

The background of the entire page is a faded, sepia-toned photograph of a railroad crossing. In the foreground, several large, black traffic lights are visible, some with their lenses obscured by shadows. Above them, a 'RAILROAD CROSSING' sign is partially visible. In the background, a multi-story building and a train are visible. The train is a modern, multi-car passenger train, possibly a Metrolink or similar, with the number '7100' visible on its front. The overall scene is a typical urban or suburban railroad crossing.

Long Island Rail Road Expansion Project
Floral Park to Hicksville

Final Environmental Impact Statement
Appendix 2-A
LIRR Smart Growth Impact Statement

April 2017

Smart Growth Impact Statement

1. Infrastructure Project Name: LIRR Expansion Project

2. Infrastructure Project Description: The Metropolitan Transportation Authority's (MTA) Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) is proposing the LIRR Expansion Project from Floral Park to Hicksville (the "Proposed Project" or "LIRR Expansion Project"). The Proposed Project is a key element of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's transportation infrastructure initiatives and is a strategic component of a comprehensive plan to transform and expand New York's vital regional transportation infrastructure. The Proposed Project extends 9.8 miles between the Floral Park and Hicksville stations, where five branches converge carrying approximately 41 percent of LIRR's daily ridership. The addition of a third track would increase track capacity through the corridor making it easier to run trains along this busy, congested rail corridor. This would improve service reliability and make transit more attractive, with the further goal of getting travelers out of cars, reducing traffic congestion, and reducing adverse environmental impacts. This 9.8-mile stretch also includes seven street-level train crossings ("grade crossings") where road traffic must stop and loud train horns must blow each time a train passes. Eliminating these grade crossings through grade separation (e.g., underpasses) or, in two cases, closure is anticipated to substantially reduce noise, traffic congestion, delays, and air pollution, and greatly improve safety for residents, motorists, and pedestrians.

3. Criteria review. Is project consistent with the following criteria? Briefly describe how it is consistent or, if not, explain why a criterion is not relevant or why it is not practical to meet a particular criterion:

- A. To advance projects for the use, maintenance or improvement of existing infrastructure;
 - Consistent
 - Not relevant
 - Not consistent

Explain briefly: *The Proposed Project would improve the existing infrastructure of the LIRR Main Line corridor and improve mobility at seven (7) grade crossings within the project corridor.*

- B. To advance projects located in municipal centers;
 - Consistent
 - Not relevant
 - Not consistent

Explain briefly: *The Proposed Project involves the improvement of the LIRR Main Line corridor, station improvements, and grade crossing separation/closures in municipal centers. It is expected that improvements to transit service through increased commuter rail capacity and improvements to traffic flow through grade crossing separations/closures fostered by the Proposed Project would have a concomitant beneficial effect on the municipal centers that are served by stations along this corridor.*

- C. To advance projects in developed areas or areas designated for concentrated infill development in a municipally approved comprehensive land use plan, local waterfront revitalization plan and/or brownfield opportunity area plan;
 - Consistent
 - Not relevant
 - Not consistent

Explain briefly: *The Proposed Project is located in a highly developed area of Long Island. The Proposed Project will improve existing transportation facilities, improve traffic flow, reduce noise and vibration and add parking capacity.*

- D. To protect, preserve and enhance the state's resources, including agricultural land, forests, surface and groundwater, air quality, recreation and open space, scenic areas, and significant historic and archeological resources;
 - Consistent
 - Not relevant
 - Not consistent

Explain briefly: *The EIS for the Proposed Project evaluates the potential impacts on the requisite resources, and has determined that the Proposed Project would not result in any significant adverse impacts to these resources. In addition, by facilitating a broader range of commuter rail services, the Proposed Project helps to preserve the State's natural resources by making commuter rail more attractive as opposed to driving on the region's already congested highway network, thereby reducing fossil fuel consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and wear and tear on bridge and roadway infrastructure.*

- E. To foster mixed land uses and compact development, downtown revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, the enhancement of beauty in public spaces, the diversity and affordability of housing in proximity to

places of employment, recreation and commercial development and the integration of all income and age groups;

- Consistent
- Not relevant
- Not consistent

Explain briefly: *The Proposed Project is expected to enhance public transit reliability, which in turn supports Transit Oriented development (TOD) and other station- and downtown-centric development in the Study Area.*

- F. To provide mobility through transportation choices including improved public transportation and reduced automobile dependency;
 - Consistent
 - Not relevant
 - Not consistent

Explain briefly: *The goal of the Proposed Project is to improve public transportation and reduce automobile dependency, as set forth in the purpose and need. The Proposed Project also will improve transportation flow at grade crossing and includes ADA accessibility enhancements at stations along the corridor.*

- G. To coordinate between state and local government and inter-municipal and regional planning;
 - Consistent
 - Not relevant
 - Not consistent

Explain briefly: *LIRR has engaged in an unprecedented public outreach effort (see Long Island Rail Road Expansion Project EIS Chapter 21, "Public Outreach") for the Proposed Project in order to ensure that all interested parties were involved in the decision-making process. LIRR has conducted extensive outreach and coordination with State and local government in the design and development of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project is consistent with all applicable planning documents and, moreover, is considered a project of regional significance and its implementation is considered an act of regional planning.*

- H. To participate in community based planning and collaboration;
 - Consistent
 - Not relevant
 - Not consistent

Explain briefly: *LIRR has conducted extensive outreach and collaboration with State and local government and affected residents regarding the*

Proposed Project and the minimization of significant adverse impacts to local stakeholders.

- I. To ensure predictability in building and land use codes;
 - Consistent
 - Not relevant
 - Not consistent

Explain briefly: *The Proposed Project does not affect the predictability of any building and land use codes.*

- J. To promote sustainability by strengthening existing and creating new communities which reduce greenhouse gas emissions and do not compromise the needs of future generations, by among other means encouraging broad based public involvement in developing and implementing a community plan and ensuring the governance structure is adequate to sustain its implementation.

- Consistent
- Not relevant
- Not consistent

Explain briefly: *As stated in Chapter 17 of the EIS, "Climate Change/Sustainability," the Proposed Project would result in a net reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by eliminating grade crossings and, thereby, idling times for automobiles. While the Proposed Project does not specifically and would not formally encourage public/governmental relations in terms of development of community plans, it does provide the transportation infrastructure around which such plans may be centered.*

ATTESTATION

I hereby attest that the Project, to the extent practicable, meets the relevant criteria set forth above.

Veronique Hakim
Interim Executive Director
Metropolitan Transportation Authority