

Amtrak Kicks Off Procurement for East River Tunnel Renewal

Latest construction project in Amtrak's portfolio will continue the rebuilding of critical Northeast Corridor infrastructure assets

NEW YORK – Amtrak has launched the procurement phase of the East River Tunnel Rehabilitation Project with a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for construction services for the comprehensive renewal of two of the four tubes in the tunnel. The work will modernize the tunnel infrastructure, improving safety, service capacity, reliability, and security and bring the systems to a state of good repair used by Amtrak, NJ TRANSIT and Long Island Rail Road. Preparatory work is already underway in Sunnyside Yard with major construction starting in early 2024 and continuing through 2027.

“This project will renew the East River Tunnel for another century, connect local residents to jobs and economic opportunities, and deliver a modern, more reliable and improved travel experience,” said [Amtrak CEO Stephen Gardner](#). “As we usher in a new era for passenger rail, we are proud to work with our partners at MTA and NJ TRANSIT and thank Senator Schumer and the congressional delegation of New York and New Jersey for their efforts to ensure funding is available.”

“Thanks to the \$24 billion for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program on the Northeast Corridor that I secured in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and the work to secure commitments from the parties involved, Amtrak can move forward to repair the East River Tunnels damaged during Sandy that are so vital to LIRR commuters,” said Senator Schumer. “The funding and commitments I secured will help strengthen New York's infrastructure for Long Islanders on the LIRR and Amtrak riders for years to come.”

“The East River Tunnel is vital to the Northeast Corridor, and commuters and riders who depend on this infrastructure deserve a modern and improved tunnel,” said FRA Administrator Amit Bose. “President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is making possible historic investments in passenger rail and rail safety, with significant opportunities to modernize America's busiest intercity passenger rail corridor, benefiting hundreds of thousands of citizens and the economy.”

“We are delighted to see this vital infrastructure work moving forward,” said LIRR Interim President and Metro-North Railroad President Catherine Rinaldi. “With the opening of Grand Central Madison, current LIRR schedules are written to ensure the East River Tunnel project

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can proceed without major LIRR schedule adjustments. Once completed, this project will provide a more resilient tunnel that will allow hundreds of LIRR trains to pass through per day, and in the future, Metro-North service.”

“We look forward to working with our partners to advance this critical project,” said NJ TRANSIT President & CEO Kevin S. Corbett. “The rehabilitation of the tunnel will not only improve the safety and reliability of our service, but also enhance mobility and connectivity for all our customers across the region.”

The project is eligible for federal funding via the FY 2022-2023 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP-NEC Program) created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). An application for a full funding grant for the East River Tunnel Rehabilitation Project was submitted in March 2023 in response to the FSP-NEC Program Notice of Funding Opportunity. Amtrak issued this RFQ in anticipation of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) funding decision expected in Fall 2023. Previously, Amtrak applied for, and was awarded, a grant under the FY 2021 Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program for the East River Tunnel Rehabilitation Enabling Components Project, which will ensure that traction power is maintained in each of the tunnel lines while rehabilitation activities are underway. Additional funding by the State of New York was [announced in December 2021 by Senator Schumer](#), who facilitated an agreement in which MTA committed up to \$432 million for the East River Tunnel project.

The selected construction contractor will sequentially rehabilitate both tubes by demolishing the existing tunnel systems down to the concrete liner and performing the reconstruction of all the systems. Interested contractors should monitor [Amtrak’s Procurement Portal](#) for further solicitation information and submittal requirements. The work will be performed under a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) as part of a 2021 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Amtrak and North America’s Building Trades Unions covering Amtrak’s major civil engineering projects.

This is one of several major infrastructure projects that Amtrak’s newest department, Capital Delivery, is advancing. Earlier this year, Amtrak also launched the procurement for the replacement of the [B&P Tunnel in Maryland](#) and [Connecticut River Bridge](#) with similar procurement opportunities in the coming months.

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