

# INSTITUTE FOR RATIONAL URBAN MOBILITY, INC.

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Statement at Special Meeting of Board of Trustees  
Gateway Program Development Corporation  
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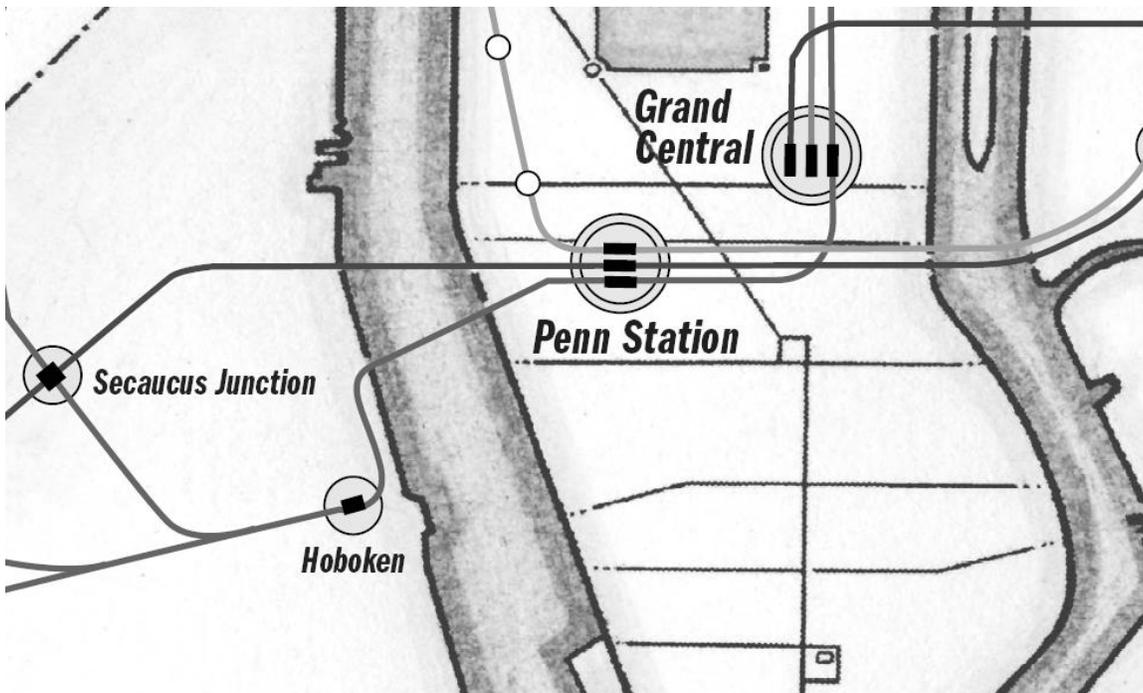
The Institute for Rational Urban Mobility, Inc. (IRUM), is a NYC-based non-profit concerned with reducing motor vehicle congestion and improving the livability of dense urban places. A key IRUM effort is to make the case for transforming the three commuter rail lines serving the NY-NJ-CT metropolitan area into a coordinated regional rail system with frequent service, integrated fares, and thru-running, first at Penn Station and then by linking Penn Station with Grand Central Terminal. IRUM supports doubling Hudson River regional rail capacity but urges GPDC's Board of Trustees to carefully consider a much better routing for the new Hudson Tunnels, briefly described in the attached thumbnail. This proposal is described in more detail in IRUM's August 15, 2017 comments which were submitted during the DEIS process, and can be found at:

[http://www.irum.org/20170815%20-%20Hudson Tunnel DEIS IRUM comments.pdf](http://www.irum.org/20170815%20-%20Hudson%20Tunnel%20DEIS%20IRUM%20comments.pdf)

IRUM urges GPDC trustees and staff to carefully consider these comments as it moves forward with the Hudson Tunnel project. Routing the new tunnels by way of the Hoboken Terminal area and connecting them directly to NJ Transit's Morristown Line offers the following advantages over GPDC's current plan:

1. Doubles the mainline capacity between Newark and NY immediately without any expansion of the existing route via Secaucus.
2. Avoids taking of any private property in Hudson County
3. Eliminates loss of wetlands in the Hackensack Meadowlands
4. Provides significantly better rail service to the Jersey City-Hoboken waterfront business district, the state's largest in terms of class A office space.
5. Provides a useful connection to the Hudson-Bergen light rail line
6. Eliminates the need for expansion of Portal Bridge and permits the existing bridge to remain safely in use indefinitely

The Penn Station-Grand Central connection was described in the Access to the Region's Core (ARC) 2003 Major Investment Study. IRUM urges GPDC to immediately request that all relevant information about this connection be made available to the public. Transparency should be a critical element in planning for this much needed Hudson Tunnel project.



## **Build new Hudson River Passenger Rail Tunnels via Jersey City-Hoboken Waterfront Business District and then via Penn Station and Grand Central**

A simple and cost-effective way to remake the region's three commuter rail lines into a coordinated **Regional Rail System** is to route much-needed new Hudson River passenger rail tunnels by way of the Jersey City-Hoboken waterfront business district, NJ's largest in terms of "Class A" office space. A new on-line station would be constructed just south of the Hoboken Terminal and a new 2.3 mile two-track tunnel would connect with existing tracks and platforms at Penn Station, NY. A 1.2 mile two-track tunnel would be constructed under 31<sup>st</sup> Street and Park Avenue to link with existing tracks and platforms in the Lower Level of Grand Central Terminal. New stairways and wider concourses are critical to rebuilding Penn Station into a suitable gateway to NYC. Thru-running increases capacity and connectivity while permitting removal of rail yards for new resilient waterfront development. It efficiently uses existing rail infrastructure, avoiding adverse environmental impacts of new rail trackage in the Hackensack Meadowlands.

The Penn Station-Grand Central connection allows west of Hudson residents to reach destinations in East Midtown, the largest concentration of office buildings in the nation and makes it easier for Bronx, Westchester and Connecticut residents to reach the growing West Midtown area as well as Hoboken/Jersey City, Newark and Newark Airport. An interconnected **Regional Rail System** -- with frequent service, integrated fares and through-running -- provides an attractive alternative to driving on crowded highways that cannot be expanded and increases the economic viability of the region in the face of growing global competition.