



Regional Rail – Midtown Links

Converting the region's commuter rail lines into a regional rail system, with frequent service and integrated fares would greatly expand the utility of these lines. The single most important step is to connect the region's two main railway stations: Grand Central Terminal (1) and Penn Station (2). Capacity on Manhattan's Amtrak West Side Line (3) is limited by a single track tunnel under the West Side rail yards. A new double track connection at 10th Avenue and 34th Street would allow this line to enter the north side of Penn Station, permitting through operation with the 33rd Street tunnels under the East River. With this flow-through operation the West Side yard could be eliminated, avoiding the need for a deck and greatly reducing the cost of new development.

The two existing Hudson River rail tunnels (4), severely limit capacity from the west. In the near term some capacity can be gained by through-operation at Penn Station, where all trains using these tunnels would continue on the 32nd Street tunnels under the East River, eliminating conflicts and delays. New tunnels (5) would double capacity across the river, and provide needed redundancy. The new tunnels would connect to existing platforms on the south side of Penn Station and would lead to the new connection to Grand Central. All trains using this connection would flow through from New Jersey to Grand Central, continuing north to the Bronx and beyond. A shuttle service (6) would link the disused West Side Yard with Penn Station, providing a low cost link for access to new West Side development. Not shown is a new two-track connection from the Lower Deck of the 63rd Street tunnel directly into existing platform tracks that lead to the Upper Level Loop at Grand Central. With this shift, and with through running to New Jersey on the 32nd Street tunnels, capacity is gained on the 33rd Street tunnels, permitting a simple on-line station (7) to be constructed at Park Avenue, for transfer to the Lexington Avenue local subway.