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## 3 Designs Submitted for Midtown Train Station

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**N**ew York State officials announced yesterday that they would choose from among three developers to transform the city's central post office into a new Midtown train station serving commuters on New Jersey Transit and possibly the Long Island Rail Road.

The selection of one of the three design proposals submitted Friday is expected to take place by June and would mark an important step forward for the plans to create a new train station in memory of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, who championed the effort before his death in 2003.

The project, across Eighth Avenue from Pennsylvania Station, has proceeded in fits and starts for the last decade, but officials now hope to begin construction by the end of this year and complete the station by 2010.

"The quality and scope of the various proposals put forth for Moynihan Station show the importance of this project as a gateway to New York City," said Charles A. Gargano, the chairman of the Empire State Development Corporation.

The design proposals all incorporate what has playfully become known as the potato chip - a shapely glass and steel canopy that will encompass the new station's entry lobby. That canopy, designed by David M. Childs of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, would envelop a series of concourses that slip under the post office building, letting light flow onto the train platforms below ground.

The three proposals also include a well-lit atrium and a passageway along 32nd Street linking Eighth and Ninth Avenues.

The agency has secured \$600 million in public funds to build the 400,000-square-foot train station. In addition, the site will include 250,000 square feet for the Postal Service and 750,000 square feet for retail, office or residential use.

The developers are Boston Properties, Tishman Speyer and a partnership of the Related Companies and Vornado Realty Trust.

Whoever who wins the competition will also acquire the rights to privately develop and control the 750,000 square feet under a long-term lease. Mr. Gargano would not specify the features of each proposal, but he said they included a warehouse-type store, a boutique or business hotel, a museum, public space for exhibits and live performances, a rooftop banquet hall and space for retail stores.

The project effectively dates to 1963, when the former Pennsylvania Station, a Beaux-Arts masterpiece designed by McKim, Mead & White, was demolished over protests by preservationists and architects. The current Madison Square Garden was built on the site over a labyrinthine terminal for Amtrak, the two commuter railroads and two sets of subway lines.

In 1998, officials announced they would lease 400,000 square feet of space in the James A. Farley Post Office Building, built in 1914, for a new station. But in 2002, the agency agreed to buy the entire site, on Eighth Avenue between 31st and 33rd Streets, for \$230 million.

The current Penn Station serves 550,000 passengers a day. "It is horrible right now," Mr. Gargano said. "It is congested, not roomy, not pleasant to look at. It's like walking through a cave."