

# FREDERICK DOUGLASS TUNNEL PROGRAM

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



As part of our commitment to helping the public understand the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program, this document shares responses to frequently asked questions. This document is not all encompassing, but rather a start to our communications with you as an interested stakeholder. To simplify the information, we have organized and grouped similar questions by subject area. Should you have additional questions, please email [FDtunnel@amtrak.com](mailto:FDtunnel@amtrak.com). Additionally, you may contact us by phone at (443) 423-1115 and a member of our team will be happy to assist you.

### EXISTING BALTIMORE & POTOMAC (B&P) TUNNEL

#### 1. Is the existing tunnel safe?

Yes. Amtrak regularly performs federally mandated inspections and maintenance in the existing tunnel to ensure that it continues to be safe and operational for train service. Amtrak is advancing the design and construction of the new Frederick Douglass Tunnel to create a new, higher-capacity tunnel for the 9 million MARC and Amtrak passengers that rely on it.

#### 2. Will the existing tunnel continue to be used for diesel freight trains?

Yes, the existing tunnel will continue to be used by diesel freight trains for the foreseeable future. At the current time, diesel freight trains use the B&P Tunnel for two round trips per week and do not transport hazardous materials.

### KEY FEATURES

#### 3. What is included in the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program?

The Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program includes two new high-capacity tunnel tubes for electrified passenger trains, new roadway and railroad bridges, new track, rail systems, and railroad infrastructure, and a new ADA-accessible West Baltimore MARC Station.

**4. I heard Amtrak originally planned for four tunnels. Why did that change?**

Amtrak has determined that two tunnel tubes will be sufficient to add more passenger trains, utilize the available funding and shorten the construction duration. No date for the construction of additional tunnel tubes has been identified. If service needs increase and funding is available in the future, two additional tunnel tubes could eventually be designed and constructed.



**FUTURE OPERATIONS**

**5. Will MARC trains run on diesel in the new tunnel?**

The two new tunnel tubes being constructed for the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program will only serve electrified passenger trains for MTA's Penn Line (MARC) and Amtrak under normal operations. MTA has committed to electrifying its Penn Line trains to support this program.

**6. What is the purpose of the Emergency Ventilation Facilities?**

The Tunnel Ventilation Systems, designed in accordance with the NFPA-130 standard, are building facilities that provide protection for train passengers in the event of an emergency. They provide stairs for emergency evacuation to the surface, as well as emergency fans that could extract smoke from the tunnel in the unlikely event of a fire.

**7. Will the Emergency Ventilation Facilities cause poor air quality in the area?**

The new Frederick Douglass Tunnel under normal train operations will only service electric passenger MTA MARC Penn Line and Amtrak trains. MTA has committed to electrifying its Penn Line trains to support this program. The fans will be tested periodically to ensure that they remain operational but will not run under normal operations.

The ventilation facilities will not pose health or safety risks that would negatively impact people in the community. Emissions associated with the ventilation facility will not cause, or substantially contribute to a violation of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), standards established by the U.S. EPA, to protect human health and welfare, including children.

**8. Are the two new tunnel tubes being designed to accommodate double stack freight trains?**

No. The two tunnel tubes for the Frederick Douglass Tunnel are being designed for electrified passenger rail trains.

**9. Did reducing from four tunnel tubes to two tunnel tubes reduce the throughput capacity for trains going through Baltimore?**

Yes, building two tunnel tubes as opposed to four tunnel tubes will reduce the capacity for trains through Baltimore. However, the higher operational performance with two new tunnel tubes will provide for significantly increased passenger train capacity above the existing tunnel, along with faster track speeds and a more comfortable ride. The new tunnel and upgraded tracks will allow both MARC and Amtrak to add more passenger trains, adding more travel options for Marylanders and Amtrak riders across the Northeast Corridor.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS**

**10. How will members of the public be informed and express their views as the program progresses?**

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participation and input is a priority throughout the program. In addition community meetings, the public will be able to review information on website at [Amtrak.com/fdtunnel](https://Amtrak.com/fdtunnel). In addition, there is a dedicated [fdtunnel@amtrak.com](mailto:fdtunnel@amtrak.com), and phone number, (443) 423-1115, for contact members of the program team. The public is also encouraged Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program via Facebook (“Frederick Douglass Program”) and Instagram (@FDTunnel). If you are interested in joining mailing list, scan this QR code to get periodic updates from our team.

**11. What is the Community Investments Program?**

Amtrak is committed to investing in the communities that we serve. Amtrak has committed \$50 million to mitigate the adverse impacts of the program. Those mitigations include investments such as a mix of infrastructure improvements, workforce development, and a community development fund. The Community Investments Program is currently being developed from the FRA’s guidelines and further information will be provided upon completion.

## **COST & SCHEDULE**

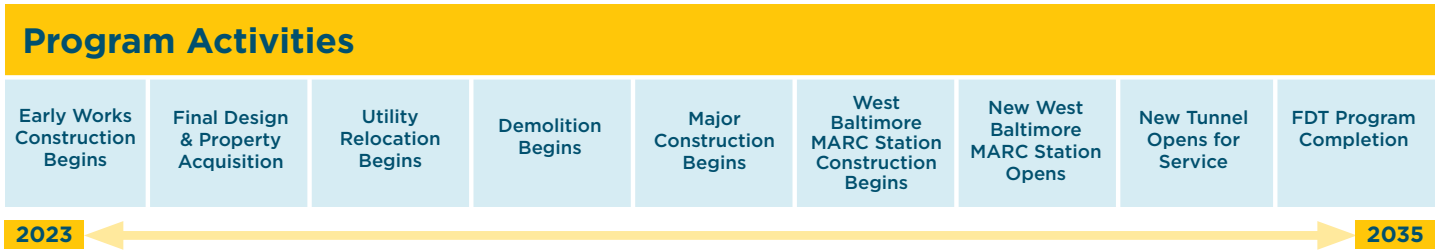
**12. Who is paying for the program?**

Funding will come from:

- Amtrak
- Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) (including a portion from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act [IIJA])
- State of Maryland

### 13. What are the cost savings going from four tunnel tubes to two tunnel tubes?

The savings is more than \$1 billion.



### 14. When will construction begin?

The Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program will be constructed in several stages. The first set of early construction activities began in March 2023 with track work in the Halethorpe and West Baltimore areas. This initial project was completed in summer 2023 and will reduce impacts during later construction phases. Final design, property acquisition, and utility relocation have begun and are progressing. Major construction is anticipated to begin in 2024 and tunnel boring is planned to start in 2026.

### 15. When will the program be completed?

Amtrak currently anticipates that the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program will be completed in 2035. Construction is dependent on many factors, including design progression and the timely availability of funding, materials, and property.

## CONSTRUCTION, IMPACTS, PROPERTIES AND ACQUISITION

### 16. How many properties need to be acquired?

Private property acquisitions have been identified for approximately 600 parcels. The majority of these (over 500) are subterranean, where Amtrak is providing compensation and obtaining rights to tunnel underneath a parcel.

### 17. How will impacted property owners be contacted regarding the acquisition?

Each impacted property owner will be contacted directly by a property acquisition professional. If a property owner has questions about a potential acquisition, they may send an email to [FDT.realestate@amtrak.com](mailto:FDT.realestate@amtrak.com).

### 18. Will vibration from tunnel construction cause any damage to my property?

No, construction is not expected to impact private property. Amtrak will take precautions, such as setting vibration limits and performing active monitoring, to avoid damaging homes and businesses. While construction does include methods such as tunnel boring, drilling and blasting, Amtrak will use state-of-the-art techniques (e.g., controlled blasting, testing, and real-time monitoring) and vibration limits to ensure protection of nearby properties.

### 19. What if construction damages my property?

Amtrak is committed to doing the right thing, and this includes performing monitoring during construction to help ensure that construction does not unexpectedly cause excessive vibration or damage to properties. Prior to tunneling, Amtrak will offer property owners adjacent to the new tunnel an opportunity to have their property inspected to document the physical condition. If there is future concern that the tunnel construction damaged a property, Amtrak and the property owner will be able to examine the inspection (report and pictures) to help assess whether construction activities unexpectedly caused damage to a property. Amtrak intends to ensure that compensation is provided for any property damaged by the tunnel construction.