



Build Gateway Now Campaign Proposal 2022-23

Over the past grant period beginning October 2020, the *Build Gateway Now Coalition* and RPA have kept up the steady drumbeat of public support for the Hudson Tunnel Project and other Gateway Program projects. Through a range of activities and events, we have highlighted the need for the program and put positive pressure on those responsible for advancing the project to its next step. This often required a softer and more strategic approach than in past years, but still helped advance the project and shape public perception of the program and its components.

Specifically, RPA, working in concert with the coalition, continued to be an established organization for honest and insightful analysis and commentary about the Gateway Program. RPA and the coalition earned 103 press hits during the grant period, including mentions in the New York Times, Bloomberg, and a number of TV appearances. While legislation and specific milestones drove much of the coverage, RPA was successful in garnering at least one Gateway mention in every month of the grant period, often using original pitches such as the 10-year anniversary of ARC's cancellation or a list of coalition New Year's resolutions to fill in quieter periods in the calendar.

In March of 2022, RPA held the Gateway Program Town Hall with FTA Administrator Nuria Fernandez and FRA Administrator Amit Bose to give Federal authorities a chance to voice how the current administration will support the project. The program was successful in engaging the coalition, press, and public, as over 360 unique attendees joined coalition members who drafted and asked questions of the administrators.

Additionally, the Gateway Program took center stage at the RPA Centennial Assembly. New York Governor Kathy Hochul and New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy made a rare joint appearance to announce that former New Jersey Transportation Commissioner Kris Kolluri would [become the first CEO of the Gateway Development Commission](#). Additionally, Majority Leader Schumer encouraged the Gateway Program's key stakeholders — most of whom were in the room — to settle their differences and come together now to build Gateway by helping the Gateway Development Commission to become a grant eligible agency, asking New York and New Jersey to sign memorandums of understanding clarifying their funding commitments, and calling on the Federal Railroad Administration to commit to supporting Gateway using funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

In addition to direct work supporting the Gateway Program, RPA also led or joined efforts to advocate for new infrastructure funding and more Federal support for Gateway Program partners who saw their operating budgets decimated by the pandemic. Efforts included research such as the [Infrastructure for](#)

[Recovery and Renewal](#) report, which highlighted the economic benefits of constructing the Gateway Program, as well as an array of additional advocacy activities.

During this grant cycle, as always, our strong working partnerships with the GDC, Amtrak, and other Gateway Program partners will inform our work, but we will continue to operate as an independent voice.

Our work for this grant cycle will be comprised of four major activities: the development of original content; coalition engagement, management, and growth; press engagement; and the creation of new research.

Original Content Development

RPA will develop public messaging and content to highlight the accomplishments of the various Gateway Program projects and activities that the media can reference and coalition members can share. RPA proposes three related activities for this grant cycle:

Gateway Program Interactive Map RPA proposes planning, designing, and developing an interactive map formatted for embedding on the buildgateway.org website that would allow visitors to explore and learn more about the individual components of the Gateway Program. The underlying data would be planned and set up in a way that would maximize the ability of RPA to update information over time so it can reflect project status, costs, partners, and other relevant information we choose to be accessible to the public.

Timeline: Fall 2022

Budget: \$4,000

Gateway Program Animated Explainer Video RPA also proposes the planning, design, and production of an animated one-minute video covering the individual improvements of the Gateway Program. The content would be introductory in nature, discussing the urgent need for the projects, their components, and their benefits. The style would be similar to the "[Tunnel Trouble](#)" video previously produced by RPA.

Timeline: Winter 2022

Budget: \$2,000

Paid Advertising Previous paid campaigns have focused on building a robust Twitter following for the [@build_gateway](#) handle, resulting in a solid 3,500 followers. These campaigns appear to have largely tapped the universe of interested followers on Twitter. This cycle will instead highlight specific articles, reports, or op-eds that drive home key advocacy points.

Timeline: Ongoing over 18 months

Budget: \$12,000

Metrics to be reported for the paid advertising campaigns will include social media and email list growth, engagements, and impressions, engagements.

Coalition Management, Engagement and Growth

While the Build Gateway Now Coalition is fairly well-established and cohesive, we can strengthen its engagement through more regular contact and with fresh content. These tactics include:

- Conducting regular calls and in-person briefings to ensure stakeholders have the latest project information, particularly during key moments for the project and when new research is published. For some members, we will organize one-on-one calls to strengthen relationships with key individuals in the coalition. Further, we plan to sponsor educational presentations and/or briefings for partner organizations in the tri-state area and beyond – both to engage and grow the coalition.
- Updating the BuildGateway.org website, which was merged into the improved rpa.org. Here, we will amplify research, press releases, social media posts, and other public documents from Gateway Program partners, helping to centralize all of these key resources.
- Mobilizing the coalition to comment at GDC meetings and hearings, support the project with positive statements in the press, speak favorably about the project in public settings, and share useful information with colleagues. RPA will supply coalition members with the most relevant and up-to-date information and talking points.
- Generating op-eds and LTEs from coalition members. This gives them a chance to sign their name to written materials advocating for Gateway projects and help us reach a wider readership.
- Growing the coalition by mining attendance lists from previous panels and the RPA assembly, as well as by asking existing members (during one-on-one calls to be done later this summer and in early fall) to invite colleagues, friends and members of organizations whom they believe would be a valuable asset to the coalition.

Metrics to be reported for the coalition management, engagement and growth will include the size of the coalition and the number of members added, the number of meetings held, and the completed tasks from the list above.

Timeline: Ongoing over 18 months

Budget: \$284,000

Media Outreach and Engagement

Rapid response RPA and the Coalition will continue to respond quickly to relevant events and breaking news through writing timely, responsive statements and social media engagement with the freedom to be direct with those who are holding up progress – whether that's at the local, state, federal or agency level. We will also respond to key project developments or comments from key decision-makers on our website and social media channels.

Other Media Engagement could include the following tasks.

- Reach out to publications for op-ed placements, earned media and editorial board engagement.
- One-on-one Penn Station and Gateway Program tours for reporters new to covering the issue.
- Pitches related to “invented” milestones, such as the Tunnel’s birthday, the anniversary of Superstorm Sandy or Penn Station’s demolition.
- Letters of support and op-eds on key topics, especially when public agencies and government entities are slow to move or holding up progress.

Social Media We will continue to bolster our social media pages, specifically our Twitter account, which now has nearly 3,600 followers and has tweeted over 1,200 times. We will also re-engage with our followers on Facebook and work alongside other RPA social media channels, such as Instagram and LinkedIn. Our current social media tactics include: thanking electeds, pointing out delays in the projects, highlighting relevant and novel research, and commenting on current events that point to the need for Gateway.

Metrics to be reported for media outreach and engagement and growth will include the number of news clips, social media account growth and engagement, and other tasks completed from the list above.

Timeline: Ongoing over 18 months

Budget: Included in coalition management

Publish & Promote Original Research

Rather than focusing primarily on one large report, RPA will instead focus on easily digestible and shareable content that is timely and responsive to the public discussion and the interests of coalition members and complete a mid-sized report on Penn Station Through-Running.

Project One-Pagers/Benefits Reports are intended to be a series of easy-to-update one-pagers that describe the various Gateway Program projects and their benefits. As projects advance, plans become clearer, or project impacts for passengers, the economy, or the environment become known, we will plan for these one-pagers to be easily updated to reflect the most current information and talking points.

Timeline: Approximately 1 every 2 months over 18 months

Budget: \$12,000

Penn Station New York Through-Running Report will walk through the current conditions at Penn Station, including how the current tracks and platforms operate and connect with the station. How the conversion of the station to a full-through running operation is technically challenging and would lead to significant disruptions. Why building Penn Station Expansion is a way to achieve a version of Penn as a through-running station that will lead to the greatest increase in capacity and help achieve long-term visions for a more integrated regional network.

Specific report release support actions will include, but are not limited to:

- Coalition press release
- In-person or Virtual press event
- Ed board engagement and associated op-eds
- Social media shares
- Calls, presentations, and engagement of third parties, both locally and nationally
- Emails and other support as needed

Metrics to be reported for research will include:

- Number of one-pagers and research posts completed
- Media mentions: including direct mentions, mentions via surrogates, and ed board or op-eds/LTEs generated
- Social media engagements
- Presentations completed

Timeline: Spring 2023

Budget: \$36,000

Total Budget

Requested from Amtrak: \$350,000 for 18 months.

FY22 July 1, 2022 – Sept. 30, 2022: \$55,333.33

FY23 Q1 Oct. 1, 2022 – Dec. 31, 2022: \$53,333.33

FY23 Q2 Jan. 1, 2023 – March 31, 2023: \$69,333.33

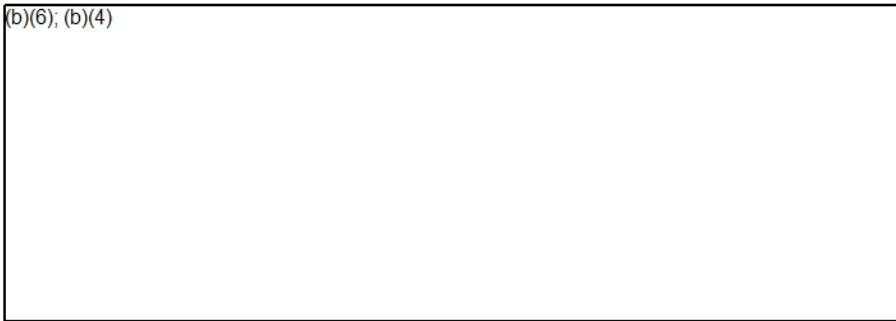
FY23 Q3 April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023: \$69,333.33

FY23 Q4 July 1, 2023 – Sept. 30, 2023: \$51,333.33

FY24 Oct 1, 2023 – Dec. 31, 2023: \$51,333.33

RPA Staff

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1/29/2026