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# Regional Rail for Metro New York

— A 21st Century Business Model  
for Commuter Rail Service —

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TRI-STATE TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN





The NYC region is powered by three commuter rail systems: NJ Transit, Long Island Rail Road, and Metro-North, and 1 intercity rail service, AMTRAK.

Each system is designed primarily to connect suburban workers with jobs in Manhattan.

This operations model reflects outdated assumptions regarding where people and jobs are located, and how people want to move about the region.

The pandemic-fueled shift to remote work has a major impact on ridership and fare revenue.

A new business and operations model is needed to meet the needs of today's workforce.

# What is Regional Rail?

Regional Rail would unify the 3 commuter railroads' operations to provide seamless trips between more places, rather than primarily trips to Midtown.

Regional Rail would run trains through Manhattan, connecting cities and towns in New Jersey, Long Island, and the Hudson Valley, with a one-seat ride.

Frequent service all day: At least every 30 mins in the suburbs and every 15 mins in denser neighborhoods.

Free transfers between regional trains, subways, and buses, and fare equalization with the NYC Subway in the subway's service area.

# What is Needed to Achieve Regional Rail?

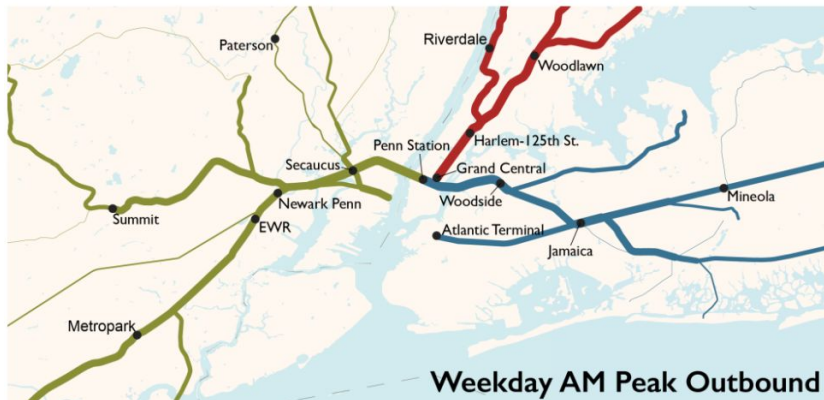
Systemwide electrification and the purchase of high-performance electric trains.

High platforms, providing universal access and speeding up boarding for everyone.

Strategic infrastructure investments to relieve bottlenecks and unify the disjointed rail networks.

This has been done in other cities – most famously, Paris and Philadelphia.

# Commuter Rail Service Frequency



# INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN THE NYC AREA

## Legend

— Existing Transit Lines

## Rail Projects

- 1 Gateway Program Amtrak
- 2 Gateway East Amtrak
- 3 Interborough Express MTA
- 4 Third Track LIRR
- 5 East Side Access LIRR
- 6 Penn Station Access: Phase I MNR
- 7 Penn Station Access: Phase II MNR
- 8 Lower Montauk Branch Passenger Rail NYC DOT
- 9 Cross-Harbor Freight Tunnel PANYNJ

## Subway Projects

- 10 2nd Ave Subway: Phase II NYCT
- 11 PATH Extension to EWR PANYNJ

## Light Rail Projects

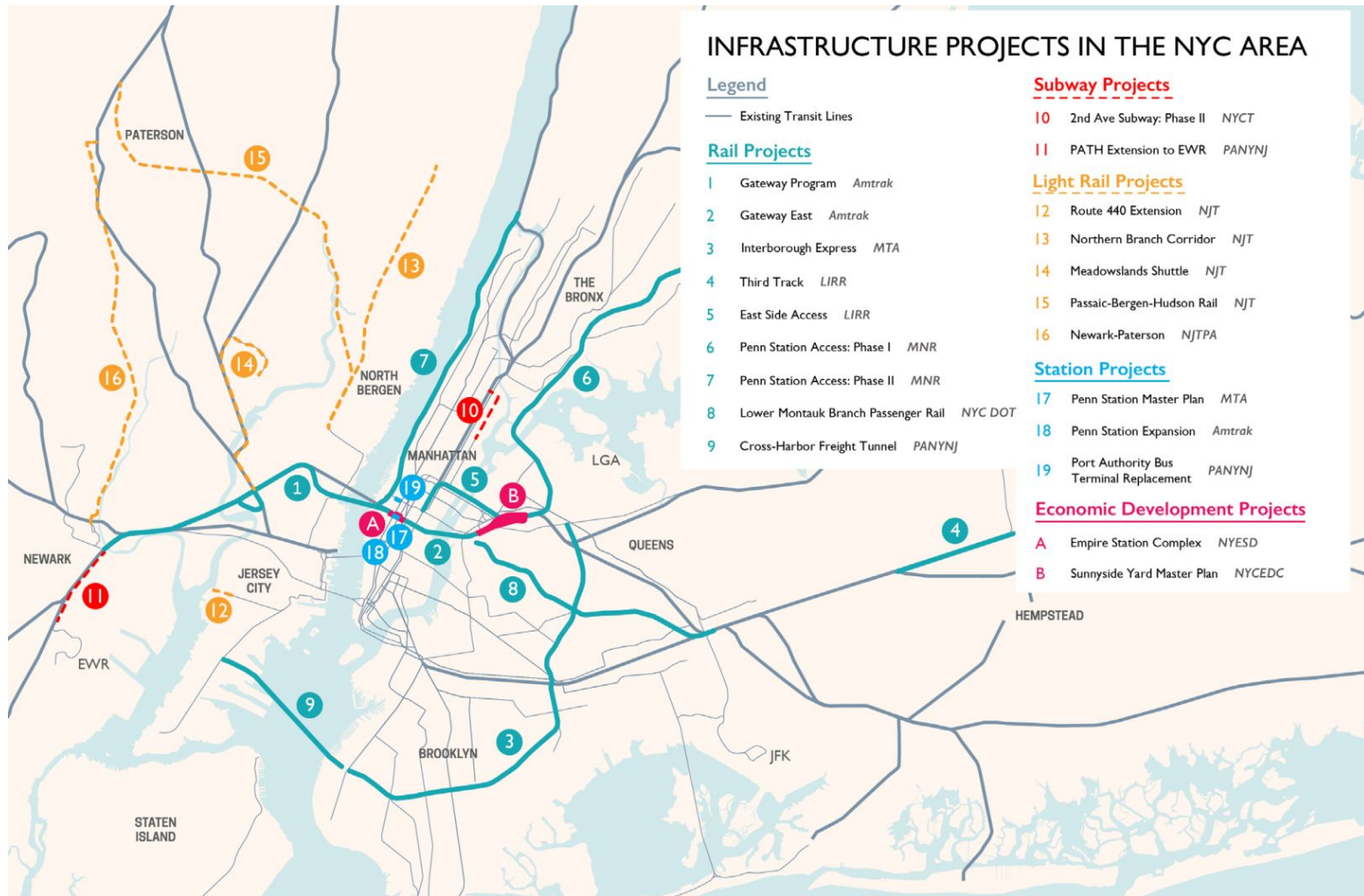
- 12 Route 440 Extension NJT
- 13 Northern Branch Corridor NJT
- 14 Meadowslands Shuttle NJT
- 15 Passaic-Bergen-Hudson Rail NJT
- 16 Newark-Paterson NJTPA

## Station Projects

- 17 Penn Station Master Plan MTA
- 18 Penn Station Expansion Amtrak
- 19 Port Authority Bus Terminal Replacement PANYNJ

## Economic Development Projects

- A Empire Station Complex NYSED
- B Sunnyside Yard Master Plan NYCEDC

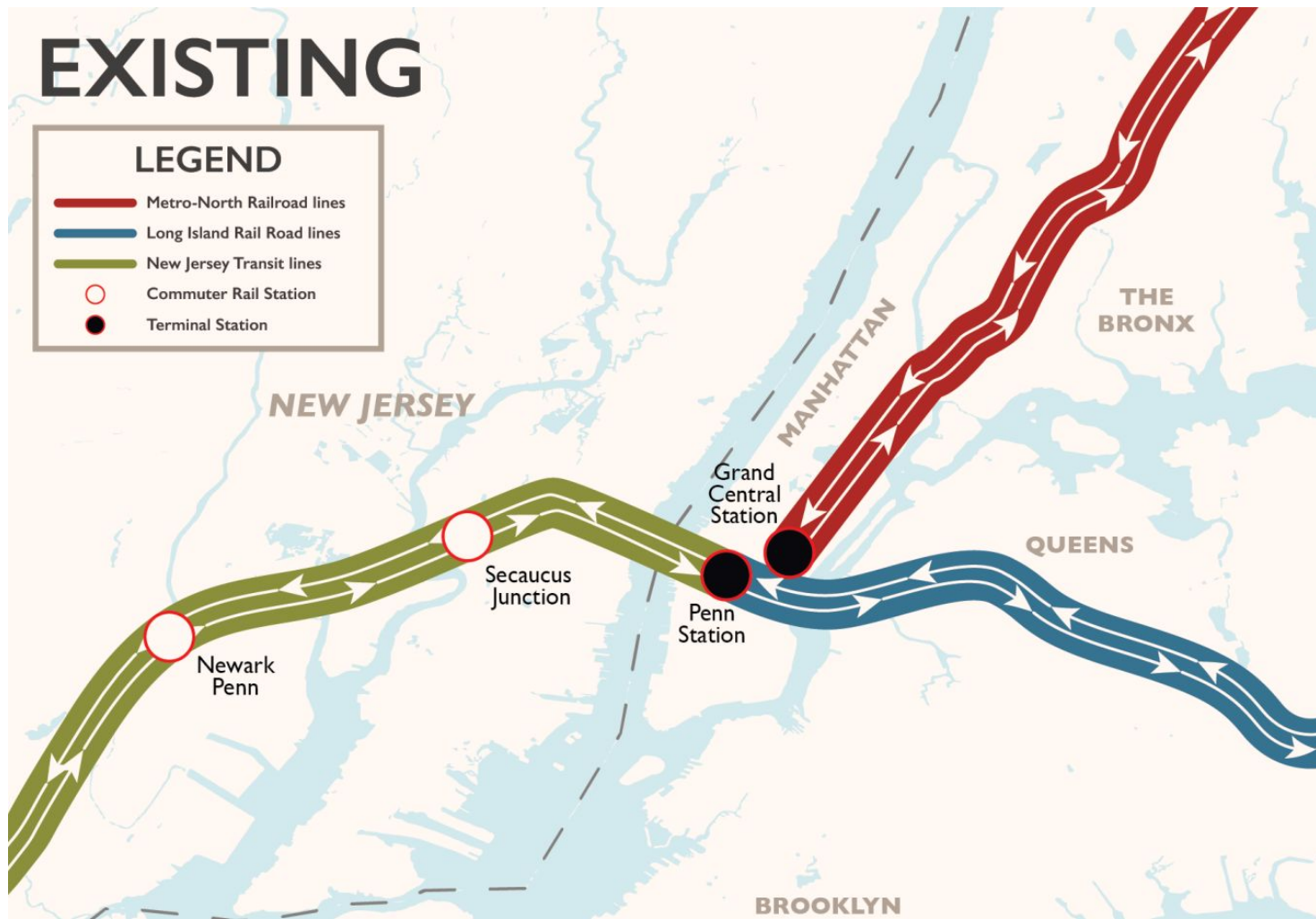




# EXISTING

## LEGEND

-  Metro-North Railroad lines
-  Long Island Rail Road lines
-  New Jersey Transit lines
-  Commuter Rail Station
-  Terminal Station



# THROUGH-RUNNING

## LEGEND

- Metro-North Railroad lines
- Long Island Rail Road lines
- New Jersey Transit lines
- Through-Running Station





# The Trunk Line

The Trunk Line is the segment of the rail network where NJ Transit, LIRR, and Metro-North service will overlap. The NYC Trunk Line will be along the Northeast Corridor, between Newark Penn Station and the planned Sunnyside Station in Long Island City, Queens.

There is consensus that the trunk line for Regional Rail will pass through New York Penn Station.

There is consensus that the trunk line needs 4 (rather than the existing 2) tracks under the Hudson River – This is already underway as Amtrak's Hudson River Tunnel Project.

There is consensus that through-running at Penn Station is basic to regional rail and would increase the capacity of the station.

There is consensus that a Long Island City station should be built at Sunnyside Yards.

There is disagreement on **how and when** through-running can be achieved, and **to what extent train capacity can be increased** by implementing through-running.

# The Tri-State Solution

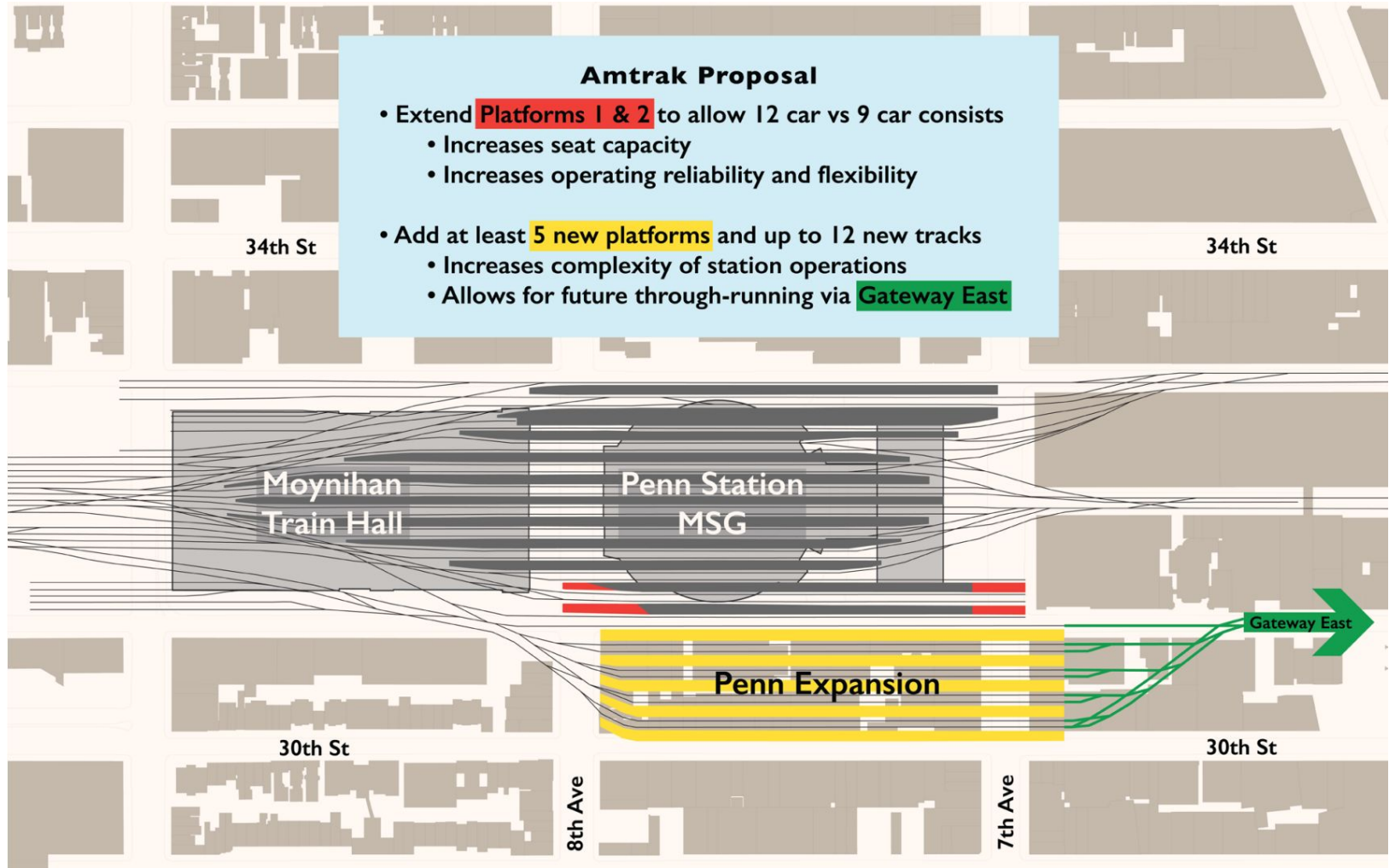
If it can be proven by an independent 3rd party that an expansion of Penn is necessary to achieve through-running, TSTC proposes an alternative scheme.

A small-scale expansion (2 tracks, 1 platform) can be built south of Penn Station, primarily to allow for continued operations while existing tracks and platforms at Penn are reconfigured to accommodate through-running.

This approach shortens the timeline for through-running and minimizes destruction of the surrounding neighborhood.

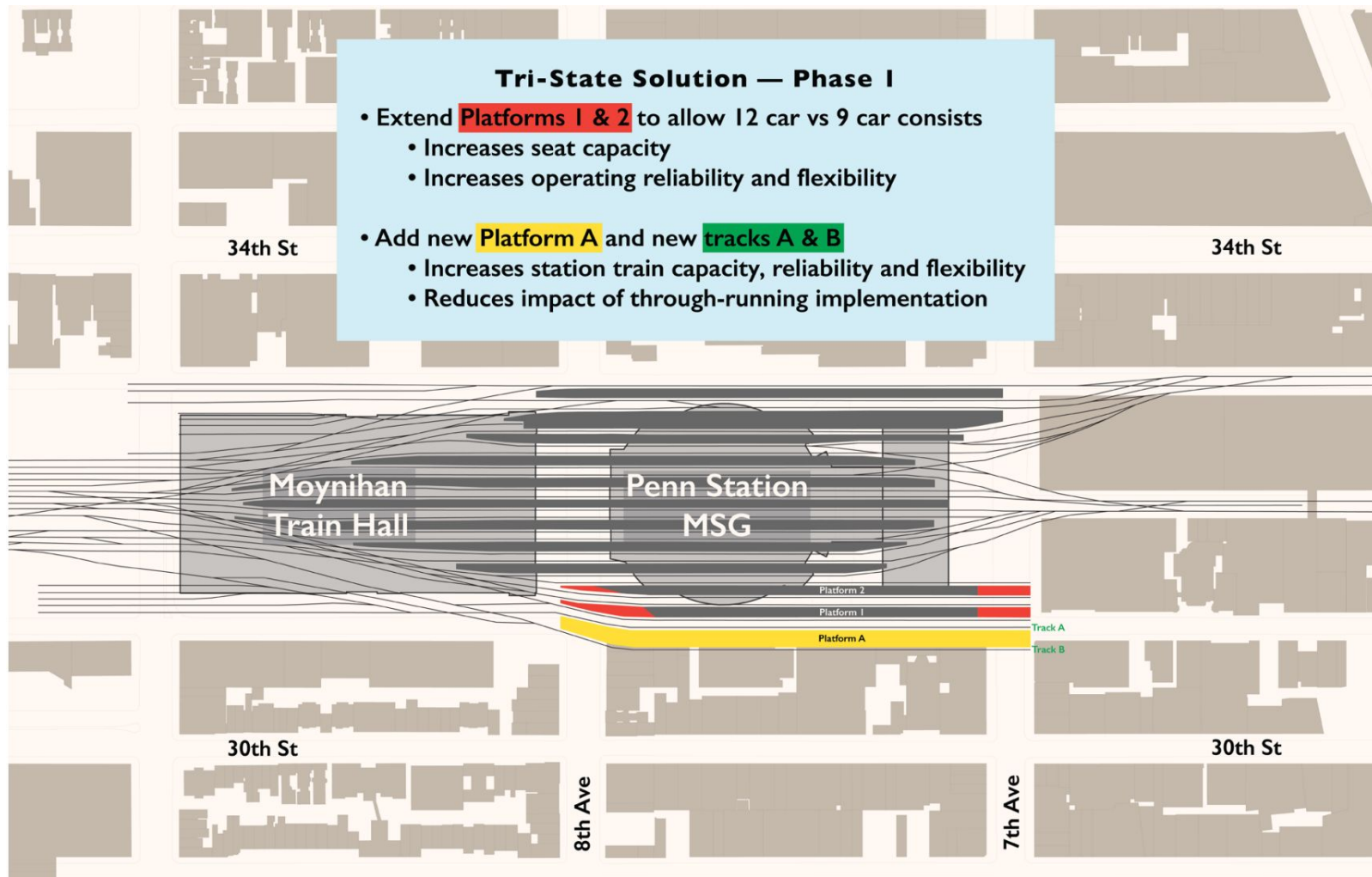
## Amtrak Proposal

- Extend **Platforms 1 & 2** to allow 12 car vs 9 car consists
  - Increases seat capacity
  - Increases operating reliability and flexibility
- Add at least **5 new platforms** and up to 12 new tracks
  - Increases complexity of station operations
  - Allows for future through-running via **Gateway East**



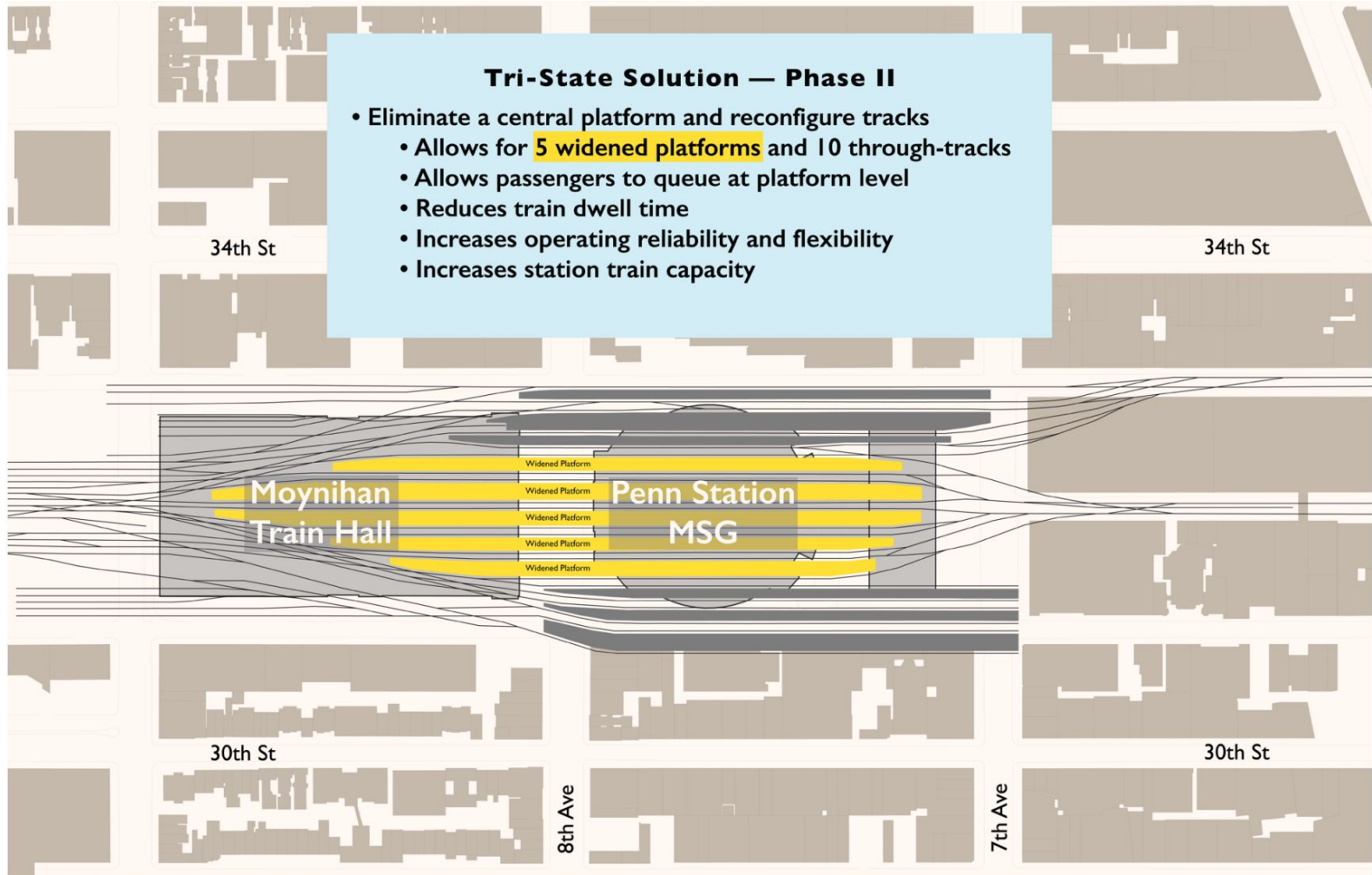
### Tri-State Solution — Phase I

- Extend **Platforms 1 & 2** to allow 12 car vs 9 car consists
  - Increases seat capacity
  - Increases operating reliability and flexibility
- Add new **Platform A** and new **tracks A & B**
  - Increases station train capacity, reliability and flexibility
  - Reduces impact of through-running implementation



## Tri-State Solution — Phase II

- Eliminate a central platform and reconfigure tracks
  - Allows for 5 widened platforms and 10 through-tracks
  - Allows passengers to queue at platform level
  - Reduces train dwell time
  - Increases operating reliability and flexibility
  - Increases station train capacity





# More Than a Vision – A New Business Model

The upgrades that are required to achieve a unified Regional Rail network are all components of a new business model for what we currently call “commuter” rail.

The old idea of “haul in and haul out” using highly inefficient, inaccessible, and environmentally dirty equipment, as well as an antiquated stub-end terminal operations model, must give way to the future.

Through-running and Regional Rail will significantly reduce our region’s contribution to climate change while desegregating people and opportunities.

# Opportunities Unlocked: Newark



## The Path Forward: Short-term (0-5 years)

- Establish a network manager
- Restructure fare policies (Freedom Ticket expansion, fare capping, free transfers)
- Unify mobile ticketing apps and enable “through-ticketing” (the ability to buy fares across agency systems)
- Unify wayfinding (signage, maps) across transit agencies
- Share data between transit agencies and departments of transportation
- Coordinate schedules between modes for more efficient transfers
- Increase off-peak and bidirectional rail service
- Introduce through-running NJT, LIRR, and MNR service at Penn Station

# The Path Forward: Long-term (5-15 years)

- Permanently establish NJT, LIRR, and MNR revenue through-running service at Penn Station
- Coordinate rolling stock procurement between transit agencies
- Automate fare collection
- Expand rail electrification
- Retrofit stations for high-level boarding
- Build Sunnyside Station
- Introduce passenger rail service on freight corridors and abandoned rights of way

# From Here to There: Regional Rail for Metro New York

Read our report

[bit.ly/NYCRegionalRail](https://bit.ly/NYCRegionalRail)

