

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Supplemental Environmental Assessment for Construction of a Concrete Casing Extension in the Hudson Yards, New York, New York

Federal Railroad Administration

Introduction:

For purposes of right-of-way (ROW) preservation, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) is currently constructing an underground concrete casing in the Eastern Rail Yard of the John D. Caemmerer West Side Yard (also referred to as the Hudson Yards) in New York, NY. Amtrak is proposing to extend this underground concrete casing into the Western Rail Yard of the Hudson Yards (the Extension) in order to ensure that the ROW under Hudson Yard is effectively preserved. This ROW is necessary to preserve the possibility of future expansion of rail service between New Jersey and New York (via a tunnel under the Hudson River) and would further support Amtrak's efforts to improve resiliency in response to potential future disasters, such as flooding, in Amtrak's North East Corridor.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Amtrak prepared a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) in August 2014 to examine the potential environmental impacts associated with the Extension. The SEA supplemented the March 2013 Environmental Assessment (EA) and May 2013 Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which examined the potential environmental impacts of constructing the underground concrete casing in the Eastern Rail Yard and found that the construction would have no foreseeable significant impacts on the quality of the environment. In order to support the common environmental analyses, the SEA incorporated by reference the March 2013 EA and the May 2013 FONSI.

The proposed action site—the Hudson Yards Western Rail Yard—is owned by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and used by the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR). Amtrak is the proposed action sponsor and would design and construct the Extension. Amtrak anticipates constructing the proposed action using Federal funding managed through the FRA.

This FONSI prepared for the proposed Extension does not amend or preclude the conclusions presented in the May 2013 FONSI. Construction of the Extension would not affect the March 2013 EA or May 2013 FONSI determination previously made for the underground concrete casing through the Eastern Rail Yard of the Hudson Yards in New York, NY.

Purpose and Need:

An underground concrete casing from 10th Avenue to 11th Avenue is currently being constructed in the Eastern Rail Yard, and the purpose of the proposed action is to preserve additional underground ROW extending from underneath the 11th Avenue bridge to 30th Street in the Western Rail Yard of the Hudson Yards (See Figure 1). Preserving the ROW in Hudson Yards is needed to maintain opportunities to expand rail services to meet future demand and to improve intercity and commuter rail system safety and reliability. As discussed in the May 2013 FONSI and incorporated by reference into the SEA, studies have shown that Hudson Yards is the only

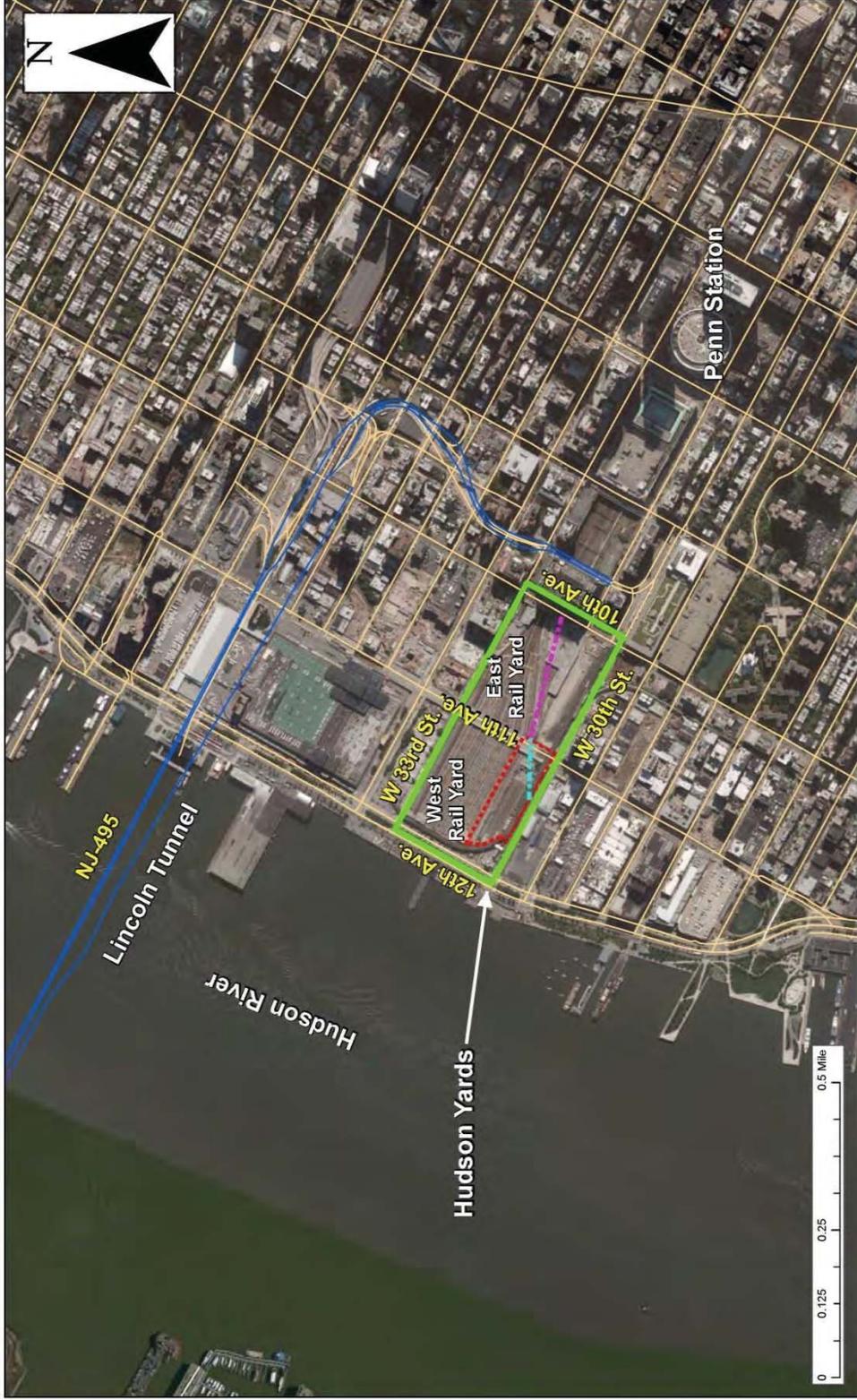


Figure 1: Hudson Yards Concrete Casing Extension Project Location Map

- Hudson Yards
- - - Proposed Action Area in West Rail Yard Including Staging
- - - Proposed Action West Rail Yard
- - - Proposed Action East Rail Yard (currently under construction)
- NJ-495
- Roads

Federal Railroad Administration

Imagery: ESRI ArcGIS Online and data partners
 Date: May 2014
 Prepared for: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
 Contract: BPO1001987



Finding of No Significant Impact

clear alignment on the west side of Manhattan that would allow a rail tunnel under the Hudson River to fully connect to New York Penn Station from the west (see May 2013 FONSI, p. 1-2). The proposed action also supports Amtrak's effort to improve resiliency in the passenger rail system in response to disasters, particularly flooding.

There is an urgent need to preserve this ROW because, in December of 2012, Related Companies (the "Developer") began construction of a large-scale development, referred to as the "Overbuild Project" in the area above Hudson Yards. If the underground ROW is not preserved while the Overbuild Project foundations are being constructed, the use of this location under Hudson Yards would be permanently lost as a possible alignment for future expansion of rail service between New York and New Jersey via a rail tunnel under the Hudson River. The timing of construction under the 11th Avenue bridge is also dependent on the reconstruction schedule of the LIRR's Maintenance of Equipment (MOE) building and its ancillary tracks, which have been demolished and removed as part of the construction of the concrete casing in the Eastern Rail Yard.

Description of Proposed Action:

The proposed action is to construct an underground concrete casing extension to preserve a ROW beneath the 11th Avenue bridge and in the Western Rail Yard for possible future expansion of rail service via a tunnel under the Hudson River into New York Penn Station.

Construction Timing and Schedule:

The Extension is proposed to be constructed in two stages. Construction of the Extension under the 11th Avenue bridge needs to start prior to construction of one of the residential towers proposed in the Eastern Rail Yard (Tower D) as part of the Overbuild Project. Construction of Tower D would require access along 11th Avenue, and the building may be occupied by 2016. Construction of the Extension under the 11th Avenue bridge must also be completed before LIRR's MOE building and its ancillary tracks are scheduled to be reconstructed in October 2015. Therefore, construction of the Extension portion under the 11th Avenue bridge would be anticipated to begin between December 2014 and February 2015 and last approximately 10 months. Conducting work under the 11th Avenue bridge for the proposed action prior to construction and occupation of the residential tower would allow for proper timing and access and would avoid noise, traffic, and access disruptions to residents from construction of the Extension after the building is occupied. It would also permit LIRR's MOE building and ancillary tracks to be reconstructed in October 2015 as scheduled.

Construction of the Extension from the 11th Avenue bridge extending diagonally southwest to 30th Street is anticipated to begin in 2017 after the portion underneath the 11th Avenue bridge is complete and based on funding availability. Construction for this portion is estimated to last between 12 and 15 months. Construction schedule and timing would be coordinated with the Overbuild Project schedule and the City of New York (City).

Finding of No Significant Impact**Description of Alternatives:**No Action:

Under the no action alternative, Amtrak would not construct the Extension to preserve the ROW in the Western Rail Yard.

Construction of Concrete Casing Extension:

The action alternative includes construction of a concrete casing extension that would be approximately 605 feet long, between 50 to 65 feet wide, and between 27 to 38 feet tall. The Extension would originate at the western end of the underground concrete casing currently under construction in the Eastern Rail Yard, extend under the 11th Avenue bridge, and continue diagonally across approximately two-thirds of the Western Rail Yard, underneath a portion of an historic elevated freight rail line the Freight Railroad viaduct (referred to as the High Line), and end at 30th Street. The High Line is a public aerial greenway.

Construction of the Extension would require:

- Tracks 0 and 1 that lead to LIRR's MOE building are currently out of service and have been removed due to construction of the concrete casing in the Eastern Rail Yard. These tracks would need to remain out of service until construction of the portion of the Extension under the 11th Avenue bridge is complete.
- Temporary relocation and replacement of utilities supported by and under the 11th Avenue bridge (storm/sanitary sewer, electric, water, gas) and signals/communications.
- Excavation of approximately 66,000 cubic yards of soil and 14,000 cubic yards of rock.
- Demolition of LIRR's Emergency Services Building in the Western Rail Yard, temporary relocation of Emergency Services Building functions, and reconstruction of the building to its original condition following completion of the Extension.
- Demolition of the structural support system (two roadway spans and one pier) for the 11th Avenue bridge along with restriction of traffic over half of the bridge at a time and reconstruction of the bridge supports and restoration of traffic.
- Temporary underpinning of the High Line.

No permanent operational components, such as tracks, lighting, ventilation, or electrical systems, would be constructed as part of the proposed action. Minor, temporary systems, such as sump pumps, lighting, and ventilation, would be installed in the Extension during construction.

Evaluation of Alternatives:No Action:

Under this alternative, construction of the Overbuild Project would still occur, preventing Amtrak, New Jersey Transit (NJT), or any other rail service from utilizing a ROW underneath the Overbuild Project that would support expanded intercity and NJT commuter rail services and improve intercity and commuter rail system safety and reliability in the Hudson Yards.

Therefore, if the Extension is not constructed before or at the same time as the Overbuild Project foundations, the ROW for the Extension beneath the Overbuild Project would be permanently

Finding of No Significant Impact

lost as a potential alignment for the future expansion of rail service between New York and New Jersey via a rail tunnel under the Hudson River.

Construction of Concrete Casing:

Construction of the Extension would preserve an important underground location for expanding intercity and NJT commuter rail services. In addition, the proposed action supports Amtrak's effort to improve resiliency in the passenger rail system in response to potential disasters, particularly flooding.

Preserving the ROW would maintain opportunities to expand rail services to meet future demand and improve intercity and commuter rail system safety and reliability. The proposed action would not change or add to existing rail operations and would not become operational unless and until this ROW is selected in a future study for the construction of a rail tunnel under the Hudson River into New York Penn Station.

Environmental Consequences and Mitigation Measures:

FRA has analyzed the current environmental conditions and the consequences of the proposed action's environmental impacts as described in the SEA. Measures to avoid and minimize impacts have been incorporated into the project design and construction. Amtrak will continue to coordinate the final design, construction schedule, and construction monitoring plans with New York City and the Friends of the High Line. Based upon the environmental analyses, summarized below, FRA has concluded that construction of the Extension would have no foreseeable significant environmental impacts.

This FONSI does not discuss resources that are not located within the proposed action area or would otherwise not be affected by the proposed action. These resources include: surface water and wetlands, vegetation and habitat, wildlife, threatened and endangered species, and coastal zone resources.

Geology: There would be no substantial adverse environmental impacts from the removal of 14,000 cubic yards of bedrock from the proposed action site. Bedrock excavation would only occur for the portion of the Extension under the 11th Avenue bridge and would last between 2 to 3 months. Amtrak's construction contractor would handle, stage, transport, and dispose of all removed rock in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local regulations. Amtrak's construction contractor would use industry standard practices for New York City and excavation would be coordinated with LIRR, New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA), MTA and New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding agency vibration and/or strain limitation requirements and would obtain permits as needed from the City's Department of Buildings. Amtrak's construction contractor would obtain excavation and rock splitting and blasting permits from the City's Buildings Department. The removal of bedrock would not affect future LIRR, MTA, NYCTA, High Line, or New York City DOT operations because the surface of the Western Rail Yard and the 11th Avenue bridge would be restored following construction of the Extension and would be adequate to support LIRR, MTA, NYCTA, High Line, and New York City DOT operations.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Soils: No adverse impacts from the excavation or handling of the estimated 66,000 cubic yards of urban fill and native soils that would be removed from the proposed action site are anticipated. Trucks would haul all soil and fill material excavated from the proposed action site to licensed disposal facilities. Although the soils and fill material in the proposed action site are not expected to be classified as hazardous waste under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Amtrak's construction contractor would complete verification testing in accordance with RCRA regulations and disposal facility acceptance requirements when soils are excavated. Amtrak's construction contractor would develop a Soil Management Plan to ensure that contaminated materials are handled, staged, transported, and disposed of in accordance with Federal, State, and local regulations.

Groundwater: Impacts to groundwater are anticipated to be temporary and minor and no adverse impacts from the handling of groundwater are expected. Excavation for the Extension trench would occur in the water table; therefore, construction dewatering would be required. Amtrak's construction contractor would prepare a Groundwater Management/Dewatering Plan with procedures for handling groundwater encountered during construction. Amtrak's construction contractor would be required to conduct verification testing of the groundwater, and the Dewatering Plan would describe procedures to ensure that Amtrak's construction contractor would treat or dispose of any contaminated groundwater released during dewatering operations in accordance with Federal, State, and local regulations. Construction dewatering of the excavated Extension trench would be discharged into the LIRR storm sewer system and to the Hudson River at an outfall that is regulated under the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems, of which LIRR is an existing permittee. Groundwater that is discharged into LIRR's storm sewer system would be treated by Amtrak's construction contractor for the removal of sediment before entering the storm sewer system.

Air Quality: Air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed action would be temporary and minor, and would not adversely impact air quality. Annual emissions generated as a result of the proposed action are not expected to exceed threshold levels established in the Clean Air Act's general conformity regulations. Fugitive dust as a result of site clearing and earthmoving activities would temporarily increase during construction of the proposed action. Amtrak's construction contractor would minimize fugitive dust as needed through measures such as the application of water to disturbed areas and haul roads, and speed controls on earthmoving equipment and haul trucks. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the only greenhouse gas (GHG) considered in the SEA because emissions from other GHGs would be negligible. As shown in the SEA, annual CO₂ emissions from the proposed action are expected to be 5,053 metric tons, or 0.011 percent of the total annual CO₂ emissions generated in New York City. Therefore, the relative contribution of GHGs from the proposed action compared to those generated in New York City would be negligible.

Cultural Resources: The SEA assessed the effects of the proposed action on cultural resources in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The properties in the proposed action area are not considered historic because they either date to the 1980s rail yard redevelopment or were substantially altered as part of the 1980s rail yard development project. However, one historic property is located in the Hudson Yards and the above-ground Area of Potential Effect: the High Line Freight Railroad viaduct in the vicinity of 10th Avenue from

Finding of No Significant Impact

Gansevoort Street to West 34th Street (High Line), which has been converted to a public aerial greenway. Temporary visual obstructions created by construction equipment associated with the proposed action could result in temporary loss of context for the High Line. However, based on available documentation located in the files of the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) (*Final Generic Environmental Impact State for the proposed No. 7 Subway Extension and Hudson Yards Rezoning and Development Program* [2004] and *Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Western Rail Yard* [2009]) and data gathered during a field investigation of the Hudson Yards, the proposed action would have no adverse effect on the historic High Line. As part of the proposed action, installation of temporary underpinnings for structural supports of the High Line would not adversely impact the character-defining features or associative attributes that qualify the structure for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As determined through consultation with the SHPO, FRA would require Amtrak to implement protection measures such as monitoring of the High Line to avoid accidental damage during construction.

Based on previous work done at the Hudson Yards and from New York State Office of Park, Recreation and Historic Preservation research, there is low potential for archaeological resources to be present in the archaeological area of potential effect.

In a letter dated July 22, 2014, the New York SHPO concurred with FRA's determination that the proposed action would have no adverse effects on historic properties provided that monitoring of the High Line would occur per the New York City Building Code Technical Policy and Procedure Notice #10/88.

Parks - High Line Freight Railroad Viaduct:

FRA reviewed the conceptual design proposed to support the High Line during excavation and construction of the concrete casing. As discussed in the SEA, the supports for the High Line will not impact the operations of the park or require closure. The concept plan indicates that 17 underground High Line foundation supports would be removed and replaced with the construction of the Extension. The underground foundations would be removed where necessary to construct the concrete casing. Bedrock drops rapidly deeper west of 11th Avenue thus the depth to bedrock increases rapidly west of 11th Avenue so no blasting will be needed in the vicinity of the High Line. There would be no impact or change to the viaduct structure since the foundation removal and replacement work would be at or below final grade. After construction, the High Line structure would be supported by the Extension with no change in the viaduct. Precise numbers and the final design of the temporary removal and the supporting structure of the High Line during construction will be subject to approval by the Friends of the High Line and NYC Parks.

Amtrak will develop a monitoring plan in coordination with NYC and the Friends of the High Line and will implement the plan during construction to ensure there are no potential impacts to the High Line. Strain gauges, vibration monitors, geophones, and surveys are typical monitoring devices and are currently being utilized during the construction in the Eastern Rail Yard. No impacts to nearby structures were noted during the continuous monitoring in the Eastern Rail Yard and none are anticipated for the proposed Extension construction in the Western Rail Yard. Amtrak also understands that no portion of the High Line would need to be closed during the placement and removal of the temporary support structures. Because the Western Rail Yard

Finding of No Significant Impact

would be restored to its current configuration and the Extension would be underground, there would be no long-term visual impacts to the High Line visitors.

Visual Resources: Construction activities associated with the proposed action would result in negligible short-term impacts on views of the Hudson Yards. Visual impacts to the Hudson Yards would likely be indistinguishable to High Line visitors and the surrounding community and businesses when compared to the existing surrounding construction, which will continue long after the Extension would be completed. Because existing buildings and tracks would be restored to their current configurations and the Extension would be buried below ground, no long-term direct or indirect visual impacts from the proposed action are anticipated.

Hazardous Materials Health and Safety: Hazardous materials could be encountered during excavation activities through exposure to soils and fill, exposure to groundwater, or during demolition of the Emergency Services Building. However, with implementation of the hazardous materials and hazardous waste best management practices and adhering to Federal, State, and local requirements for handling of hazardous materials and wastes, no direct or indirect adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed action.

A 2004 testing of soils in the Western Rail Yard, outlined in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Western Rail Yard* (2009), determined that soils throughout the Western Rail Yard are typical of soils in the New York urban environment and contain concentrations of benzene, ethylbenzene, semivolatile organic compounds, and metals that exceed NYSDEC's recommended soil cleanup objective thresholds. However, none of the samples exhibited concentrations in excess of RCRA standards. The contaminated samples raise no unique environmental concerns, are indicative of background conditions in urban fill, and require no specific precautions beyond the typical measures used during construction at redevelopment sites in New York City. Groundwater in the Western Rail Yard was also tested in 2004, as outlined in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Western Rail Yard* (2009), which determined that groundwater in the Western Rail Yard had metals in exceedance of NYSDEC Water Quality Standards. The elevated metal concentration is likely an attribute, however, of the metals in suspended particles in the Western Rail Yard's turbid groundwater, which is common in urban areas with historic urban fill.

Amtrak's construction contractor would complete verification testing in accordance with RCRA regulations and disposal facility acceptance requirements when soils are excavated. Amtrak's construction contractor would develop a Soil Management Plan, a Groundwater Management Plan, and a Dewatering Plan to ensure that contaminated materials are handled, staged, transported, treated, and disposed of in accordance with Federal, State, and local regulations. Additionally, dust control best management practices would suppress any potential for contaminated dust generated by the construction activities, such as spraying water, thorough cleaning of on-site vehicles, placing gravel on exposed soil, and covering transport vehicles with tarps.

Before demolition of the Emergency Services Building, Amtrak's construction contractor would complete an asbestos-containing material and lead-based paint survey of the building. Removal of any residual contents of the oil and water separators and the separators themselves would be handled and disposed of in accordance with all Federal, State, and local requirements. Diesel fuel currently stored in the Emergency Services Building would be placed in appropriate containers

Finding of No Significant Impact

and transported according to Federal, State, and local regulations for disposal or reuse. Construction activities would include the use of hazardous materials and hazardous waste generation from construction equipment, but no impacts on worker and public safety are expected. Amtrak's construction contractor would implement appropriate safety measures, such as preparing a Health and Safety Plan, along with procedures for the handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes during construction activities to limit worker, public, and environmental exposure.

Noise and Vibration: With implementation of monitoring (per the New York City Building Code Technical Policy and Procedure Notice #10/88), noise and vibration control measures, and compliance with city, State, and Federal noise regulations, noise and vibration impacts from the proposed action on buildings and operations would be short-term and within acceptable limits.

Construction activities associated with the proposed action would cause temporary increases in noise levels, although these increases would be indistinguishable from existing construction noises already occurring in and surrounding the Hudson Yards. The section of the High Line surrounding the Hudson Yards is opened in fall of 2014; therefore, people will be visiting the High Line park adjacent to the Western Rail Yard while the proposed action is under construction. Although construction noise from the proposed action may disturb people visiting the High Line, the noise from the proposed action would be short-term and would blend in with the noise from other ongoing construction in the Hudson Yards (such as the Overbuild Project), which will continue well beyond the completion of the proposed action. Amtrak's construction contractor would comply with the New York City Noise Control Code to minimize impacts from noise, limit rock splitting, blasting, and/or pounding hours to minimize disruptions to nearby buildings, and would implement good engineering practices such as proper maintenance and operation by muffling devices and shutting off idling machinery when not in use.

Vibrations from rock excavation and construction can travel into the soil and rock and potentially into the foundations and walls of nearby buildings and facilities. Special excavation techniques, such as rock splitting, would be used to reduce vibration impacts so that no adverse impacts on nearby facilities, buildings, tracks, and railroad systems would occur. Amtrak's construction contractor would obtain excavation and rock splitting and blasting permits from the City's Buildings Department. Amtrak would monitor vibration levels at the No. 7 line tunnel, the 11th Avenue bridge, LIRR facilities (as identified by LIRR), and along the High Line to determine if vibration from the proposed action would cause adverse impacts on these structures and facilities. Strain gauges, vibration monitors, geophones, and surveys are typical monitoring devices and are currently being utilized during the construction in the Eastern Rail Yard. Amtrak would coordinate with property owners when mitigating the vibrations to acceptable levels.

Access and Traffic: The proposed action would have direct impacts on access and traffic in and around the Hudson Yards, but these would be temporary. Impacts may occur from construction workers traveling to the Hudson Yards, from trucks transporting concrete to and haul trucks transporting excavated materials from the proposed action site, and from delivery of construction-related equipment to the proposed action site. These direct impacts would be most noticeable during times of existing traffic congestion, but would otherwise be minimal when compared to the existing traffic conditions in and around the proposed action area. Adherence to

Finding of No Significant Impact

truck routes for haul trucks associated with the proposed action and employee and construction equipment parking in designated areas would minimize impacts on access and traffic from the proposed action. Attachments 3 and 4 on the Comment and Response Matrix (included as an appendix to this FONSI) tabulate predicted employee routes and local truck routes, respectively.

Because road closures would be required on the 11th Avenue bridge between 30th and 33rd Streets during construction of the Extension underneath the bridge, there would be temporary, adverse impacts to motorists and pedestrians using the bridge during construction of the Extension thereunder. Lane closures on the 11th Avenue bridge currently exist, and have existed for approximately one year, due to construction associated with the High Line and Overbuild Project. Currently, the 11th Avenue bridge is partially closed, with two travel lanes and one pedestrian sidewalk accessible. Construction activities associated with the Overbuild Project, and other surrounding construction, are anticipated to maintain this partial closure and two travel lane minimum on the 11th Avenue bridge during the period of the proposed Extension construction (through 2015 and beyond). Thus, pedestrians and motorists traveling on the 11th Avenue bridge during the proposed Extension construction would likely not notice a difference from the current configuration. Safety measures on the 11th Avenue bridge such as a temporary concrete barrier and lighting would be used to maintain safe roadway conditions. The portion of the Extension west of the 11th Avenue bridge is not anticipated to require any roadway lane closures. Amtrak would coordinate with the New York City DOT and New York City Department of Design and Construction during any roadway closures or traffic maintenance.

Worker and equipment access to the Hudson Yards would be provided by an existing entrance at 30th Street and in coordination with MTA and LIRR. All construction vehicles and equipment would be stored or parked in the staging areas located in the southern portion of the Western Rail Yard or in the smaller staging areas in portions of the Eastern Rail Yard closest to 11th Avenue. Minor impacts from construction workers parking personal vehicles on City streets near the Hudson Yards would occur.

Utilities, Infrastructure, and LIRR Operations: Temporary moderate direct and indirect adverse impacts to LIRR and MTA operations would occur as a result of the proposed action. With the implementation of mitigation measures, however, impacts on LIRR and MTA operations would be minimized. Amtrak would make provisions to maintain MTA and LIRR operations throughout construction of the Extension. Amtrak would coordinate a detailed Site Logistics Plan with the LIRR and MTA during the design phase of the proposed action. Listed below are the utilities and infrastructure that the proposed action would affect:

- Temporary removal and rerouting of 300 feet of the existing Western Rail Yard storm drainage system and temporary removal of three manholes,
- Temporary removal and relocation of two electrical AC duct banks,
- Temporary relocation of 400 linear feet each of potable water and fire suppression lines,
- Demolition and reconstruction of the Emergency Services Building, and
- Continued lack of service at Yard tracks 0 and 1.

Amtrak's construction contractor would rebuild all utilities in original locations after completion of the proposed action and restore the utilities to full pre-construction functions and capacities.

Finding of No Significant Impact*Section 4(f) Evaluation of Impacts to the High Line:*

FRA reviewed the design proposed to support the High Line during excavation and construction of the Extension in relation to the potential "use" of the High Line as a Section 4(f) resource under the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (amended and codified in 49 U.S.C. § 303(c)). In accordance with Section 4(f), FRA has determined that there would be no "use" of the resource. FRA made this determination because the temporary supports installed for the construction of the Extension would not impact the High Line at a magnitude to substantially impair the features and attributes of the resource as a park or historic resource.

The proposed action will not require closure of the High Line or preclude the public from using the High Line. The High Line and its features (egress points, walkways, benches, etc.) would not be closed or inaccessible to the public for any amount of time during the Extension construction. All work on the Extension portion below the High Line would be underground and on MTA property. The underground foundation would be replaced but the High Line structure itself would not be altered. The proposed action would not preclude the public from using the High Line park during construction of the Extension, nor would it have any short- or long-term impacts on the public's ability to use the park or on the High Line structure itself.

FRA would require Amtrak to implement protection measures, such as monitoring, to avoid accidental damage to the High Line during construction. Monitoring of the High Line would occur per the New York City Building Code Technical Policy and Procedure Notice #10/88. Exact monitoring measures utilized during construction would be subject to detail design review and approval by Friends of the High Line and NYC Parks.

Cumulative Impacts: All impacts from the proposed action would be temporary, lasting part or all of the approximate 30 months of construction. The scale of the proposed action is minor when compared to the scale and magnitude of the Overbuild Project, and therefore the proposed action's contribution to cumulative impacts, when combined with the Overbuild Project impacts, would be minimal. Cumulative impacts from the proposed action when combined with other reasonably foreseeable future actions in the area would be limited to the proposed action construction phase and include an increase in traffic, air and noise pollution, soil and groundwater disturbance, disturbances to nearby buildings and facilities from vibration, impacts on visual resources from the presence of construction equipment, the potential for contact with hazardous materials, and impacts on LIRR and MTA utilities and operations. Any cumulative impacts would be temporary and are anticipated to be minimal.

Notice of Availability and Comments Received on the Draft SEA:

Letters announcing the start of the public comment period for the draft SEA were sent to associated agencies and community groups on August 22, 2014. The SEA public comment period ended on September 18, 2014. During the comment period, the draft SEA was available for review at the New York Public Library in New York, NY and online at FRA's website. FRA and Amtrak met with Friends of the High Line and NYC Parks on September 18, 2014 to coordinate future monitoring efforts and provide an opportunity for Friends of the High Line and NYC Parks representatives to verbally comment on the SEA. Three agencies provided written comments on the SEA: The Association for a Better New York, The General Contractors

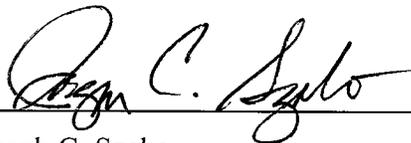
Finding of No Significant Impact

Association of New York, and the City of New York. FRA and Amtrak met with the City of New York representatives on October 28, 2014 to discuss comments on the SEA and coordinate future monitoring efforts for the High Line. Copies of the SEA comments and FRA responses to the comments are provided in the appendix to this FONSI.

Conclusion and Finding of No Significant Impact:

FRA has reviewed the analyses and comments received on the SEA and determined that there are no significant impacts anticipated from the construction of the Extension or right of way preservation following construction. In summary, the project will have temporary impacts associated with construction that will be minimized through construction timing, monitoring plans, and coordination with New York City departments. Coordination with the City of New York Parks Department and the Friends of the High Line will be maintained during design, the development of a construction monitoring plan, and during construction.

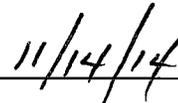
FRA concludes that the August 2014 SEA, prepared for the proposed action, satisfies the requirements of Federal environmental regulations and FRA's *Procedures for Considering Environmental Impacts* and that it has afforded adequate opportunity for the review by parties with an interest in the project. FRA finds that the construction of a concrete casing extension in the Western Rail Yard of the Hudson Yards will have no foreseeable significant impacts on the quality of the environment. This FONSI is based on the SEA, which FRA has determined to adequately and accurately discuss the purpose and need, environmental issues, impacts of the proposed Project, and appropriate mitigation measures. The SEA and comments received on the SEA provide sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This FONSI for the SEA prepared for the proposed Extension does not amend or preclude the conclusions presented in the May 2013 FONSI.



Joseph C. Szabo

Administrator

Federal Railroad Administration



Date

Appendix: Comment and Response Matrix
SEA for the Construction of a Concrete Casing Extension in the Hudson Yards, New York, NY

COMMENTOR AFFILIATION	PARAPHRASED COMMENT	RESPONSE
Association for a Better New York	Support the completion of the Extension. Support Amtrak's efforts to put the Extension in place before additional work in Hudson Yards resumes. Critical that right-of-way is preserved so that the Gateway Project can be completed. Strengthening and preserving City's transportation network is top priority for the Association for a Better New York.	Noted.
The General Contractors Association of New York	Project is an essential element in preserving right-of-way for future Northeast Corridor rail service. The Extension would allow Amtrak to begin addressing damage done to existing tunnels from Superstorm Sandy. A delay in advancing this first element of the Gateway project could seriously jeopardize a critically important element of the nation's transportation system. The NY-NJ-CT tri-state region, and all states along Eastern Seaboard, and in fact entire country, needs additional rail capacity that this project will begin to facilitate.	Noted.
Friends of the High Line	Concerns about modifying the structure of the High Line since the foundations and columns supporting the High Line are the originals and have never been remediated or repaired before.	The concept plan indicates that 17 High Line foundation supports are anticipated to be affected by construction of the Extension. The foundations would be removed where necessary and replaced in-kind, or better. Foundation removal and replacement work would be at or below final grade. The High Line structure would be able to be supported by the Extension. Precise numbers and exact details on the temporary removal of the High Line foundations would be subject to detail design and approval by the Friends of the High Line and NYC Parks. Concept plans (ie: drawings) that illustrate the underpinning were received by Friends of the High Line and NYC Parks representatives at the September 18th,
Friends of the High Line	What would the view be from the High Line during construction of the Extension?	It would look similar to the construction currently occurring in the Eastern Rail Yard. It would look like an open excavation pit during construction.
Friends of the High Line	Would the Extension continue under 30th Street?	No, the Extension would not be continuing under 30th Street at this time. Any future work for the tunnel would be within the shell of the concrete casing, underground, and isolated from above-ground structures or facilities.
Friends of the High Line	What would be the duration and timing of construction?	Construction under 11th Avenue is anticipated to begin between December 2014 and February 2015. For the portion of the extension west of 11th Avenue design would start sometime in 2015 and construction might occur in 2017 or later, after the portion under 11th Avenue was completed. Construction for the portion under 11th Avenue would last approximately 10 months, and between 12 and 15 months for the portion west of 11th Avenue, of which only a part would involve the High Line. Construction schedule and timing would have to be coordinated with Related's Overbuild Project schedule. Timing of construction could be discussed further during the NYC review and coordination on the design.
NYC Parks	What would be the mitigation measures implemented during the Extension construction?	Currently the monitoring plan is proposed, but there are not any specific mitigation measures proposed for the project since the potential impacts are considered temporary associated with construction. The monitoring plan would be provided during construction to ensure potential impacts to the High Line do not occur. Strain gauges, vibration monitors, geophones, and surveys are typical monitoring devices and are currently being utilized during the construction in the Eastern Rail Yard. The City of New York and NYC Parks would be notified immediately if a change in potential impacts was identified during the monitoring. Any noise and/or vibration mitigation methods would be coordinated with the City to adhere to City standards and all appropriate permits would be obtained. No impacts to nearby structures were noted during the continuous monitoring in the
Friends of the High Line	Provide an explanation of measurements on engineering drawings [provided in meeting].	Depth of excavation is approximately 65 feet below surface. The Extension would be 605 feet long, 50 to 65 feet wide, and 27 to 38 feet tall when completed.
NYC Parks	What would be the duration of rock excavation during the Extension construction?	Rock excavation for the 11th Avenue portion would occur between 2 to 3 months. The area near the High Line would only require the excavation of soil.
Friends of the High Line	Would acceleration of construction be possible?	The portion under 11th Avenue is a ready-to-go design. Any acceleration of the portion west of 11th Avenue would be dependent on funding.

Appendix: Comment and Response Matrix
SEA for the Construction of a Concrete Casing Extension in the Hudson Yards, New York, NY

COMMENTOR AFFILIATION	PARAPHRASED COMMENT	RESPONSE
NYC Parks	NYC Parks would have to review and approve plans before the City can sign off on the construction plans. An engineering review by the Parks' department is critical. Amtrak would be expected to pay for this review.	Noted. Future coordination with NYC Parks is anticipated and would continue throughout design.
City of New York	Overall, we recognize FRA and Amtrak's need to preserve the ROW and the importance of sequencing construction. We are confident with close coordination we will be able to minimize impacts on the High Line and surrounding community.	Future coordination with the City of New York is anticipated and would continue throughout design and construction.
City of New York	We remain concerned that without close monitoring and targeted mitigation measures, the blasting and drilling under the High Line may affect one of the city's most used and popular areas, as well as the surrounding area, during the High Line's busiest season.	Monitoring during construction will be implemented and is expected to be coordinated with the City of New York, and other applicable agencies, throughout design and construction. Because bedrock at and near the High Line is below the anticipated excavation depth, no blasting or other rock excavation activities are anticipated to occur beneath or in close proximity to the High Line. It is anticipated that only soil would need to be excavated beneath or in close proximity to the High Line.
City of New York	There is a lack of specific data on the potential impacts on the High Line and we do not concur with the finding that the action would not result in a use of a Section 4(f) property. We ask that specific mitigation measures for the period of construction be incorporated into the environmental documents. We also ask that you coordinate through this office, as the impacts on the area involve a number of city agencies.	FRA made the determination that there is no use of the High Line for the purpose of Section 4(f) because the temporary supports installed during the Extension construction would not impact the park qualities or features of the High Line, require closure of the High Line, or preclude the public from using the High Line. The High Line and its features (egress points, walkways, benches, etc.) would not be closed or inaccessible to the public for any amount of time during the Extension construction. All work on the Extension in the vicinity of the High Line would be underground and on MTA property and would not alter the structure. After the concrete casing is constructed it will be underground and not visible by the users of the High Line. The monitoring plan would be provided to the City, and Friends of the High Line prior to construction to ensure impacts to the High Line do not occur. Noise and vibration mitigation methods would be coordinated with the City to adhere to City standards and all appropriate permits would be obtained. Strain gauges, vibration monitors, geophones, and surveys are typical monitoring devices and are currently being utilized during the construction in the Eastern Rail Yard. No impacts to nearby structures were noted during the continuous monitoring in the Eastern Rail Yard and none are anticipated for the proposed Extension construction in the Western Rail Yard. Amtrak will maintain coordination with the City of New York throughout design and construction.
City of New York	The SEA largely ignores the High Line in its assessment of potential impacts. We feel the SEA should also analyze impacts on the surrounding community, including residents and local businesses, due to construction activity.	Potential impacts to the High Line were analyzed in the SEA under Cultural Resources, Visual Resources, Noise, and Vibration. FRA also reviewed the design proposed to support the High Line during excavation and construction of the concrete casing in relation to impacts to the High Line and the potential "use" of a Section 4(f) resource. FRA determined in accordance with Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (amended and codified in 49 U.S.C. § 303 (c)) that there would be no "use" and no further evaluation for Section 4(f) was needed. FRA made this determination because the temporary supports installed during the Extension construction would not impact the qualities or features of the High Line, require closure of the High Line, or preclude the public from using the High Line. The High Line and its features (egress points, walkways, benches, etc.) would not be closed or inaccessible to the public for any amount of time during the Extension construction. All work on the Extension portion below the High Line would be underground and on MTA property and would not alter the structure. A description of the High Line underpinning process is provided on page 8 of the SEA. Concept plans (ie: drawings) that illustrate the underpinning were received by Friends of the High Line and NYC Parks representatives at the September 18th, 2014 meeting. Potential impacts identified in the SEA that could affect the surrounding community (residents, businesses) were visual resources, noise and vibration, and access and traffic. Visual impacts to the Hudson Yards would be indistinguishable to the surrounding community and businesses when compared to the existing surrounding construction; construction that will continue long after the Extension would be completed. Because the Western Rail Yard would be restored to its current configuration, and the Extension would be underground, there would be no long-term visual impacts on the community. Besides the High Line, no noise-sensitive receptors (churches, schools, etc.) exist within hearing range of the Hudson Yards. Local business and community members near the Hudson Yards would likely not be able to distinguish the noise from the proposed Extension construction from existing construction noise unrelated to the Hudson Yards. Noise impacts would last only during the duration of construction and would not be long-term. Vibrations from construction could potentially travel through soil and rock and into the foundations and walls of nearby buildings. Vibration impacts would be reduced with special excavation techniques (ie: rock splitting), monitoring, permit approval, and coordination with property owners. Details on the impacts to access and traffic can be found in the response to Comment #26. Impacts to community members from the proposed

Appendix: Comment and Response Matrix
SEA for the Construction of a Concrete Casing Extension in the Hudson Yards, New York, NY

COMMENTOR AFFILIATION	PARAPHRASED COMMENT	RESPONSE
City of New York	The Section 4(f) finding is missing the requirement under DOT rules that a 4(f) determination should include all possible planning to minimize harm to the High Line. There is no signed finding by the Administrator that there is no constructive use, nor is there enough of a basis or showing of facts beyond a conclusory statement to show there would not be one. Without more information and analysis, we have no basis to concur with such a finding.	FRA understands the importance of protecting the High Line and reviewed the preliminary designs for temporarily supporting the High Line. FRA determined in accordance with Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (amended and codified in 49 U.S.C. § 303 (c)) that there would be no "use" and no further evaluation for Section 4(f) was needed. FRA made this determination because the temporary supports installed during the Extension construction would not impact the qualities or features of the High Line, require closure of the High Line, or preclude the public from using the High Line. The High Line and its features (egress points, walkways, benches, etc.) would not be closed or inaccessible to the public for any amount of time during the Extension construction. All work on the Extension portion below the High Line would be underground and on MTA property and would not alter the structure. The Project will not permanently or temporarily close the park and there is no conversion of property to a transportation use. Amtrak will develop the design plans, construction schedule, and the Construction Monitoring Plan in coordination with NY City Parks and Friends of the High Line to ensure impacts are avoided.
City of New York	SEA should fully explain measures to be undertaken in order to ensure the construction work and associated vibrations do not damage the High Line, supporting structures, or disrupt public visitation. It is our understanding that no portion of the High Line would need to be closed during the placement and removal of the temporary support structures.	The monitoring plan would be provided to the City and Friends of the High Line for review prior to construction to ensure potential impacts to the High Line do not occur. Noise and vibration mitigation methods would be coordinated with the City to adhere to City standards and all appropriate permits would be obtained. Strain gauges, vibration monitors, geophones, and surveys are typical monitoring devices and are currently being utilized during the construction in the Eastern Rail Yard. No impacts to nearby structures were noted during the continuous monitoring in the Eastern Rail Yard and none are anticipated for the proposed Extension construction in the Western Rail Yard. Future coordination with the City of New York is anticipated and would continue throughout design and construction. Amtrak also understands that no portion of the High Line would need to be closed during the placement and removal of the temporary support structures.
City of New York	With respect to potential impacts to the High Line, close coordination between Amtrak and NYC Parks and Friends of the High Line will be necessary. We also suggest close coordination with NYCDOT and other agencies. The City appreciates your reaching out to NYC Parks and Friends of the High Line to initiate the coordination on September 18, 2014.	Future coordination with NYC Parks, Friends of the High Line, City of New York, NYCDOT, and other applicable agencies is anticipated and would continue throughout design and construction.
City of New York	The City recommends an additional graphic that helps illustrate the project's relationship to surrounding elements such as the No. 7 Subway Line, the High Line, and the Overbuild Project.	Figure 2 on page 6 illustrates the action's relationship to the High Line. The Overbuild Project is expansive and is currently, or will be, surrounding and on top of the Hudson Yards. The No. 7 Subway Line runs underneath 11th Street. The No. 7 Subway Line will be deeper than the Extension, running underneath where the Extension is proposed to be. Please refer to Attachment 1 for a graphic of the Extension and its' proposed relation to the No. 7 Subway Line.
City of New York	The duration of construction activities should be more fully explained.	Construction underneath 11th Avenue is anticipated to last approximately 10 months beginning between December 2014 and February 2015. Rock excavation for the 11th Avenue portion would occur between 2 to 3 months. Construction west of 11th Avenue is anticipated to last between 12 to 15 months and begin in 2017 or later, after construction under 11th Avenue is complete. Rock excavation would not be required for this portion. Construction schedule and timing would have to be coordinated with Related's Overbuild Project schedule. Timing of
City of New York	The first paragraph states "Because depth to bedrock along the alignment increases rapidly west of 11th Avenue..." and other areas state "Depth to bedrock drops rapidly west of 11th Avenue...". Please review and modify as appropriate.	Bedrock drops rapidly deeper west of 11th Avenue thus the depth to bedrock increases rapidly west of 11th Avenue.
City of New York	With respect to Air Quality, the Methodology for General Conformity was not provided in the SEA and actions to minimize dust are not fully explained. Page 21, Section 3.8.2, for Hazardous Materials discusses more robust dust control measures that could be referenced and repeated in Air Quality section for additional clarity.	The methodology used for the general conformity calculations was consistent with the General Conformity Rule of 40 CFR parts 51 and 93. Section 3.5.2, page 16 provides details on how emissions were classified (ie: indirect, direct), what specifics were used in the conformity calculations, and what resources were used for the determination. General conformity calculations are provided in Appendix B of the SEA. Yes, the same dust control measures as described in Section 3.8.2 (spraying water, thorough cleaning of on-site vehicles, placing gravel on exposed soil, and covering transport vehicles with tarps) could be transcribed into the Air Quality section as actions that would minimize fugitive dust.

Appendix: Comment and Response Matrix
SEA for the Construction of a Concrete Casing Extension in the Hudson Yards, New York, NY

COMMENTOR AFFILIATION	PARAPHRASED COMMENT	RESPONSE
City of New York	The first paragraph indicates that there are no noise-sensitive receptors within hearing range of the project site. However, the High Line is a public resource within close proximity and falls within the definition of a noise-sensitive receptor.	The High Line is a noise-sensitive receptor and was evaluated. Noise impacts to the High Line are expressed in Section 3.9.2, page 23, under the Proposed Action.
City of New York	The fourth paragraph indicates that rock splitting, blasting and/or pounding would be limited to 7am to 10pm. This includes evening periods outside of typical construction hours of 7am to 6pm. The SEA does not clearly explain whether there will be work on the weekends, and, if so, during what time period. Please confirm the anticipated construction work schedule and extent of after-hours work anticipated, as well as noise levels anticipated and the specific attenuation measures that will be employed. Consideration should be given to mitigate the impact to construction.	The work schedule would primarily be during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, between 7am and 6pm. Weekend and off-hour work could be possible during the Extension construction as some construction activities could be performed on a 6-day per week, 2-shift per day schedule. This type of schedule is currently being implemented in the Eastern Rail Yard to reduce the overall period of construction and to allow for less disruptive truck deliveries during non-peak hours. Noise levels during the Extension construction are anticipated to be similar to or less than the noise levels currently occurring in the Eastern Rail Yard. Noise levels are anticipated to be mostly indistinguishable from existing construction noises occurring in and surrounding the Hudson Yards, such as the noise from the Overbuild Project construction, which would continue well after the Extension was completed. Noise mitigation measures would be similar to those being employed currently in the Eastern Rail Yard. These measures include, but are not limited to, limiting rock splitting, blasting and/or pounding hours, muffling construction equipment, and shutting off idling machinery.
City of New York	The environmental consequences discussion for vibration should describe a commitment for monitoring in compliance with New York City Department of Buildings Technical Policy and Procedure Notice #10/88. The earlier discussion on page 19 notes that FRA would require Amtrak to implement protection measures to avoid accidental damage. The geotechnical study referenced in the SHPO supporting materials also states that at a minimum the High Line will require monitoring. The specific monitoring and protection measures contemplated to be employed should be further explained. These measures are mentioned in Section 3.6.2 and should be reflected in the environmental consequences section as well. Please explain if additional measures beyond what is described here are anticipated.	As described in Section 3.6.2, page 19, conducting monitoring per the New York City Department of Buildings Technical Policy and Procedure Notice #10/88 is a requirement of the SHPO concurrence and would be followed. Monitoring of the High Line during construction would occur as outlined in Section 3.6.2. Currently the monitoring plan is proposed but, there are not any specific mitigation measures proposed for the project since the potential impacts are associated with construction. The monitoring plan would be developed during the design process in 2015. Amtrak would coordinate with the Friends of the High Line and NYC Parks during design to develop an acceptable plan specific to the needs provided by them. Future coordination with the City of New York and other applicable agencies on the monitoring and protection measures to be employed is anticipated and would continue throughout design and construction. Strain gauges, vibration monitors, geophones, and surveys are typical monitoring devices and are currently being utilized during the construction in the Eastern Rail Yard. No impacts to nearby structures were noted during the continuous monitoring in the Eastern Rail Yard and none are anticipated for the proposed Extension construction in the Western Rail Yard.

Appendix: Comment and Response Matrix
SEA for the Construction of a Concrete Casing Extension in the Hudson Yards, New York, NY

COMMENTOR AFFILIATION	PARAPHRASED COMMENT	RESPONSE
City of New York	The language here states there would be direct adverse impacts on traffic in the regions and traffic and pedestrians using the 11th Avenue bridge. It is unclear from the document what the impacts will be and what specific measures will be implemented to minimize those impacts. Accordingly, please provide further elaboration on these pedestrian and traffic impacts.	Traffic in the region would experience temporary, adverse traffic impacts because of increased congestion from workers and construction-related vehicles traveling to and from the proposed construction site. Traffic impacts from the increased number of vehicles would be most noticeable during the morning and evening commute when traffic is already congested. As described on page 25, it would be primarily noticeable around the intersection of 11th Avenue at West 34th Street during the morning peak traffic period, the intersections of West 34th Street with both 11th and 10th Avenues during mid-day traffic peaks, and at 12th Avenue/West 34th Street during the evening rush hour. Predicted numbers of and routes for worker and construction related vehicles can be found in the responses to Comments #30 and #31. This congestion would be mitigated by requiring trucks to adhere to specific truck routes and construction equipment and vehicle parking being designated to certain areas within the Hudson Yards. Motorists and pedestrians using the 11th Avenue Bridge would experience temporary, adverse impacts due to road and sidewalk closures. Lane closures on the 11th Avenue bridge are currently existing, and have been for approximately 1 year, due to construction associated with the High Line and Overbuild Project. Currently, the 11th Avenue bridge is partially closed, with two travel lanes and one pedestrian sidewalk accessible. Construction activities associated with the Overbuild Project, and other surrounding construction, are anticipated to maintain this partial closure and two travel lane minimum on the 11th Avenue bridge during the period of the proposed Extension construction (through 2015 and beyond). Thus, pedestrians and motorists traveling on the 11th Avenue bridge during the proposed Extension construction would likely not notice a difference from the current configuration. Safety features, such as construction signage, lighting, and concrete barriers between the accessible and non-accessible sides would be installed during construction. Only the construction of the Extension portion under the 11th Avenue bridge would require lane closures; the portion of the Extension west of 11th Avenue is not anticipated to require any roadway lane closures. Coordination with NYCDOT and NYC Department of Design and
City of New York	As a status update, Phase 3 of the High Line opened on September 21, 2014.	Noted. At the time of the SEA composition, the date of Phase 3's opening was unknown.
City of New York	The potential cumulative impacts analysis does not fully disclose or analyze the potential impacts from proposed action and other planned developments in the vicinity, such as local businesses.	The potential cumulative impacts would include the impact of the Extension construction when combined with other reasonably-foreseeable projects, which includes planned developments in the vicinity. Reasonably-foreseeable projects within the vicinity of the proposed action site are presented in Section 3.13.1, page 30. When the proposed Extension construction is compared to the reasonably-foreseeable projects, one of which is the expansive Overbuild Project, the scale of the proposed action is minor and the contribution of the proposed action to the cumulative impacts is moderate. Besides the reasonably-foreseeable projects, various entities, some of which may be local businesses, have proposed conceptual proposals and plans for new buildings and renovations. However, no specific, concrete plans were identified at the time of the SEA
City of New York	The conclusion in cumulative impacts indicates that cumulative impacts would be temporary and with the implementation of mitigation measures such as traffic control and adherence to applicable regulation, impacts are anticipated to be minor. It is unclear what mitigation measures or specific traffic controls methods will be implemented and is unclear if the impacts will be minor.	Construction of the concrete casing from 10th Avenue to 11th Avenue in the Eastern Rail Yard will be near completion or complete by the time construction under 11th Avenue begins. The cumulative impacts would be temporary, lasting all or part of the approximate 30 months of construction. It is anticipated that measures to minimize potential impacts would be similar to what is currently being employed for the construction in the Eastern Rail Yard. These measures, such as concrete barriers for traffic control and spraying water on the soil for fugitive dust control, are expressed in corresponding impact areas in Chapter 3 of the SEA. Coordination with LIRR, MTA, NYCDOT, Related (Overbuild Developer), the City of New York, and other applicable agencies will continue throughout final design and construction.
City of New York	Provide additional details regarding the construction schedule and phasing including a table that details number of workers, worker related vehicles, trucks, and other construction related vehicles.	Since the proposed Extension is a smaller scale project when compared to the ROW portion in the Eastern Rail Yard (800 foot concrete casing in the Eastern Rail Yard versus the proposed 605 foot concrete casing extension in the Western Rail Yard) the number of workers and worker-related vehicles is anticipated to be significantly less than the numbers associated with the work in the Eastern Rail Yard. Details on the numbers and types of construction equipment anticipated to be used during construction are provided in Appendix B of the SEA as that information was utilized to complete the air quality conformity calculations. Please see Attachment 2 for the types and number of construction equipment
City of New York	Please provide the work schedule, temporal distribution, and trip assignments for trucks and construction workers' personal vehicles.	The work schedule would primarily be during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, between 7am and 6pm. Some construction activities could be performed on a 6-day per week, 2-shift per day schedule, as is currently being implemented for the construction on the Eastern Rail Yard portion, to reduce the overall period of construction and to allow for less disruptive truck deliveries during non-peak hours. Distribution and anticipated employee and truck travel routes are incorporated by reference to the March 2013 EA. Construction related traffic is anticipated to follow the same routes that surrounding traffic associated with construction unrelated to the Extension (such as the Overbuild Project) follows. Traffic associated with construction in and surrounding the Hudson Yards primarily travels along 5 north-south avenues (8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th) and three bi-directional crosstown streets (23rd, 34th, and 42nd). Attachment 3 includes a table that shows predicted employee commuter routes to the Hudson Yards from outside Manhattan. Local trucks, those that deliver, load, and provide service within Manhattan, are restricted to routes per New York City Traffic Rules and Regulations (2012), as shown in Attachment 4. Trucks removing excavated material and traveling outside of Manhattan for disposal are anticipated to use the Lincoln Tunnel. Delivery trucks are anticipated to

Appendix: Comment and Response Matrix
SEA for the Construction of a Concrete Casing Extension in the Hudson Yards, New York, NY

COMMENTOR AFFILIATION	PARAPHRASED COMMENT	RESPONSE
City of New York	The project will generate at least 38 truck trips/day (19 in/19 out) and some deliveries will be over 100 miles away. Please identify in what time periods this truck activity is projected to take place.	As described in Section 3.10.2, page 25, disposal transport trucks would only operate during the day and during the typical work-week (Monday-Friday) as disposal facilities are only operational during normal business hours. Some construction activities, such as concrete delivery and placement, could be performed on a 6-day per week, 2-shift per day schedule, as is currently being implemented for the construction on the Eastern Rail Yard portion, to reduce the overall period of construction and to allow for less disruptive truck deliveries during non-peak hours.
City of New York	The applicant should conduct a weekday AM, midday, and PM Levels of Service analysis at locations that will be affected by the partial bridge closure and would result in diversions. Please provide the diversion maps and explain how they were developed.	Lane closures on the 11th Avenue bridge are currently existing, and have been for approximately 1 year, due to construction associated with the High Line and Overbuild Project. Currently, the 11th Avenue bridge is partially closed, with two travel lanes and one pedestrian sidewalk accessible. Construction activities associated with the Overbuild Project, and other surrounding construction, are anticipated to maintain this partial closure and two travel lane minimum on the 11th Avenue bridge during the period of Extension construction (through 2015 and beyond). Thus, pedestrians and motorists traveling on the 11th Avenue bridge during the proposed Extension construction would likely not notice a difference from the current configuration. Only the construction of the Extension portion under the 11th Avenue bridge would require lane closures; the portion of the Extension west of 11th Avenue is not anticipated to require any roadway lane closures. Coordination with NYCDOT and NYC Department of Design and Construction during the proposed Extension construction is anticipated. Because of the extensive construction occurring in the area from the Overbuild and other projects, bi-weekly "30-10" meetings hosted by the NYC Department of Design
City of New York	Since there are other construction projects in the area, the applicant should consult with NYCDOT Office of Construction Mitigation and Coordination and coordinate this project with other construction projects.	Future coordination with NYCDOT is anticipated and would continue throughout construction. The proposed action would be coordinated with Related's Overbuild Project and other construction projects in the surrounding area.
City of New York	The detailed design and construction management plan to be developed for the western portion of the project should ensure that the commitment to keep the High Line open as expressed in the SEA is met.	Future coordination regarding the High Line with NYC Parks, Friends of the High Line, and the City of New York is anticipated and would continue throughout design, planning, and construction. The High Line would be able to remain open and operational during the proposed Extension construction.
City of New York	The project should avoid interference with the High Line stair on 30th Street at 11th Avenue. This stair is a required egress path from the High Line and should remain open during High Line operating hours.	The High Line would be able to remain open and operational during the proposed Extension construction. The 30th Street egress stairway would not be affected during the proposed Extension construction.
City of New York	NYC Parks and Friends of the High Line have a process for approval of all adjacent construction projects. The process requires the submittal of drawing for review by a third-party engineer. NYC Parks approval process is required as part of the NYC Department of Building approval process. Given that the project is not only near the High Line, but proposes to alter the High Line structure, and that the 85-year-old structure has not been repaired, the review is anticipated to take additional time. We recommend Amtrak submit drawings early in the design. The cost of the third party review should be paid by Amtrak.	(See Comment #11). Future coordination with NYC Parks on this is anticipated.
City of New York	NYC Department of Buildings, NYC Parks, and Friends of the High Line will likely require a series of protective measures during construction including, but not limited to, vibration monitoring, in order to ensure the structural integrity of the High Line.	Noted and anticipated. Monitoring and protection measures regarding the High Line would be coordinated with NYC Department of Buildings, NYC Parks, and Friends of the High Line throughout design and construction.

Attachment 2
Predicted Types and Numbers of Construction Equipment

Specific Equipment	Equipment Type	No. of Units
Manlift	Forklifts	1
855 Liebherr Crane	Cranes	1
777 Manitowoc Crane	Cranes	2
Atlas ROC D3 Drill Rig	Bore/Drill Rigs	2
KR-803-1 Rock Anchor Drill	Bore/Drill Rigs	1
Bauer B28 Drill	Bore/Drill Rigs	1
Dump Truck	Dumpers/Tenders	5 in CY2015 and 10 in CY2016-17
Generator	Generator Sets	1
Mobile Crane	Cranes	1
Pay Loader	Rubber Tire Loaders	1
Pay Loader 980 CAT	Rubber Tire Loaders	2
Hydraulic Drill Rig BG 28	Bore/Drill Rigs	2
Track Drill	Bore/Drill Rigs	1
Concrete Mixer Truck	Cement & Motor Mixers	3
Excavator 322C CAT	Excavators	1
Excavator 318E CAT	Excavators	3
Excavator 336 CAT	Excavators	1
Impact Hammer CAT H160E	Crushing/Processing Equipment	1
Vibratory Hammer 1412B ICE	Crushing/Processing Equipment	1
Air Compressor	Air Compressors	1 in CY2015 and 2 in CY2016-17
Hoe Ram	Other Construction Equipment	1
Compactor	Plate Compactors	1
Paver	Pavers	1
Welder 400 amp	Welders	1
Grout Plant	Pumps	1
Pickup Truck	Off-Highway Trucks	2

Attachment 3

Predicted Employee Commuter Routes to Hudson Yards from Outside Manhattan

Traveling From	Route
The Bronx and Westchester	12th Avenue/Route 9A North to Henry Hudson Parkway
Brooklyn and Staten Island	12th Avenue/Route 9A South to Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel
Queens and Long Island	West 34th Street East to Queens Midtown Tunnel
New Jersey via George Washington Bridge	12th Avenue/Route 9A North to Henry Hudson Parkway
New Jersey via Holland Tunnel	12th Avenue/Route 9A South
New Jersey via Lincoln Tunnel	11th Avenue (at West 40th Street) Entrance

Source: Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) and New York City Planning Commission (NYCPC). 2004. *Final General Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed No. 7 Subway Extension and Hudson Yards Rezoning and Development Program* .

Attachment 4
Local Truck Routes per New York City Traffic Rules and Regulations

Traveling From	Route
----	8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Avenues
First Avenue to Twelfth Avenue	23rd Street, 34th Street, or 42nd Street
Broadway to Eleventh Avenue	West 30th Street
Third Avenue to Tenth Avenue	31st Street
Lincoln Tunnel entrance to Eleventh Avenue	West 40th Street
Ninth Avenue to Lincoln Tunnel entrance	West 41st Street

Source: City of New York. 2012. New York City Traffic Rules and Regulations.