtrak's Gateway Program:

- Maintain the Federal Government's role as a substantive partner with local and state governments to build and maintain infrastructure critical to the nation's economic vitality. Continue federal TIGER, Fast Track and New Starts programs with adequate funding for qualified public transportation projects across the country.
- Break out the Gateway Program components into discrete projects that can be funded, designed and constructed separately. Prioritize early completion of the most critical elements of the program. Identify alternative funding sources for later components of the program by capitalizing on momentum from completing earlier portions.
- Create new revenue sources at the state and local levels to supplement funding from the federal level and require that all project partners can meet their funding commitments. These can include new user fees, updated fuel taxes or vehicle miles traveled (VMT) fees indexed to inflation, new dedicated taxes for critical transportation projects, congestion pricing, and implementation of value recapture strategies.

**The American Institute of Architects**

The economic vitality of our country is inextricably tied to robust national and regional mass transit networks. Providing substantial federal support for Gateway and other infrastructure projects is in the regional and national interest. As architects, we strive to improve the way people experience the built environment, which can only be done by improving our nation's infrastructure.

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#### About AIA New York

AIA New York is the oldest and largest chapter of the American Institute of Architects with more than 5,500 architect, allied professional, and student members. AIANY is dedicated to three goals: design excellence, public outreach and professional development. [www.aiany.org](http://www.aiany.org)