

Governor Phil Murphy

Murphy Administration Celebrates Final Step Toward Construction of New Portal North Bridge

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President & CEO Kevin Corbett Signs Full Funding Grant Agreement

Procurement Process to Construct the New Portal North Bridge Begins Immediately

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy, alongside Department of Transportation Commissioner and NJ TRANSIT Board Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin Corbett, U.S. Senator Bob Menendez, Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill, Congressman Tom Malinowski, and Amtrak Board Chair Tony Coscia, today celebrated the finalization of the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to construct a new Portal North Bridge. NJ TRANSIT CEO and President Kevin Corbett executed the agreement with the FTA today, which will provide \$766.5 million dollars in federal funding for the Portal North Bridge.

The new Portal North Bridge, a \$1.8 billion project, is fully designed and fully permitted, having received a Record-of-Decision from the Federal Railroad Administration in 2013, which was adopted by the FTA in August 2017. NJ TRANSIT also announced that it has released an Invitation for Bid (IFB) on the project to build a new higher, fixed span across the Hackensack River in Kearny. The current 110-year old Portal Bridge has long been a source of major service disruptions for NJ TRANSIT and Amtrak customers traveling on the Northeast Corridor.

"After years of advocacy from my Administration, federal and state transportation leaders, and elected officials up and down our impacted rail lines, we are ready to put our capital to work to create a modern, reliable, and safe span that will carry our economy and our people forward for the next 100 years," **said Governor Murphy**. "With construction of a new bridge, we'll eliminate one of the most-frustrating choke-points in the entire Northeast Corridor, improving commutes for hundreds of thousands of New Jerseyans. I look forward to working alongside President-elect Biden and his team to ensure the full Gateway Program is delivered, including new tunnels under the Hudson River."

"This funding agreement demonstrates that state and federal agencies can partner together to make needed investments that will modernize and improve our infrastructure to meet future demands," **said Transportation Commissioner and NJ TRANSIT Board Chair Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti**. "The new Portal Bridge will improve the speed and reliability of regional and commuter rail traffic, and will allow marine traffic to move freely without having to wait for the old bridge to open."

"Executing the Full Funding Grant Agreement marks a key milestone in our efforts to replace this critical yet unreliable 110-year-old bridge, and finally give our customers the reliability they deserve as they commute to and from Penn Station New York," **said NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin S. Corbett**. "I want to once again thank our New Jersey Congressional Delegation for their steadfast advocacy, and our partners at Amtrak for their support. We're looking forward to getting shovels in the ground later this year."

"Today marks the culmination of an exhausting, years-long fight to secure the federal funding we need to replace the antiquated and oft-malfunctioning Portal Bridge that has been the bane of existence for New Jersey commuters. The execution of the Full Funding Grant Agreement allows this critical project to now move full speed ahead," **said U.S. Senator Bob Menendez**. "New Jerseyans deserve a safe and reliable transportation network, and that means advancing the entire Gateway program, which includes replacing the Portal Bridge and building a new trans-Hudson rail tunnel."

"Portal Bridge serves as a vital link to the entire Northeast Corridor but has long outlived its usefulness, so it is well past time to replace this century-old piece of infrastructure. The federal grant agreement signed today is welcome news in our years-long efforts to modernize our aging rail transit system that has plagued New Jersey commuters," **said U.S. Senator Cory Booker**. "I look forward to working with the incoming Biden Administration to harness the momentum from this project and see the entire Gateway Program through to completion."

"I am proud of the work we have done in Congress to secure the necessary funding to replace the Portal North Bridge, which has troubled New Jersey commuters for decades," **said Congressman Tom Malinowski**. "I look forward to construction starting as soon as possible, and to working with the incoming Administration to advance the Hudson River Tunnel portion of the Gateway Project."

"New Jersey is home to our nation's most critical infrastructure needs and this funding agreement is a major milestone towards addressing them. Repairing and upgrading the 110-year-old Portal North Bridge will boost the local economy and improve the quality of life for millions of New Jerseyans," **said Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill**. "It is a testament to the tenacity of New Jersey's Congressional delegation, state and local leaders, and transportation stakeholders that this agreement could be reached amidst many obstacles put in place by the current administration. I look forward to working with the next administration on securing further funding for projects such as the Gateway Tunnel."

"I am excited to hear that we are one step closer to the construction of a new Portal North Bridge," **said Congressman Donald Payne**. "During my time in Congress, I have fought to get millions in federal funding for both this bridge and the entire Gateway Program. I wrote a letter recently to Rep. Peter DeFazio, chairman of the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, to discuss ways to make the Gateway Program a top priority in the new Congress. The current 110-year-old bridge has served us well, but we need a modern bridge to help commuters for the next 110 years. As a member of the House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure, I will continue to fight for funding as needed to get the bridge and Hudson Tunnel Project finished as quickly as possible."

"North Jersey commuters have suffered enough on a bridge nearly as old as the Stone Age. They have been demanding relief and we hear them through their horns," **said Congressman Bill Pascrell**. "This is a big step to finally replacing this decaying structure. Our entire delegation will work hand in glove with our next President Joe Biden to finish the job. It is a top priority and will remain one until Portal Bride is replaced."

"After many years of roadblocks and delays, the crucial funding needed to upgrade the Portal North Bridge is finally

making its way to New Jersey," said **Congressman Albio Sires**. "I have been working tirelessly as a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to secure this important funding that will ensure New Jerseyans no longer need to worry about delays caused by needing to set this century-old bridge back into place. This is the first of many steps that will be taken in the coming years to improve the critical infrastructure of New Jersey, and I look forward to working with the incoming Biden Administration towards further advancing progress on the Gateway Project."

"A new Portal North Bridge rising above the Hackensack River signals a bright new day for Amtrak, NJ TRANSIT and the Northeast Corridor," said **Amtrak Chairman Tony Coscia**. "The Governor's relentless advocacy over the last few years under challenging circumstances coupled with an extraordinary financial commitment was key to reaching this milestone. We congratulate Senators Menendez and Booker and the entire New Jersey delegation on advancing this key element of the Gateway program. We thank them, as well as Senator Schumer, for years of unwavering support. As a result of their collective effort construction will start soon. Amtrak is proud to partner with the State of New Jersey to make the generational investments needed to build modern, reliable infrastructure for the 21st century economy."

"Not only will Portal North Bridge benefit riders who will no longer see hours long delays from the bridge, it means thousands of jobs building the infrastructure of the future – a key component of a regional economy fueled by modern, sustainable mass transit," said **Janine Bauer, NJ Commissioner, Gateway Development Commission**. "I look forward to continuing to work with Governor Murphy, NJ Transit and all our supporters to kick off the full modernization and expansion of the link between New York and New Jersey."

"Seeing Portal North Bridge get the full funding it needs is a wonderful welcome for me to the Gateway Development Commission," said **Balpreet Grewal-Virk, NJ Commissioner, Gateway Development Commission**. "I congratulate Governor Murphy, NJ Transit, our Congressional delegation and everyone who made this happen. I'm committed to helping build on this accomplishment to bring the Gateway projects to reality."

"Full funding for Portal North Bridge is a big step in modernizing the rail system between New York-New Jersey and the entire Northeast corridor," said **Jerry Zaro, NJ Commissioner, Gateway Development Commission**. "After more than a century of service, and using a sledgehammer to knock the tracks back into place, it's time to retire the existing bridge. We're thrilled to support NJ Transit to usher in the future of the Northeast Corridor with this project, and congratulate Governor Murphy and our Congressional delegation for all they did to make this a reality. Now it's time to get the Hudson Tunnel funded and built to join Portal in creating a 21st Century experience for passengers."

NJ TRANSIT, with the assistance of Amtrak, will construct, operate, and maintain a new Portal North Bridge and 2.44 miles of related railroad infrastructure. The project will address critical issues that have long plagued the Portal Bridge and provide the following benefits to the busiest section of railroad in North America by:

1. Eliminating the moveable span;
2. Improving reliability;
3. Increasing train speeds; and
4. Removing conflicts with maritime traffic.

The replacement, which will be preliminarily owned by NJ TRANSIT and maintained by Amtrak, is designed as a high-level, fixed span bridge that will allow marine traffic to pass underneath without interrupting rail traffic. Once full construction begins, the remainder of the Portal North Bridge Project is estimated to take approximately five years.

To help fund the project, the FTA will provide \$766.5 million through the Section 5309 Capital Investment Grants Program and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will provide \$57.1 million through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program. The remainder will be allocated by New Jersey's local share of \$811 million and Amtrak's obligation of \$261.5 million. The FFGA also includes financing for 25 new multilevel rail cars to further increase capacity. The rail cars are options on NJ TRANSIT's existing order of 113 new multilevel cars.

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