



**STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ALBANY, N.Y. 12232**

WWW.DOT.NY.GOV

**JOAN McDONALD
COMMISSIONER**

**ANDREW M. CUOMO
GOVERNOR**

January 21, 2014

**Mr. Nick Dellisanti
Supervisor
Town of New Baltimore
3809 County Route 51
Hannacroix, NY 12087**

**Re: High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Program Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Pennsylvania Station, New York City to Niagara Falls Station, Niagara Falls, NY**

Dear Mr. Dellisanti:

We are writing to notify you of the availability of the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Program. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) have prepared this Tier 1 Draft EIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act. The FRA and NYSDOT are using a tiered process, as provided for under NEPA, to complete the environmental review of the program. The Tier 1 Draft EIS is available at www.dot.ny.gov/empire-corridor.

This Tier 1 EIS describes the environmental impacts of proposed system improvement alternatives to intercity passenger rail services along the 463-mile Empire Corridor, connecting Pennsylvania Station in New York City with Niagara Falls Station in Niagara Falls, New York. It addresses broad, corridor-level issues associated with higher speed passenger rail service along Amtrak's Empire Corridor, such as service frequency, service reliability, and trip times, and sets forth a package of follow-on (Tier 2) studies, proposals, and projects. By improving passenger rail service along the corridor, the High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Program will attract additional passengers, increase travel choices, and support economic development, mobility, and environmental sustainability goals. This Tier 1 Draft EIS presents an assessment of the No Build, or "Base" Alternative, and four Build alternatives that would improve maximum authorized speeds west of Schenectady and presents an assessment of the alternatives' social, economic, and environmental effects.

We solicit your comments on the proposed program. Your comments should be as specific as possible and should address either the merits of the proposed program, or the adequacy of the Tier 1 Draft EIS, or both. Please forward your comments to us by **March 24, 2014**. Public input, along with the results of the alternatives evaluation and impact assessment, will be important factors considered in the selection of the chosen transportation options for this program to be presented in the Tier 1 Final EIS.

Six public hearings will be held statewide, at which oral and written comments can be submitted on the Tier 1 Draft EIS, as described in the attached public notice. Written comments on the project and the Draft EIS may also be submitted to David Chan, Project Manager, High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Program, New York State Department of Transportation, 50 Wolf Road, POD #61, Albany, NY 12232. Comments must be submitted in writing, and e-mail comments may be sent to empirecorridor@dot.ny.gov. Comments may also be submitted online at the project website, where the public hearing schedule, the Tier 1 Draft EIS, and a list of repositories where the Tier 1 Draft EIS can also be viewed at www.dot.ny.gov/empire-corridor. All pertinent comments, including those received at the public hearing, will be evaluated before a preferred alternative for the program is identified.

Further information on this program may be obtained from, and copies can be requested from, David Chan, Program Manager (E-mail: david.chan@dot.ny.gov, Tel.: (518) 485-1918).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Chan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

New York State Department of Transportation HIGH SPEED RAIL EMPIRE CORRIDOR PROGRAM

Pennsylvania Station in New York City to Niagara Falls Station in Niagara Falls, NY

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are evaluating improvements to intercity passenger rail services along the 463-mile Empire Corridor, connecting Pennsylvania Station in New York City with Niagara Falls in Niagara Falls, New York. Alternatives considered include the Base, or No Build, Alternative, and alternatives to introduce higher passenger train speeds on the Empire Corridor and to improve reliability, travel times, service frequency, and passenger amenities.

Comments on the Draft EIS must either be in writing or can be submitted in oral testimony at statewide public hearings and must be received by March 24, 2014. Written comments should be sent to David Chan, Project Manager, High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Program, New York State Department of Transportation, 50 Wolf Road, POD #61, Albany, NY 12232. Further information on this program may be obtained from, and copies can be requested from, David Chan, Program Manager (E-mail: david.chan@dot.ny.gov, Tel.: (518) 485-1918).

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- For In-State Calls Only.
- Non-TDD User to TDD User: 1-800-421-1220
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Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with the provision of Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1500 to 1508, six public hearings will be held statewide to present the Tier 1 Draft EIS and receive public comments.

- **Albany, NY:** Tuesday, March 4, 2014, Albany Nanotech Complex, 257 Fuller Road, Albany, NY
- **Syracuse, NY:** Wednesday, March 5, 2014, NBT Bank Stadium, 1 Tex Simone Drive, Syracuse, NY
- **Buffalo, NY:** Thursday, March 6, 2014, The Buffalo Transportation Pierce Arrow Museum, 263 Michigan Avenue, Buffalo, NY
- **Rochester, NY:** Friday, March 7, 2014, National Museum of Play at the Strong, One Manhattan Square, Rochester, NY
- **Utica, NY:** Tuesday, March 11, 2014, Utica Train Station, 321 Main Street, Utica, NY
- **Poughkeepsie, NY:** Wednesday, March 12, 2014, Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center, 12 Vassar Street, Poughkeepsie, NY

Each meeting will consist of an open house that will begin at 4 p.m., followed by the public hearing with presentations that will commence at 6 p.m.

Persons wishing to comment on the project can submit oral testimony or written comments at the public hearings. The public hearings will be recorded, and commenters can sign up for a public speaking slot, which will be limited to 3 minutes per speaker. Groups are requested to designate a single spokesperson. Stations for oral testimony to be submitted privately to a stenographer will also be available during the open house portion of the public hearings.

Written comments can also be submitted by March 24, 2014 to David Chan, Program Manager, at the address listed above, can be emailed to empirecorridor@dot.ny.us, or can be submitted online at the project website at www.dot.ny.gov/empire-corridor. All oral and written comments received during the comment period will be addressed in the Tier 1 Final EIS, which will identify the preferred alternative for the program.

Please contact David Chan at (518) 485-1918 at least one (1) week before the public hearing you plan to attend if you require a sign language interpreter, assistive listening system, translator, or any other accommodation(s) to facilitate your participation in the public hearing.



AVAILABILITY OF TIER 1 DRAFT EIS

NYSDOT and FRA have completed the first step in a tiered environmental review process for the High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Program and are releasing the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A Tier 1 Draft EIS has been prepared which assesses the program alternatives' effects on the quality of the human, natural, and cultural environment, in accordance with the provision of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 P.L. 91-190 (NEPA). The Tier 1 Draft EIS can be viewed online at the project website at: www.dot.ny.gov/empire-corridor, and copies of the Tier 1 Draft EIS are also available for review at the following locations (please contact the libraries to verify business hours).



County	Library	Address	Phone/e-mail
New York	Mid-Manhattan Library	455 Fifth Avenue New York, NY 10016	(212) 340-0863
Westchester	White Plains Public Library	100 Martine Avenue White Plains, NY 10601	(914) 422-1400 cybrarian@whiteplainslibrary.org
Rockland	New City Library	220 N. Main Street New City, NY 10956	(845) 634-4997 bdubois@rcls.org
Putnam	Kent Public Library	17 Sybil's Crossing Kent Lakes, NY 10512	(845) 225-8585 library@kentlibrary.org
Orange	Newburgh Free Library	124 Grand Street Newburgh, NY 12550	(845) 563-3600 nfrst@rcls.org
Dutchess	Adriance Memorial Library	93 Market Street Poughkeepsie, NY 12601	(845) 485-3445 lmuffs@pklb.org
Ulster	Kingston Library	55 Franklin Street Kingston, NY 12401	(845) 331-0507 reference@kingstonlibrary.org
Columbia	Hudson Area Library	400 State Street Hudson, NY 12534	(518) 828-1792
Greene	Catskill Public Library	1 Franklin Street Catskill, NY 12414	(518) 943-4230 Librarian@catskillpubliclibrary.org
Rensselaer	Rensselaer Public Library	676 East Street Rensselaer, NY 12144	(518) 462-1193
Albany	Albany Public Library — Main Library	161 Washington Avenue Albany, NY 12210	(518) 427-4300 aphweb@albanypubliclibrary.org
Schenectady	Schenectady County Public Library — Central Library	99 Clinton Street Schenectady, NY 12305	(518) 388-4500
Schoharie	The Community Library	110 Union Street Cobleskill, NY 12043	(518) 234-7897 cobl@mvls.info
Montgomery	Amsterdam Free Library	28 Church Street Amsterdam, NY 12010	(518) 842-1080
Herkimer	Frank J. Basloe Library	245 North Main Street Herkimer, NY 13350	(315) 866-1733
Oneida	Utica Public Library	303 Genesee Street Utica, NY 13501	(315) 735-2279
Madison	Oneida Public Library	220 Broad Street Oneida, NY 13421	(315) 363-3050
Onondaga	Onondaga County Public Library	The Galleries of Syracuse 447 S. Salina Street Syracuse, NY 13202	(315) 435-1900 reference@onlib.org
Cayuga	Seymour Library	176-178 Genesee Street Auburn, NY 13021	(315) 252-2571
Wayne	Lyons Public Library	122 Broad Street Lyons, NY 14489	(315) 946-9262 lyonslibrary@awwl.org
Monroe	Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County	115 South Avenue Rochester, NY 14604	(585) 428-7300
Genesee	Richmond Memorial Library	19 Ross Street Batavia, NY 14020	(585) 343-9550 kmarc@nioga.org
Erie	Erie County Public Library — Central Library	1 Lafayette Square Buffalo, NY 14203	(716) 858-8900
Niagara	Niagara Falls Public Library	Earl W. Brydges Building 1425 Main Street Niagara Falls, NY 14305	(716) 286-4894

