



Reservoir Hill Listening Session

Meeting Held: January 11, 2024

Questions and comments were gathered during the public listening session and responses have been provided by Amtrak’s Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program Team. [Additional responses have been provided in navy blue to questions raised from the presentation materials shared with Amtrak following the meeting.](#) For any additional information, please visit fdtunnel.com. For questions, email fdtunnel@amtrak.com, or call (443) 423-1115.

Community Engagement

1. When will tonight’s questions be answered?

In response to a request from the community to come listen to concerns, the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program Team (Team) brought subject matter experts to a meeting to learn about the history of the community and listen to questions and comments about the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program (Program). This document includes a compilation of comments heard, questions asked by the community, and answers by the Team. This information will be posted to the Program website, emailed to all registrants, and discussed at a future community meeting to be scheduled.

2. You should inform all neighborhoods about all meetings.

The Team is committed to keeping communities adjacent to the Program alignment informed about the Program and upcoming construction activities. Various meetings will be scheduled over time and throughout the completion of the design and through construction of the Program, in several neighborhoods to allow community members to ask questions and hear responses from the Team. Invitations to meetings in specific neighborhoods will be shared with community members in those neighborhoods. Program alignment-wide meetings will also be scheduled and held both in person and/or virtually to permit all interested parties and all stakeholders to be invited and attend in order to hear Program information and ask questions to the Team.

3. Since geological studies and tests are common questions to all communities, why not start with specific topics or concerns and then all communities can attend at the same time, not separately?

The Team has attended meetings with various communities along the Program alignment over the last 18 months. During that time, even though there are common discussion points at all meetings, there are also differences in areas of focus for each community. The Team wants to ensure that the questions of



specific and highest importance for each community are covered during any meetings.

Intermediate Ventilation Facility

Response to overall community comments:

The location of the Intermediate Ventilation Facility (IVF) is the result of community engagement between 2014 and 2016 during the environmental review phase of the Program as part of the Record of Decision (ROD). As described on page 17 of the ROD, the initial Program plans placed the IVF closer to the tunnel alignment. As a result of community input, the IVF was relocated to the periphery of the Reservoir Hill Historic District in order to reduce the visual impact on the interior of the Reservoir Hill residential community and also avoid the displacement of Whitelock Farm, a community resource.

The Programmatic Agreement for the Program (PA) that was entered into to guide Amtrak through Section 106 compliance throughout the Program, requires that certain elements of the Program, including the IVF, be designed with “Context Sensitive Designs,” meaning that the designs need to be sensitive of the historic properties located within the vicinity of certain Program elements. In the case of the IVF, the historic properties that the design of the IVF needs to be sensitive to are the Reservoir Hill Historic District because the IVF is located within the boundaries of this historic district, as well as the Bolton Hill Historic District since the IVF will be visible from parts of that district. Both the Reservoir Hill Historic District and the Bolton Hill Historic District are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. As part of the implementation of the PA and during the Program design process, the Maryland Historical Trust and Concurring

Parties will be provided an opportunity to comment on relevant exterior design treatments. An opportunity for public comment on certain components of the exterior design and landscaping of the ventilation facilities is also required by the Record of Decision.

The IVF is also located within the Eutaw Place Madison Avenue Historic District, which is a locally designated historic district located within the larger Reservoir Hill Historic District. Amtrak agreed to an advisory review by the Baltimore City Commission on Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) for the IVF's design, due to its location in the Eutaw Place Madison Avenue Historic District. Amtrak intends to submit materials for this review to be included on the March 12, 2024, CHAP hearing.

Amtrak has not completed the final designs of the IVF; some of the elements of the exterior façade treatments of the IVF may still be changed, and we welcome the input from the community. An opportunity for public comment on certain components of the exterior design and landscaping of the ventilation facilities is also required by the Record of Decision.



4. What kinds of chemicals will be vented?

The Frederick Douglass Tunnel's intermediate ventilation facility (IVF) will not be used to exhaust the tunnel's air except in the rare case of smoke or fire in the tunnel. The tunnels themselves are constructed of non-combustible materials and all other components in the tunnel are specified to be fire resistant. Even in such an event, the only materials that would likely combust within the tunnel would be the interior finishes of the train (like seats, flooring, windows) and any materials brought onto the train by passengers such as luggage or handbags.

Amtrak does not permit passengers to carry or bring hazardous materials on trains.

Air emissions from the IVF are not expected to exceed OSHA or national ambient air quality standards, including those exiting the IVF in the event of smoke or a fire in the new tunnel. The concentration levels of air exiting the IVF should remain below these nationally standardized thresholds. Air emissions associated with the IVF should 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.

5. How will ventilation change if the Phase 2 tunnels are built?

The IVF's ventilation system operation will not significantly change if Phase 2 of the Program (two additional tunnel bores) is constructed. The current ventilation system is designed such that the IVF is only to exhaust air in the rare case that there is smoke or a fire in the new tunnel.

6. Why didn't the size of the vent facility change considering that you are now building only two tunnels?

The size and makeup of the IVF has decreased as described below:

Reduction in Height of IVF Building: The previous Program design which included four tunnel bores had the overall height of the IVF building at 73 feet and 8 inches. The current design of the Program with two bores has the overall height of the IVF building at 59 feet and 6 inches. The IVF building has decreased in height by more than 14feet.

Reduction in Number of Fans in IVF: The previous Program design included eight fans (required to support diesel trains and their 4x4000HP locomotives), and the fans were to be installed in a vertical orientation in the IVF building (requiring a taller IVF building). In the current design of the Program, the number of fans in the IVF was reduced to four fans (due to the elimination of diesel trains from using the new tunnel) and the orientation of the four fans were changed to horizontal, which resulted in a reduction of the height of the IVF to be the same

height as the existing surrounding buildings (for the previous Program design, the IVF was designed taller than all surrounding buildings).

Reduction in Ground Area of IVF Building: In the previous Program design which included four bores, the area of the ground level of the IVF building footprint was approximately 24,500 SF. In the current design of the Program with two bores, the area of the ground level of the IVF building footprint is 23,100 SF. The ground level of the IVF building footprint has decreased by 1,400 SF.

Please note that despite the reductions in the height and ground level footprint of the IVF building, as well as the number of fans in the IVF, the same level of other equipment supporting the ventilation systems in the IVF building including electrical transformers supplying electricity to the fans, and the mechanical equipment providing the required interior environment for the electrical, communications and ventilation equipment, are all still required to support the ventilation system regardless of the change in the number of bores currently being built was part of the Program from four to two and the elimination of the operation of diesel freight trains in the tunnels. Other ancillary equipment, such as communications and signal equipment, is also not affected by the number of tunnels or fans since this equipment is still required regardless of the number of tunnels.

7. Why are the ventilation facilities pointing vents directly at an elementary school?

The IVF does not exhaust air towards the elementary school. The IVF ventilation exhaust and intake louvers are located only along the south side of the IVF building which is located on West North Avenue.



On the side of the IVF building facing Eutaw Place (west), Linden Avenue (east) and Jordan Street (north), there about 1-2 small louvers on each of these walls.



The louvers range in size from approximately 3' x 7' to 7' x 7', and they serve the mechanical rooms of the IVF building. These louvers are not connected to the ventilation system or any of the fans inside the IVF building but are required to provide natural airflow into the rooms inside of the IVF building that contain the mechanical equipment.

On all sides of the IVF building there are niche/ornamental grille features as part of the exterior building design. The niche/ornamental grilles, along with the finishes and materials, are intended to help the IVF building visually blend into and complement the existing and surrounding neighborhood row houses.

Community Investment Program

8. Where is the \$50M coming from? What is the source?

The \$50M Community Investment Program (CIP) is funded through a federal grant provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation to Amtrak (FY22-23 Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail). Amtrak will administer the CIP and distribution of the funds. Pursuant to the Record of Decision (ROD), the funds will be distributed over the duration of the overall Program, as it progresses.

9. Maryland would allocate and/or distribute recurring funds annually based on passenger rail ridership.

There are no current plans or discussions to allocate or distribute any funds from Amtrak ticket sales from passenger rail ridership to the community.

10. Where is the community investment program?

When the Federal Railroad Administration approved a preferred alignment for the Program in 2017, it issued a ROD) outlining certain conditions for Program implementation and defining certain environmental mitigations measures to be implemented by Amtrak during the Program's design and construction. This mitigation work is intended to be implemented by Amtrak to address any possible environmental and construction-related impacts of the Program on areas adjacent to the Program alignment.

Amtrak will comply with the ROD mitigation measures by creating the \$50M Community Investment Program (CIP) that will consist of two components: (1) Amtrak direct investments into the community (such as constructing a playground or park) and engagement activities and (2) Amtrak grants to qualified community organizations.

Amtrak will make investments in the community through a transparent subgrant process. Specifically, regarding community grants, there will be a notice of funding opportunity published, formal application process by which eligible



organizations may submit applications for grant funds and a selection will be made based on objective and published criteria and according to how well applicants meet the criteria as based on the ROD and Amtrak grants and compliance departments.

As for next steps, the Team is working to externally launch the CIP later in 2024, with consideration to the Program's overall construction schedule and timelines. Also, the Team has recently hired a dedicated lead focused on overseeing and managing the entire CIP and all related processes and activities.

As the CIP rollout progresses, Amtrak will advertise the official launch and initiation of the CIP, as well as all application requirements and selection criteria on its website (Amtrak.com/fdtunnel). Amtrak will also make information available through various communications channels (such as social media, email, media outreach, etc.).

11. The FDT is a Federal \$6B investment that will not bring any benefits to this community, it will bring only negative impacts and we need to live with these impacts. What is Amtrak planning to do to demonstrate that there are real benefits for this immediate community?

In addition to the CIP, the Program will also introduce transit-related improvements in the West Baltimore area, including a newly designed ADA-accessible West Baltimore MARC Station, faster MARC and Amtrak travel times between Baltimore and Washington, DC, the replacement of multiple city bridges that require repair or replacement, and remilling, regrading and/or repaving of many streets located within the Program alignment.

With regard to the CIP, when the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) approved a preferred alternative for the Program in 2017, it issued a ROD outlining certain mitigation requirements for Program implementation and measures to be implemented by Amtrak during the Program's design and construction. This mitigation work is intended to be implemented by Amtrak to address any possible environmental and construction-related impacts of the Program on areas adjacent to the Program alignment.

As addressed above, as part of the ROD requirements, Amtrak will implement the CIP. The CIP will prioritize mitigation efforts in the following focus areas: 1) community development, 2) workforce development, 3) parks & recreation, 4) community gardens, vacant lots, & public open space transformation, 5) transportation, and 6) historic preservation.

Also, the Program will provide many benefits to Baltimore community members by creating a large number of construction jobs and other rail and construction-related workforce development opportunities. Amtrak is advancing a partnership with the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development to maximize workforce recruitment from the impacted communities and to provide support



services to assist individuals with training and access to job sites. The Program will also create many opportunities for small and local businesses to sub-contract on construction tasks, especially with a focus on employing minority and/or disadvantaged business enterprise companies from Baltimore.

Emergency Response and Safety

12. What is going to happen in case of a train collision within the new tunnel? Any spills of chemicals? Any issues at street level?

Train collisions are extremely rare due to modern safety technology like Positive Train Control that is installed and active along Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, including the Baltimore area. Amtrak has an existing Emergency Response Plan in place for the B&P Tunnel that addresses Amtrak's operations and trains, and Amtrak works closely with the MTA and Baltimore first responders to prepare for the unlikely event of an emergency within the existing tunnel. The Emergency Response Plan will be updated and refined as required for the new tunnel when we get closer to the time when the new tunnel is put into operation and use.

Amtrak is coordinating with the Baltimore City Fire Department to advise on their response plans for incidents in the new tunnel.

13. Do you have emergency plans to protect our communities?

Amtrak has emergency response plans depending on the type and location of the emergency, which include coordination with first responders in the immediate area (in this instance, the City of Baltimore). See the response to Question 12 for more information.

14. How should community members respond to an emergency?

As for all emergency incidents, community members should dial 9-1-1.

15. What would an explosion (in the tunnel) feel like at the surface?

Amtrak cannot predict how something, even something unlikely, will feel like in the future. However, as part of the design process, the engineering team is required to perform extensive fire and explosion analyses as part of the tunnel design process. In addition, the program has security elements that include gates, CCTV cameras, and door locks that will prevent unauthorized persons and/or vehicles from entering the Frederick Douglass Tunnel.

16. Will Amtrak answer our questions in case of an emergency?

In the event of an emergency involving an Amtrak train, and/or Amtrak owned infrastructure or structure, Amtrak will typically set up an Incident Response Team to manage emergency response operations with those impacted by the



emergency. Amtrak Public Relations will provide communications to the community in such an event and can be reached at 1-800-562-1904.

17. How will emergency response be coordinated with City emergency responders?

Amtrak operates under National Incident Management System in which Amtrak will coordinate with local first responders including their local Office of Emergency Management in the event of an emergency involving Amtrak.

18. How would a collision or explosion in the tunnel affect properties at the surface?

Amtrak cannot predict how something, even something unlikely, will affect properties in the future. However, throughout the Program design process, the Program designers have considered extreme events in their analysis of designs, following all applicable federal guidelines. Design analysis shows no significant impacts to properties located on the surface above the construction of the new tunnel. Amtrak is constructing two single-track tunnel bores in which only a single train will operate in each tunnel bore at a time, therefore a collision between two trains within the tunnel is highly unlikely. Additionally, the new tunnel design includes state-of-the-art fire-life safety equipment to prevent failure of the new tunnel structure. The existing B&P tunnel does not include modern fire-life safety equipment, and that is part of the reason for the importance of building the new tunnels.

19. Create a Community Emergency Plan: Ensure the community understands different potential emergencies and how to respond to them.

- **If the emergency ventilation site is for emergency evacuation of riders, what is the protocol for neighborhood residents?**
- **How will the community be prepared for emergencies during deconstruction, construction, and operation?**

(RESPONSE PROVIDED FOLLOWING RESERVOIR HILL COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION)

Amtrak has emergency response plans depending on the type and location of the emergency, which include coordination with first responders in the immediate area (in this instance, the City of Baltimore).

20. Emergency Alert System: Provide the technology and infrastructure for alerting the community about emergencies.

- **Which technologies will be utilized to inform the community of an emergency?**
- **How will this system be alert appropriate local, state and federal stakeholders?**

(RESPONSE PROVIDED FOLLOWING RESERVOIR HILL COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION)



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In the event of an emergency involving an Amtrak train and/or Amtrak owned infrastructure or structure, Amtrak will typically set up an Incident Response Team to manage Amtrak's emergency response operations and communicate with those impacted by the emergency. Amtrak Public Relations will provide communications to the community in such an event and can be reached at 1-800-562-1904.

Amtrak operates under the National Incident Management System in which Amtrak will coordinate with local first responders including their local Office of Emergency Management in the event of an emergency involving Amtrak.

Construction

21. What engineering solutions are in place to prevent/minimize damage to homes?

Specific tunneling and ground support methods were developed to minimize the potential for damage resulting from construction of the new tunnel to homes and other existing structures and buildings located on the surface above the new tunnel alignment. State-of-the-art tunnel boring machines will be used for the digging of the new tunnel that generate minimal vibrations and provide for immediate support of the ground surrounding the new tunnel. This approach reduces the risk of unacceptable vibration levels and ground collapse resulting from the construction of the new tunnel. In the cross passages between tunnel bores and the IVF excavations, controlled blasting methods will be used to limit surface vibrations to minimally impactful levels and these excavations will be supported with a system of ground support that includes rock bolts, shotcrete, lattice girders, and spiling pre-reinforcement to minimize ground deformations which could affect homes and other existing structures and buildings located on the surface above the construction of the new tunnel.

A minimum zone of construction influence has been established along the surface area above where the new tunnel will be constructed (Zone).

Construction of the tunnel is not expected to impact homes and other existing structures and buildings located in the Zone, and this is the region the Team will analyze and monitor for movement using instrumentation. Amtrak is also in the process of requesting permission for Amtrak engineers to access the interior and exterior of homes and other existing structures and buildings located in the Zone to perform survey(s) prior to the start of the construction of the tunnel. Amtrak will also be requesting access to the interior and exterior of homes and other existing structures and buildings located in the Zone to perform surveys upon the completion of the construction of the tunnel. Property owners will be provided with a copy of the final pre-construction and post-construction surveys, which will include photographs, for their records. In the event that a property owner



believes that the tunnel construction directly caused damage to their home or other structure or building located in the Zone, the pre-construction and post construction surveys will be provided to Amtrak's insurance companies to be used in the assessment of a property owner's claim for damages.

22. Structural Reinforcement: What steps will Amtrak take to ensure homes along the alignment have proper shoring into 2175?

(RESPONSE PROVIDED FOLLOWING RESERVOIR HILL COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION)

Specific tunneling and ground support methods were developed to minimize the potential for damage resulting from construction of the New Tunnel to homes and other existing structures and buildings located on the surface above the New Tunnel alignment. State-of-the-art tunnel boring machines will be used for the digging of the New Tunnel that generate minimal vibrations and provide for immediate support of the ground surrounding the New Tunnel. This approach reduces the risk of vibrations and ground collapse resulting from the construction of the New Tunnel. In the cross passages between tunnel bores and the Intermediate Ventilation Facility (IVF) excavations, controlled blasting methods will be used to limit surface vibrations to minimally impactful levels and these excavations will be supported with a system of ground support that includes rock bolts, shotcrete, lattice girders, and spiling pre-reinforcement to minimize ground deformations which could affect homes and other existing structures and buildings located on the surface above the construction of the New Tunnel.

A minimum zone of construction influence has been established along the surface area above where the New Tunnel will be constructed (Zone). Construction of the New Tunnel is not expected to impact homes and other existing structures and buildings located in the Zone, and this is the area that the Program Team will closely analyze and monitor for movement using instrumentation. Amtrak is also in the process of requesting permission from property owners for Amtrak engineers to access the interior and exterior of homes and other existing structures and buildings located in the Zone to perform survey(s) to identify any existing structural damage prior to the start of the construction of the New Tunnel. Amtrak will also be requesting access to the interior and exterior of homes and other existing structures and buildings located in the Zone to perform surveys upon the completion of the construction of the New Tunnel to identify any new structural damage. Property owners will be provided with a copy of these final pre-construction and post-construction surveys, which will include photographs for their records. In the event that a property owner believes that the New Tunnel construction directly caused damage to their home or other structure or building located in the Zone, the pre-construction and post construction surveys will be provided to Amtrak's insurance companies to be used in the assessment of a property owner's claim for damages.



Vibration

23. Where are we in the process of the vibration studies?

The operational ground-borne vibration assessment has been completed and based on this assessment we are predicting no significant impacts to existing surface structures resulting from the construction of the new tunnel based on the current Program design. This report that is being finalized shows consistent results with prior studies conducted during the environmental review process.

The original NEPA noise and vibration studies are available on the Program website: [Noise Technical Report](#); [Vibration Technical Report](#).

24. I spoke with an Amtrak representative, and she told me to accept an offer that means free money. How could this “free money” affect my future rights as a property owner?

Amtrak will make an offer to purchase subsurface property rights by mail to the known address(es) of property owners. Amtrak’s written offer will consist of a written summary statement that includes a description of the subsurface property rights Amtrak will acquire and the just compensation Amtrak will pay for the property being acquired. While the transaction itself will compensate for the acquired real estate – with your consent and at a date and time that works for you, Amtrak will conduct a pre-construction survey(s) of any structures located on the surface of the property prior to the start of tunneling.

The vibrations from sidewalk repaving following a broken gas line in a caused damage to my property. How will Amtrak protect property owners from construction vibration if there are adverse effects to homes?

See response to Question 23.

25. Minimize Vibration: Can Amtrak demonstrate what levels of noise and vibrations neighbors will experience during construction and operation of the tunnels?

(RESPONSE PROVIDED FOLLOWING RESERVOIR HILL COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION)

An operational ground-borne vibration assessment has been completed by Amtrak (Report). Based on this Report, Amtrak is expecting no significant impacts to existing homes, or other structures or buildings located on the surface resulting from the construction of the New Tunnel based on the current Program design. This Report shows consistent results with prior studies conducted during the NEPA environmental review process.

The original NEPA noise and vibration studies are available on the Program website: [Noise Technical Report](#); [Vibration Technical Report](#).



Freight

26. Can you assure us that freight trains will not use the new tunnel in the future?

The Frederick Douglass Tunnel is being designed for electric passenger trains. Once this new tunnel is in operation, the existing B&P tunnel will continue to be used by freight trains. Diesel freight trains will only be allowed in the new tunnel under temporary or emergency operations. It is important to note that today, the existing B&P Tunnel currently carries very few freight trains (less than one round trip per day, on average) and no increase in freight traffic is expected in the future.

Normal operations include the movement of rail equipment and maintenance vehicles, which may be moved by diesel locomotives. However, these instances are limited (primarily overnight) and will not require use of the IVF for venting exhaust.

27. What can the team say about future freight travel, the Phase 2 double-stacked tunnels and hazards such as oil trains?

Amtrak has determined that the two electrified passenger tubes currently being designed and constructed in the Program will be sufficient to improve passenger rail service, utilize available funding, and shorten the construction duration compared with previous plans for four tubes. The two tunnels under design and construction are intended for electrified passenger trains. The diameter of the new tunnels will not accommodate double stack freight trains. The freight operator that uses the existing B&P Tunnel does not operate any crude oil trains on Amtrak rail lines in Baltimore.

Regarding Phase 2, NEPA Re-evaluation states: Amtrak proposes to initiate construction of Phase 1 in the near term; however, no timeframe has been established for initiation of Phase 2 construction. Prior to proceeding with Phase 2, approvals from the City of Baltimore and State of Maryland as well as financial commitments from Amtrak and the State of Maryland will be required and it is not certain when, or if, such approvals and commitments will be secured.

28. Will the new tunnels carry oil?

As explained in the response to Question 23, once construction of the new tunnel is completed and it is put into operation, the existing B&P Tunnel will be dedicated to freight traffic. At this time, the current freight operator that uses the existing B&P Tunnel does not operate any crude oil trains on Amtrak tracks in Baltimore.

29. What prevents oil/hazmat freight from being pulled through the tunnels?

Freight railroads are “common carriers” and fall under the jurisdiction of the Surface Transportation Board. The transport of hazardous materials is a heavily regulated activity in the United States. In addition to federal regulation, Amtrak also has a series of rules and procedures which outline what types of trains/cars are permitted to use Amtrak owned tracks. Amtrak will use these same rules and procedures to prevent freight trains from using the tracks in the new tunnel under normal operations.

30. Who/what exactly is going to use this tunnel? MARC? CSX?

The Frederick Douglass Tunnel will be used by Amtrak and MARC passenger trains.

(RESPONSE PROVIDED FOLLOWING RESERVOIR HILL COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION)

The New Tunnel is being designed for electric passenger trains. Once the New Tunnel is in operation, the Existing Tunnel will continue to be used by freight trains. Diesel freight trains will only be allowed to use the New Tunnel under certain limited temporary or emergency operations. It is important to note that today, the Existing Tunnel currently carries very few freight trains (less than one round trip per day, on average) and no increase in freight traffic is expected in the future.

In certain normal operations, diesel locomotives may be used to move rail equipment and rail maintenance vehicles. However, these instances are limited (primarily overnight) and will not require use of the IVF for venting.

Tunnel Operations

31. Is there going to be noise when trains operate?

Electric trains are much quieter than traditional diesel trains. Noise levels in the new tunnel will be similar to other modern tunnels and not much different from the existing B&P Tunnel. Any possible noise impacts at the surface level have been addressed as a part of the design of the new tunnel with the installation of noise walls to both the south and north of the new tunnel. Additional noise assessments will be performed during the track design and are required to determine the impacts from ground-borne noise from new tunnel operations.

Amtrak plans to mitigate any identified noise impacts as a part of the final design of the Program.



A map of the Reservoir Hill neighborhood with new tunnel depths identified has been previously shared with the community. The depth of the new tunnel, which is located within rock, provides very significant noise reduction, thereby providing a natural noise barrier reducing sound reaching the surface.

Environmental

32. How does the project account for climate-driven changes in the environment such as increased potential for damages from extreme weather events, extreme heat, flood, wildfires, floods?

The Frederick Douglass Tunnel will be built with modern construction methods, materials, and design standards, which will result in new infrastructure that is safer and more resilient to extreme weather events compared to the aging, existing B&P Tunnel. The new tunnel will feature modern, state of the art, fire-life safety systems, along with improved drainage and flood prevention systems.

Regular inspection, maintenance, and repair of the new tunnel and of its related new infrastructure and facilities will ensure continued safety and reliability into the future.

Additionally, the Program has the potential to improve the competitiveness of Amtrak and MARC with other modes of transportation, such as automobiles, which could result in a decrease in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions that have been proven to contribute to climate change. Improvements to passenger rail infrastructure for the Program will result in improved travel times, greater reliability, and increased accessibility of passenger rail service. According to the US Department of Energy (USDOE), passenger rail travel contributes less per passenger mile GHG emissions than either automobiles or airplanes. More information on GHG emissions is included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Program (FEIS) on page [VI-112](#).

33. Do the environmental studies account for existing sub-standard local air quality and high asthma rates in the local population, including potential increases in PM 2.5 (particulate matter) from wildfires?

Under the federal Clean Air Act (CAA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) establishes the guiding principles and policies for protecting air quality conditions throughout the United States. The USEPA's primary responsibilities in this area include promulgating the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) which define ambient (i.e., outdoor) levels of air pollutants that are considered safe for public health, welfare, and the environment, as well as approving State Implementation Plans (SIPs), plans that demonstrate compliance with the NAAQS. NAAQS are health-based standards geared toward protecting sensitive or at-risk portions of the population such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. More information is included in the [FEIS Air Quality Technical Report](#).



Existing air quality conditions are considered in the evaluation of potential air quality impacts. The Program will have no net increase in operational emissions exceeding applicable de minimis thresholds defined by the USEPA. The Program would result in no projected increase in diesel freight train operations, and no significant air emissions are generated by Amtrak electric locomotive trains.

The air quality analysis conducted by the FRA for the 2016 FEIS predicted small increases in VOC, NOx, and PM2.5 which were below the applicable de minimis thresholds permitted by USEPA. However, these increases were due to a projected 2040 increase in MARC diesel trains and the MTA committed in 2023 to only operate electric MARC trains through the new tunnel.

Analysis of localized emissions from operation of ventilation facilities for the Program presented in the FEIS determined that new tunnel ventilation would not exceed applicable NAAQS. Because MTA has since committed to only operating electric MARC trains through the new tunnel, these localized emissions would likely be reduced even lower than what was modeled for the FEIS.

The analysis of construction emissions included in the FEIS determined that no exceedances of applicable NAAQS will occur during construction.

34. The EIS is obsolete; will you complete a supplemental EIS required to account for aforementioned issues with climate change, extreme weather, and air quality?

Amtrak has continued to coordinate with FRA to ensure that the 2017 Record of Decision remains valid in light of any changes to the Program or the affected environment. At this time, a supplemental environmental impact study is not anticipated to be required.

35. What kinds of chemicals will be vented?

See response to Question 33.

36. What kind of gases will be released from the ground while digging?

The metamorphic rock formations that the new tunnel will be constructed within do not typically generate gas when excavated. Nevertheless, the air in the new tunnel will be monitored for gas and appropriate safety precautions will be implemented if gas is encountered during construction in order to protect the workers and the public.

The specifications of the actual tunneling/digging of the new tunnel requires continuous air quality monitoring and tunnel ventilation during construction. This monitoring must be done in accordance with all applicable regulations, including but not limited to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).



The OSHA requirements are for the protection of tunnel workers and do not normally impact people at the surface. OSHA categorizes tunneling projects as either potentially gassy or gassy. This tunnel is categorized as the lesser, potentially gassy. This tunnel is categorized as the lesser, potentially gassy.

37. Do the environmental studies account for effects on children, emergency events, and noise?

Yes, the FEIS considered effects on children, emergency events, and noise.

Children: [Section VI.B](#) of the FEIS considered potential impacts to public health and safety, including children’s health and safety. With respect to air quality, NAAQS are health-based standards geared toward protecting sensitive or at-risk portions of the population such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. The air quality analyses done as part of the FEIS determined that the quality of the air impacted by the construction or operation of the Program would not exceed applicable NAAQS.

Emergency Events: The new Program infrastructure will conform to the comprehensive life safety approach included in the NFPA Standard for Fixed Guideway Transit and Passenger Rail Systems-NFPA 130. These standards provide regulations for fire safety requirements in underground, surface, and elevated fixed guideway transit and passenger rail systems, including stations and tunnels. NFPA-130 outlines the requirements for emergency ventilation systems, emergency procedures, communication, and control systems, and for life safety from fire through infrastructure design and fire protection system attributes. Implementation of these regulations, along with new modernized infrastructure, would improve safety conditions compared to those of the existing B&P Tunnel.

Noise: As described above, noise has been evaluated and the Program will include construction of noise barriers in certain areas along the alignment of the Program to mitigate potential noise impacts.

38. Is the project part of the 2010 NEC Master Plan and/or NEC FUTURE program, and how does that relate to future freight traffic?

Replacing the existing B&P Tunnel has been identified as a major priority in many studies and other federal and state documents over the years. This includes the 2010 NEC Master Plan and the NEC FUTURE Record of Decision. Most recently, it was included on the Northeast Corridor Commission’s [CONNECT NEC 2037 Plan](#).

The Program was designed to accommodate future passenger train volumes forecasted as part of the NEC FUTURE program. No increases in freight traffic are anticipated as a result of the Program.



39. How do you defend the project not following the law with regards to Section 106?

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 is a process by which federally funded projects must consider the impacts to historic properties. In the case of large and complex undertakings, often a Programmatic Agreement (PA) is developed to guide the consideration of effects as the project is developed and constructed. The PA for the Baltimore & Potomac Tunnel Replacement project was executed in March 2017 and included in the Record of Decision (ROD) issued by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), also in March 2017. The Baltimore & Potomac Tunnel Replacement project was subsequently renamed the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program in order to honor Frederick Douglass, but the governing and planning documents remain valid. The Program remains in compliance with the terms of the Programmatic Agreement and ROD.

Climate Change

40. Dr. Kanter asserts that the effects of rail dust generated goes unchecked between when rail is installed (new), and until the end of its useful life and then replaced again.

Railroad infrastructure is initially installed with attention to detail for precise design geometry to accommodate operational safety, ride quality, and maximum speed for any segment of rail – resulting in the most efficient and safe operation. In addition to good railroad engineering practice, Amtrak embraces its regulatory and compliance obligations and responsibilities and checks geometry with calibrated instrumentation on regular intervals to ensure geometry is maintained over an asset’s life expectancy. Track is also visually inspected on regular intervals. These inspections ensure Amtrak’s rail systems are maintained as installed, thus, any “rail dust generated” is not significantly different upon initial installation versus end of life from a geometry standpoint, as Amtrak continuously visits and adjusts track geometry as mandated and required on a regular basis.

41. Dr. Kanter – paper handout. Paragraph 3 – “As an environmental expert, I want to emphasize the importance of accounting for climate impacts in infrastructure planning, of which rail is an important component. The best data we have available...”

Amtrak appreciates the data referenced and compiled by the National Climate Assessments, and it is important from the standpoint of recency. Please understand that Amtrak has designed the Program in strict accordance with railroad best practices. Amtrak is unaware of any data that has informed a change to a prevailing code applicable to the Program that would cause Amtrak to revisit any change to the Program design.



Miscellaneous

42. **Beyond capacity, how confident are you that you are planning for another 150 years of infrastructure for not only today but for tomorrow?**

(RESPONSE PROVIDED FOLLOWING RESERVOIR HILL COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION)

The new Frederick Douglass Tunnel (New Tunnel) will be built with modern construction methods, materials, and design standards, which will result in new, modernized and advanced infrastructure that more resilient to extreme weather events and more reliable and operationally efficient compared to the more than 150-year-old existing B&P Tunnel (Existing Tunnel). The New Tunnel will feature modern, state of the art, fire-life safety systems, along with improved drainage and flood prevention systems. Regular and routine inspection, maintenance, and repair of the New Tunnel and its related new infrastructure and facilities will ensure continued safety and reliability into the future.

Additionally, the Frederick Douglass Tunnel Program (Program) has the potential to improve the competitiveness of Amtrak and MARC with other modes of transportation, such as automobiles and buses, which will result in a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that have been proven to contribute to climate change. Improvements to passenger rail infrastructure for the Program will result in improved travel times, greater reliability, and increased accessibility of passenger rail service. According to the US Department of Energy (USDOE), passenger rail travel contributes less per passenger mile GHG emissions than either automobiles or airplanes. More information on GHG emissions is included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Program (FEIS) on page VI-112.

43. **Cooperative Negotiation: How will Amtrak work with the community to cooperatively negotiate land rights? What is the timeline for contacting homeowners concerning negotiations? How can we leverage land use agreements to support future generations? (E.g. Leasing)**

Amtrak is only acquiring property required for the Program. Amtrak is currently making offers to purchase subsurface (below ground) property rights from the property owners, and this will continue through 2024. Purchase offers are being made to individual property owners for the subsurface rights below a horizontal plane (which will be located beneath a home or other structure) Leases for the real estate subsurface would be nonstandard and will not be considered. Amtrak's acquisition of these subsurface property rights will not impact a property owner's right to pursue a claim against Amtrak for damages to a home or other building located on the property that are caused by the construction of the New Tunnel.

Please reference our [brochure](#) for subsurface acquisitions. 



44. Liability: What are our rights in case of damage to our homes? What are the financial and time limits to Amtrak's liability to individual homeowners and to the community during deconstruction, construction and operation?

In advance of major construction activities, Amtrak will issue an online form that will be available on the Program website (that will also be available in print at future community meetings) for the community to submit information relating to possible claims against Amtrak for damage to homes or other types of properties alleged to have resulted from Amtrak's deconstruction or construction activities directly related to the Program.

We do not expect any damage to occur during these activities. However, this form will enable homeowners and other property owners to submit information to Amtrak so that Amtrak can review and assess the submitted form and related information on a case-by-case basis. Amtrak cannot specifically address monetary and time limitations in general as each submitted claim will be assessed in accordance with applicable laws relating to the specific matter. Amtrak will inform the community when this online form goes live.

With respect to Amtrak's operation of the new Frederick Douglass Tunnel, we do not anticipate any damage to the property of homeowners. If such damage occurs, however, the affected homeowner or property owner can pursue remedies available to them under the law.

45. At the 2021 kickoff, Phase 1 was estimated to cost \$4B. During President Biden's 2023 visit, it was increased to \$6 Billion. Please explain this cost increase.

The Program will be funded through a United States Department of Transportation Federal-State Partnership grant with the federal portion of the funding being \$4.7 billion. The State of Maryland will contribute \$450 million, and the remaining costs will be paid by Amtrak. The total Program budget is expected to be \$6.02 billion.

The original Program budget was \$4.5 billion in 2017 and was increased to \$6.02 billion to account for escalation and contingency considering the level of design development according to industry standards. Cost escalation is the largest factor contributing to the increase in the Program budget, as the increased budget accounts for the unprecedented inflation over the past few years. The increased budget also includes more conservative inflation assumptions for the duration of the Program and contingency accounts for changes to the Program as design advances and possible unanticipated conditions are encountered.