

WELCOME TO THE LEONIA TRANSIT SURVEY!

BOROUGH OF LEONIA

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To Residents and Business Owners in Leonia:

NJ Transit is planning to restore passenger "light rail" service along the tracks that run along the Western border of Leonia where passenger trains once ran. Known as the Northern Branch, this 11 mile rail line would run from the Cresskill/Tenafly border to Weehawken, Hoboken and Jersey City with ferry and PATH connections to New York City.

After NJ Transit issues the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") for the project, the Borough will have 45 days to provide comments to NJ Transit.

Your elected officials have engaged a team of planning and transportation consultants, H2M Group and Urbana Consulting, to advise us throughout this process. H2M and Urbana have been working with the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Transportation to develop a short survey to assess the views and preferences of Leonia residents and business owners towards aspects of the proposed light rail line. The survey is now ready for distribution.

For data security purposes, only one survey response can be submitted per computer. However, you do not have to complete the survey in one sitting. You can re-enter the survey at any time to finish or update your responses. The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

Paper copies of the survey are available in the Office of Borough Administrator, Borough Hall and at the Leonia Library, and can be downloaded from the Borough's website. After being filled out, they need to be returned to the Office of Borough Administrator, Borough Hall, 312 Broad Avenue, Leonia, NJ 07605-1894. Household members sharing a single household computer will want to fill out one electronic survey and the remaining members a paper survey. Paper surveys require a name and address to be provided for data security purposes. They will be tabulated with the assistance of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Transportation.

All surveys – electronic and paper – must be completed by **August 15, 2010** to allow for tabulation and analysis by this coming September.

Your elected officials request that as many Leonians as possible fill out this survey so we can better understand your views to advance our Borough's interests. The results of the survey will be shared with the community after they are tabulated. Thank you for helping us to serve you.

Sincerely,

Mayor Mary Heveran and the Municipal Council
Borough of Leonia

NORTHERN BRANCH LIGHT RAIL INFORMATION



Please review the following general information about the Northern Branch Light Rail before answering the survey questions that follow:

Where would it run? The proposed light rail system would run from the Cresskill/Tenafly border to Weehawken, Hoboken and Jersey City with ferry and PATH connections to New York City.

When would it run? It would use trolley-like electric cars expected to operate from 5:30 AM to 11:00 PM and with six (6) trains per hour off-peak (every 10 minutes) and twelve (12) trains per hour (every 5 minutes) at peak commuting times.

How long would it take? From Leonia, the commute to Weehawken Ferry Terminal is estimated to be 14 minutes; 26 minutes to Hoboken PATH terminal.

Who would it serve? NJ Transit estimates that the Leonia Train Station will serve approximately 3,000 weekday riders (roundtrips); 26% of this ridership (780 commuters) would be from Leonia.

What is the status? The Northern Branch project is in the design phase. NJ Transit is currently finalizing the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") and once released Leonia will have 45 days to submit comments and recommendations for integration into the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which will govern the design of the project. The DEIS will analyze light rail impacts on our town, including traffic congestion – one of the most significant issues affecting our quality of life. Once the DEIS is released, the Borough and its consultants will review NJ Transit's DEIS and respond. By filling out this survey, you will help Leonia's officials to submit the most effective response in this 45 day review period.

What about "quiet zones?" Since the Northern Branch rail line is under the jurisdiction of the Federal Railroad Administration ("FRA"), light rail trains will be required to blow horns at crossing unless the FRA approves "quiet zones" for crossings. If the line is funded and implemented, Leonia will want to coordinate with Bergen County (owner of Fort Lee Road) to submit such an application. NJ Transit has indicated that it will pay for mitigating measures such as quad crossing gates to help ensure that the application meets federal FRA standards.

Links to additional information:

- Additional information on the Northern Branch and the DEIS is available in the introduction to the survey and at: <http://www.northernbranchcorridor.com>
- We encourage you to also review the documents related to the Northern Branch, which were largely authored by the Mayor's Transportation Advisory Committee, available on the borough website at: http://www.leonianj.gov/content/Mayors_Advisory_Committee_on_Transportation.aspx
- This Survey is available at: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LeoniaTransitSurvey>

RESIDENT INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions about you and your preferences.

1. Do you live in Leonia?

Yes

No

Other (please specify)

2. Where do you work?

Leonia

Bergen County

Hudson County

New York City

Not working/retired

Other (please specify)

3. What is your age?

Under 18

18 – 34

35 – 44

45 – 54

55 – 64

65 – 75

Ages of other household members (please specify)

**4. Would you or any family members consider using the Leonia light rail station ?
(Check all that apply.)**

- Commuting most days
- Commuting 1-2 days per week
- Personal or recreational trips to the Hudson River Waterfront
- Personal or recreational trips to New York City
- As a travel option for visitors (friends, relatives, etc.) to get to Leonia
- I would rarely use the rail service
- I would not ever use the rail service

Other (please specify)

5. If using light rail, how would you prefer to get there? (Check all that apply.)

- Drive and park there
- Walk to the station
- Bike to the station
- Take a bus/jitney to the station
- Get dropped off

Other (please specify)

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are a host of potential benefits and issues to evaluate when considering new light rail service. Please let us know how you rank the following in importance.

6. In terms of potential BENEFITS to Leonia, how would you rank the following in importance?

	(1) Not at all important	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Extremely important
Additional options for commuter access to work	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Reduced dependence on automobiles	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Reduced air pollution and dependence on foreign oil	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
New investments, businesses and tax rates for Leonia	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Development opportunities near the station	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Increased property values	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Attracting a wider range of households including young professionals to Leonia	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Potential grants for having "sustainable" transportation options (pending federal legislation will emphasize land use/transportation connection)	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

Other/Comments (please specify)

7. In terms of potential DISADVANTAGES, how would you rank the following?

	(1) Not at all important	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Extremely important
Increased traffic congestion	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Delays at gate closings/grade crossing on traffic along Fort Lee Road	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
The potential loss of or impacts to parkland	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Train whistle noise (if "quiet zone" status is not obtained)	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Potential pedestrian safety issues	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Costs to the Borough of additional emergency services	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Effects on Leonia High School and access to the athletic fields in Overpeck Park	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Light pollution	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

Other/Comments (please specify)

8. When seeking concessions or amenities from NJ Transit in the project design, how important are the following?

	(1) Not at all important	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Extremely important
A pedestrian overpass from Leonia High School to Overpeck Park sports facilities	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Capital funding to help achieve "quiet zone" status (trolley-type bells rather than train whistles announcing train crossings)	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Parking garage instead of open lot	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Station-oriented retail shops at or around the station	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Raised/textured crosswalks and wide sidewalks	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Street trees and Landscaping	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Benches and seating	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Trash & recycling receptacles	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Bike racks	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Public Art	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Pedestrian lighting	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Solar array on top of a parking structure	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ

Other (please specify)

STATION LOCATION & PARKING

These final questions focus on the location of the potential train station in Leonia as well as opinions towards parking for the train station.

NJ Transit has examined various station/parking configurations for Leonia. The agency believes that a station and parking must be located close to the intersection of Fort Lee Road and the train tracks (to be accessible from the center of Leonia and I-95). Please take a look at the map of four proposed locations at this intersection.

Also provided below is a matrix of points in favor and points against each of the four locations for your review.



	1-NW Overpeck Park Owner: Borough/County	2-NE Kulite Parking Owner: Kulite	3-SE Station Park Owner: Borough	4-SW Overpeck Park Owner: County
PRO'S	Traffic from I-95 would not need to cross the tracks	Not require Green Acres Parkland	Greatest potential for Economic development new business	Traffic from I-95 would not need to cross the tracks
	Ample space for parking		Parking garage can be "wrapped" with retail	Offers the most space/land for parking
	Parking spaces can be reserved for Leonia residents		Parking spaces can be reserved for Leonia residents	There is no conflict with bus/auto traffic
	Green Acres parkland must be replaced somewhere in Leonia		Green Acres parkland must be replaced somewhere in Leonia	There is no conflict with school pedestrians
	Borough will be compensated for the 1.2 acres		Borough will be compensated	
	There is no conflict with bus/auto traffic			
	There is no conflict with school children/ pedestrians			
CON'S	Minimal economic development potential	Traffic from I-95 must cross the tracks twice	Traffic from I-95 must cross the tracks twice	Parking spaces cannot be reserved for Leonians
	Requires green acres parkland	Small parking area is probably not adequate	Requires green acres parkland	Minimal economic development opportunity
		Parking spaces cannot be reserved for Leonians	Some potential conflict with bus/auto traffic	Requires green acres parkland
		No economic development potential	Some potential conflict with school children/pedestrians	New park/recreation land not required to be in Leonia
		No creation of new park or recreation land for the Borough		No compensation to Leonia
		No compensation to Leonia		
		High conflict potential with bus/auto traffic		
		High conflict potential with school children/pedestrians		

9. My preference among these proposed locations is for:

1-NW: Overpeck Park North (Borough-owned)

2-NE: Kulite (Privately owned)

3-SE: Station Park (Borough-owned)

4-SW: Overpeck Park South (County-owned)

Other/Comments? (please specify)

10. Most transit riders using Leonia station are likely arrive from I-95 and this highway exit makes it an attractive place for NJ Transit to establish a commuter parking facility. NJ Transit envisions a 550-space parking facility.

Which of the following statements comes closest to your views?

A 550-space parking facility is too big.

A 550-space parking facility is too small; NJ Transit predicts 3,000 round-trip riders at the proposed Leonia station, with most arriving from I-95.

Regardless of the number of parking spaces, a parking garage, rather than an open lot is essential to minimize the physical footprint and aesthetic and visual impacts of the project.

Even if Leonia has been advised that projected ridership and NJ Transit project planning will not allow for a drop off (no parking) station design, Leonia should fight for this approach even at the risk of ending up with a NJ Transit design that is less favorable than could otherwise have been obtained through cooperation and compromise.

Other/Comments? (please specify)

11. How important are the following parking-related issues?

	(1) Not at all important	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5) Extremely important
Leonia residents should have the opportunity to reserve a portion of the parking permits at the station area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The parking facility should be a parking garage (not a larger surface parking lot)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The parking facility should be within walking distance of the station and bus stops for transferring passengers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any parking facility must be "right-sized" to accommodate NJ Transit's projected vehicle usage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any station/parking design should minimize physical impacts to the area and favor pedestrian and non-parking (bus transfers, drop-offs, cyclists) light rail users	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other/Comment? (please specify)

12. Do you have any other comments concerning parking or any aspect of the proposed light rail project?

13. Please provide your name and address (optional for those completing the electronic version).

Name (First, Last)

Street Address

City, State, Zip