

## Long Island Rail Road Expansion Project

### Notes to Scoping Document

Reference	Comments
Introduction	<p><i>The introduction of a third track would increase track capacity through the corridor making it easier to run trains. This would improve service reliability...</i></p> <p>The LIRR should quantify the degree to which service reliability will be improved by the addition of a third track. This should be done in an objective and transparent manner and based on empirical evidence that is available in the public record. For example a ten year review of delays on the LIRR should be documented and categorized. The on time reliability rate should be calculated over this ten year period. A second reliability rate should be calculated by deducting those delays that would have been avoided by the redundancy that a third track would reportedly provide.</p> <p>The incremental increase in reliability, should there be one, should be used in an objective cost / benefit analysis that considers the cost to build a third track and the extensive diminished property values, lowered tax base and permanent damage to the affected communities along the main line that will result from construction.</p> <p>The cost benefit analysis should also consider the relative impacts of other initiatives that would improve service reliability at a lower cost and impact to local communities. These initiatives includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Construction of a new passenger train yard in Huntington to preset trains for the westbound commute, thereby reducing the need to deadhead eastbound trains.</li> <li>2. Electrify the Port Jefferson branch.</li> <li>3. Complete the second track into Ronkonkoma</li> <li>4. Grade crossing eliminations in a contextually sensitive manner that does not adversely affect local communities</li> <li>5. Correct the Jamaica Crawl by upgrading problematic switches</li> <li>6. Complete East Side Access into Grand Central Terminal</li> <li>7. High speed signaling switches in conjunction with passing sidings throughout the LIRR system</li> </ol> <p>The order in which these initiatives be accomplished should be considered on factors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The degree to which service reliability will be improved</li> <li>• The cost of accomplishing the initiative</li> <li>• The degree of adverse impact of the initiative relative to all other initiatives</li> </ul>
Introduction	<p><i>Governor Cuomo has said that this project will set the standard for positive community engagement...</i></p> <p>The scoping period is far too short for the public to gain a meaningful understanding of all of the ramifications of the entire project. Moreover, the Scoping Document fails to describe in any details relating to the installation of the Third Track. Absent these vital details, the public is unable to make an intelligent assessment of the total impact of the work that would be accomplished.</p>

Reference	Comments
	<p>At a minimum, the comment period should be help open for no less than ninety days.</p> <p>More importantly, the scoping process should be suspended altogether until a complete assessment of the entire project can be presented in detail sufficient so that public can appreciate the ramifications of the Project. The Scoping Document is defective in that it does not present the entire project, but seeks to segment phases of the entire project in direct contradiction of the rules under the SEQRA process.</p> <p>The affect is to foster distrust and contempt for the process in direct contradiction to the Governor’s stated goal of a project that will <i>set the standard for positive community engagement</i>.</p>
<p>Congestion and Delays Along Existing LIRR Main Line</p>	<p><i>...Moreover, in the event of a bottleneck caused by an emergency repair, or disabled train, conditions can range from severely constrained to immobilized, creating significant delays.</i></p> <p>The MTA-LIRR should consider the root cause of delays; emergency repairs or disabled trains, and direct resources at fixing the root cause of the problem instead of high cost and high impact changes to the results of those root causes. Capital funds should be spent on modern, reliable trains and switches and signals and other control architecture. The New York State Comptroller should conduct an independent audit of the LIRR maintenance program and its effectiveness at preventing breakdowns and improving safety and reliability. This is another mitigation step that would achieve an increase in service reliability at a lower cost and human impact than is likely to occur under the Project as described in this Scoping Document.</p>
<p>Intra-Island, Reverse Peak and Reverse Direction Service Limitations</p>	<p><i>LIRR anticipates increasing demand for intra-island travel and reverse peak travel – services that the current Main Line configuration cannot support during critical times of the day.</i></p> <p>On separate occasions, LIRR President Patrick Nowakowski and Governor Andrew Cuomo made unequivocal statements to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of New Hyde Park that there is no demand for a Reverse Commute and the Project had nothing to do with solving a Reverse Commute. These consistent positions obviously dismiss studies by the Rausch Foundation and other parties that have a vested financial gain in building out a third track.</p> <p>The fact that the Scoping Document decries a Reverse Commute as part of the Project Purpose and Need is an affront to the integrity of both of these leaders. It also signals a significant disconnect between the executive leadership and the staffers who hastily compiled this document. The inclusion of Reverse Commute as a Purpose and Need further discredits the document and the underlying transportation imperatives that are described herein.</p> <p>The Scoping Document expresses the LIRR’s <i>desire to increase reverse commute</i> but the desire is purely speculative without the basis of fact and in direct contravention to the opinions expressed by the Governor and the LIRR President. The Reverse Commute purpose and need should be retracted as false and wishful thinking. It is subjective noise masquerading as a viable need that would be solved by the Project.</p>

Reference	Comments
	<p>Since the Governor and LIRR have both dismissed the thesis of the Rausch Foundation, the arguments for the economic benefits to Long island from the reverse commute that are derived from such studies, must also be dismissed for the purposes of justifying this Project.</p>
Project Purpose	<p><i>The primary Purpose if the LIRR Expansion Project is to improve rail services, reliability and public safety along the LIRR Main Line segment between Floral Park and Hicksville by constructing a third track and by eliminating the grade crossings.</i></p>
	<p>The primary purpose can be achieved as outlined in the 7 steps above at a lower cost and impact to local communities.</p>
Grade Crossings	
	<p>The proposals presented in the Scoping Document for the elimination of the new Hyde Park grade crossings at Covert Avenue, South 12<sup>th</sup> Street and New Hyde Park Road presents an overall and cumulative effect of much greater traffic through residential streets. The highly developed residential area will be adversely impacted by changes in traffic patterns that will create a profound impact on the character of the suburban community. As <i>Community Character</i> is a significant element that is called out in the DEIS, this bears great attention. Each residential street should be no more than a 5% increase in traffic as a result of the Project, during or after construction. Any amount greater than this will represent a greatly diminished quality of life and home values for this community.</p> <p>The net effect of the Project, considering all circumstances stated thus far is overall negative and places an unfair and unbalanced burden on New Hyde Park without adequately justifying the benefits to this community or the region.</p>