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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

West of Hudson Regional Transit Access Study Open House Set for December 8 in Orange County

MTA Metro-North Railroad will hold an open house in Orange County on December 8 to present the latest information on the West of Hudson Regional Transit Access Alternatives Analysis (AA) / Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Study.

This first open house will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn, at 15 Crossroads Court, Newburgh, New York just south of Route 17K). It will run from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., with presentations at 4:30 p.m. and then repeated at 6:30 p.m. Question and answer sessions will follow each presentation.

The meeting will introduce the proposed goals and objectives and provide the public with its first look at the proposed long list of alternatives, screening process and next steps. Facilitators will be present to guide the attendees through the material, explain the study, answer questions and solicit input. The public will have an opportunity to provide input on the material presented.

The purpose of the study is to identify and propose solutions for improved commuter transit mobility and accessibility between Orange County and New York City, as well as improved transit options for access to/from Stewart International Airport (SWF) and the surrounding region.

Metro-North, the project sponsor, undertook this study in June 2008. It is conducting the Alternatives Analysis in close collaboration with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), and in coordination with New Jersey Transit (NJT) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). As the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is the lead federal agency, the study will follow all FTA regulations and be completed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 (NEPA).

During the Alternatives Analysis phase, the study will evaluate a long list of transit options that can serve the needs of both the commuter and airport markets. Options include bus, rail and other transit alternatives that have the potential to provide improved mobility, convenience and integration of transportation systems to serve both of these travel markets. At its conclusion, the AA will recommend a short list of feasible alternatives to be further evaluated in the next phase: the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Additional open houses are scheduled for February 2009, when the project team will provide an update on the study and present the short list of alternatives. In April 2009, the project team will announce the results of the detailed analysis and identify the recommendations that would be carried forward to the EIS. The public will have an opportunity to provide input at both milestones.

Additional information, including a project questionnaire, is available through the website: www.mta.info/mta/planning/whrtas. Those needing additional information or wishing to comment on the project can call this toll free number: 800-897-0302.