



STEVEN M. FULOP
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

CITY OF JERSEY CITY OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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February 1, 2022

Peter Simon
Chief of Staff to the Chairman
The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey
4 WTC
150 Greenwich Street
22nd Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chairman O'Toole:

I write on behalf of the City of Jersey City in support of the proposed Marion PATH Station and as a follow-up to our previous communications between the Port Authority, Lanterra Developments, and Mana Group over the past fifteen years for the vitality and prosperity of Jersey City's West Side community surrounding the Marion Gardens and Journal Square neighborhoods. Since last we spoke, we have continued to garner strong support from our local, State, and Federal elected officials whose constituencies need this critical transportation improvement.

With the support of the Port Authority, now is the time to make the important investments that will not only further economic recovery and create a more sustainable future but will also provide necessary connectivity to one of the busiest and most unique transportation hubs in the nation.

Currently, there are nearly 20,000 residents within walking distance from the proposed PATH Station location, 30-percent of whom do not have cars. According to the American Community Survey (2018), more than half of workers in Jersey City use public transportation - the highest percentage of public transit riders of any City with a population of over 100,000 in the US, behind only New York City and Washington DC. The number of workers who commute into and out of Jersey City are relatively comparable.

Additionally, the City's employment growth has been fueled by the expansion of existing employers and the relocation of large employers from throughout the region into Jersey City. The population growth trend in the last ten years alone has shown significant increases of over 30,000 residents not just in Jersey City but also Newark.

Increasing accessibility to the PATH at the identified location will significantly enhance overall mobility and expand our transportation infrastructure in an area currently limited by transit options. The proposed PATH Station would provide thousands of residents every day with access to reach better jobs, housing, education, healthcare, and countless more opportunities.

In the broader Journal Square area, including the “Marion” section, we currently have:

- 3,000 units under construction
- 11,500 units approved for construction
- 330,000 square feet of office approved for construction
- 375,000 square feet of retail approved for construction

These numbers listed above do not include the partnerships Jersey City has created with Centre Pompidou in Paris to rehabilitate a 58,000 square foot former public service trolley station building to locate Centre Pompidou’s first North American satellite. The City has also made a substantial commitment in partnership with NJ Devils Entertainment, Inc. to restore Jersey City’s iconic Loew’s Theater with the goal of reopening the theater to the public for live entertainment. Both of these major projects are already underway.

Less than a mile from where the new Marion PATH station would be located is an area known as “Little India.” This area, located between the Journal Square core and the Marion neighborhood, is home to the highest concentration of Asian Indians in the western hemisphere. Little India hosts the largest outdoor Navratri and Holi festivities in New Jersey. We fully expect these existing and expanding destinations will bring people in from both east and west of Journal Square.

To cite the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey’s mission statement, with the Marion PATH proposal, we have identified a unique opportunity that will “meet the critical transportation infrastructure needs of the bistate regions businesses, residents, and visitors.”

In understanding the economic impacts resulting from the pandemic, we will look to the developers to fully fund the construction of a two-platform, ten car above-ground station, with minor modifications to existing tracks previously constructed in anticipation of this extension. As discussed in recent years with the developers involved, we are confident that the proposed development in the area will pay for the necessary capital improvements.

We have met with the developers and their transportation/rail consultants. We are encouraged by their preliminary findings that the proposed PATH Station is not only feasible but is also ideally located to provide much-needed transportation for this growing community as development continues to expand away from the waterfront and Journal Square proper.

I am confident we can work together on a solution, especially with no Port Authority capital required for the vitality and prosperity of the surrounding community.

Studies have proven more efficient and convenient public transit options can help to promote equity and inclusivity, and efforts to enhance commuting access greatly benefit impoverished households. Combined with other transportation enhancements recently implemented and those currently underway, I’m confident that our community at large will significantly benefit from a more robust transportation network with faster and more affordable routes to further expand the horizon for each and every one of our residents.

A prime example of how our administrative efforts have successfully expanded transit access and closed transit gaps is New Jersey’s first-ever, city-run public bus system, Via. Since launching in March of 2020, Via Jersey City has been one of the company’s most successful programs worldwide. While our Downtown enjoys good service, the north and south areas of the City have fallen into the trap of transit deserts. To fix this, we launched an on-demand shared ride network that functions as part of the broader public transportation system. In just two years, it has transformed how we view our City and the transportation system that connects us.

We also recently welcomed the start of the Light Rail extension to the City’s Westside to further address transit inequities where needed most. The culmination of these recent projects leads to our overall goal of increasing transit access and efficiency, thereby broadening a wide array of opportunities for our residents.

The Marion PATH Station would provide a critical juncture to tens of thousands of our residents and commuters to complement and extend Jersey City's existing public transit infrastructure while filling the gaps in areas that need it most. I implore you to join me in this push for progress as we cannot stand idly by. Instead, we must take action to fuel the economic engines that play a larger part in the overall recovery of our local and regional economy impacting residents across the area - and at no cost to the taxpayers, this project will be the key to help start those engines and fuel a more powerful economic recovery for all.

We ask for your leadership in moving the project forward and specifically to consider the impacts outlined in this letter and our previous discussions during the PATH's commissioned report to examine the feasibility of this proposed project.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Steven M. Fulop', with a stylized, overlapping loop structure.

Steven M. Fulop
Mayor

Cc: Peter Simon, Chief of Staff to Chairman O'Toole