

LIVINGSTON AVENUE
BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
AND OTHER NYS PASSENGER
RAIL NEEDS



ESPA

Empire State Passengers Association

Capitol District
Transportation Committee
Presentation

March 4, 2021

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WHAT IS THE EMPIRE STATE PASSENGERS ASSOCIATION?

WWW.ESPARAIL.ORG

- A statewide advocacy organization promoting better intercity passenger rail service in New York and surrounding states, established in 1981.
- 2020 “re-boot” with new website, technology upgrades, and the decision to engage the services of a part-time Executive Director.
- Critical need to jump start New York’s preparation for the Biden Rail Renaissance.

**ESPA
BIG
PICTURE
GOALS:**

- Educate New Yorkers and the State Legislature on how Amtrak funding works under the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008.
- ✓ Under Section 209, states are responsible for the net operating subsidy for all Amtrak routes < 750 miles in length.
- ✓ *NY State pays for all net operating and capital costs* for Amtrak service north of NYC except for the Lakeshore Limited train which is a national long-distance train funded by fare revenue and federal subsidies to Amtrak.

ESPA BIG PICTURE GOALS CONT.

- **Update NYS DOT's 2009 State Rail Plan**
 - The Federal Railroad Administration regulations require an update every 4 years.
 - NYS' freight railroads and passenger rail advocates agree that we are overdue in updating this important document.
- **Finish the Tier I Environmental Impact Statement for the Empire Corridor**
 - FRA and NYS DOT say this 2014 product will be finished by June of 2021.

OTHER SHORT AND INTERMEDIATE TERM PASSENGER RAIL IMPROVEMENT GOALS

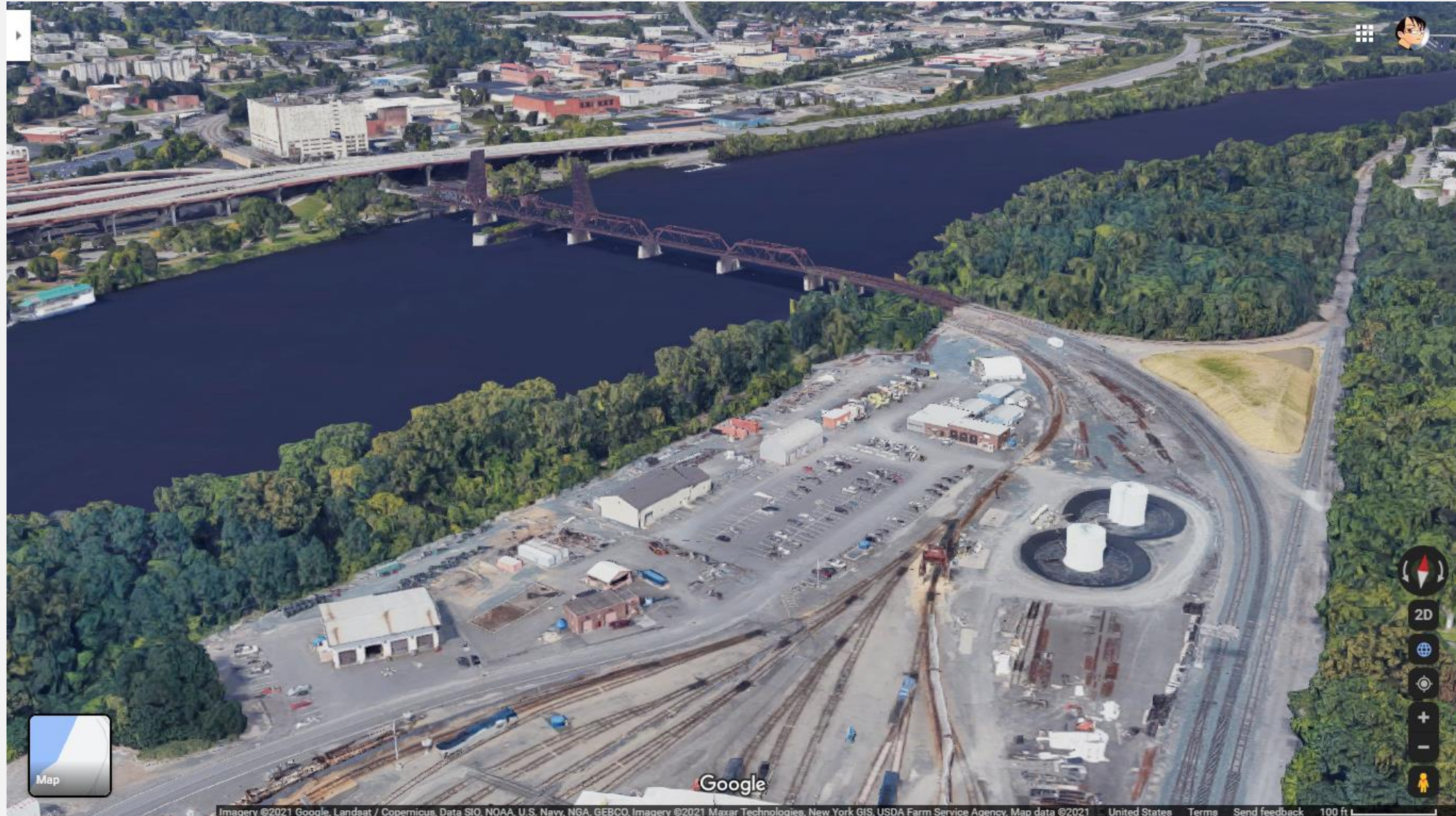
■ **Short Term**

- Reopen Food Service Commissary in Rensselaer to serve all trains in the State
- Restore café car service on Albany—NYC—Albany trains
- Add baggage car to the Maple Leaf train
- Restore train service to pre-Covid levels by this summer

■ **Intermediate Term**

- Apply for federal grant in 2021 for final design of the Livingston Ave. Bridge replacement project
- Complete the design of the Maintenance Base in Niagara Falls to properly serve Empire Corridor trains
- Buy more NYS railcars in the upcoming Amtrak replacement car order
- Order new Empire Corridor locomotives off of the MNR locomotive contract
- Prepare for Empire Corridor Tier I EIS ROD announcement in Summer, 2021

LIVINGSTON AVENUE BRIDGE



LIVINGSTON AVENUE BRIDGE

- Constructed in 1901-02
- Owned by CSX but now under long-term lease to Amtrak
- Funding for Environmental Assessment for replacement awarded to NYS DOT around 2010 (FFY10 HSR grant)
- FRA and NYS DOT show EA scheduled for completion in June 2021
- Public meeting promised by NYS DOT in 2021
- Issue of pedestrian and bicycle bridge – doable but serious safety and security issues must be resolved

LAB REPLACEMENT FUNDING OPTIONS

- **Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair grants**
 - ✓ Repair, replace, or rehabilitate railroad assets to reduce the state of good repair backlog and improve intercity passenger rail performance
 - ✓ FY19 \$400 million; FY20 \$200 million; FY21 \$200 million
 - ✓ As a publicly owned/controlled asset, LAB is eligible project

LAB REPLACEMENT FUNDING OPTIONS

- **Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI)**
 - ✓ Funding for capital projects that will improve passenger and freight rail transportation systems in terms of safety, efficiency, or reliability
 - ✓ FY19 \$255 million; FY20 \$325 million; FY21 \$375 million

LAB REPLACEMENT FUNDING OPTIONS

- **Better Utilize Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) grants** (earlier known as TIGER grants)
 - ✓ A U.S. DOT-wide program that provides a unique opportunity for the DOT to invest in road, rail, transit, and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives.
 - ✓ FY19 \$900 million; FY20 \$1.0 billion; FY21 \$1.0 billion

IT'S TIME FOR NEW YORK STATE TO COMMIT TO THIS PROJECT!

These discretionary grant programs are available and likely to get larger under the Biden Administration.

30% Local Match on a \$300 million replacement contract is \$90 million.

NYS DOT needs to apply for final design funding in 2021.



THANK YOU.
QUESTIONS?

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