

What's Ahead for the Northeast Corridor & Regional Rail

Rail Passengers Association



Today's Webinar

- Update on the Northeast Corridor & the new Acela
 - Caroline Decker, Vice President for the Northeast Corridor Service Line, Amtrak
- Conversation on Regional Rail
 - Jarred Johnson, Director, TransitMatters
- Q&A
 - Moderated by Madi Butler, Rail Passengers
 - Featuring Caroline, Jarred, and Jim Mathews
- A look ahead to next month's webinar



RAIL PASSENGERS
ASSOCIATION

Update on the Northeast Corridor & the new Acela

Caroline Decker, Vice President for the Northeast Corridor
Service Line

Amtrak



Northeast Corridor Service Line Update

October 21, 2020

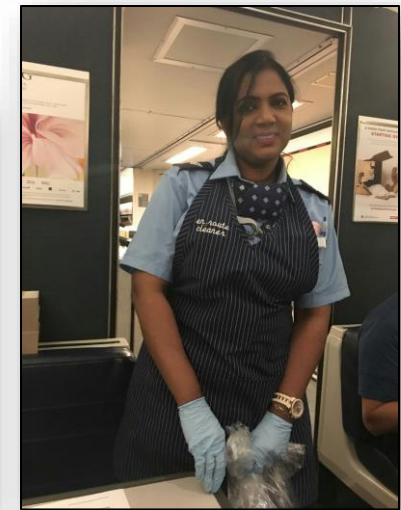
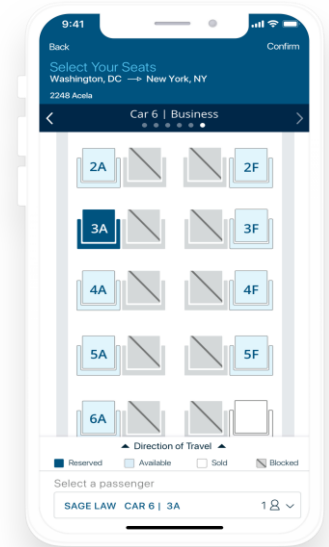
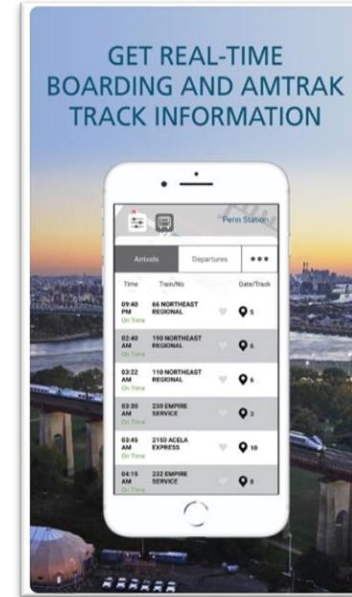
NEC Focus

- Serve with Safety
- Sustain the Business
- Win New Customers
- Build for the Future



NEC COVID Response & Initiatives

- Modified schedules
- En route cleaners, end-to-end
- Real time boarding, gate & track information at major stations
- Acela all Reserved Seating
- Capacity Indicator
- F/B modifications FC Acela
- Restricted seating on Café Cars, take away service only
- Plastic Protective Barriers installed in food service cars
- Physical distancing
- Masks/facial coverings required
- Zone boarding coming soon at major stations



#NewAcela



#NewAcela Program Updates

- Testing underway on two prototype trainsets:
 - PS01 - Pueblo, CO / TTCI
 - PS02 - Northeast Corridor / Penn Coach Yard

- Certification testing in Pueblo, CO will take up to one year

- NEC testing will occur throughout 2020 and into 2021

- First revenue-ready trainsets scheduled for delivery in spring 2021

- Amtrak training scheduled to begin in June/July 2021

- Pending successful testing and FRA authorization, revenue service launch anticipated in October 2021

Infrastructure & Stations

- Average age of major NEC backlog projects is more than 110 years, including ten moveable bridges, three sets of tunnels, and one viaduct.

- Major projects include Portal North Bridge, Hudson Tunnel, B&P Tunnel Replacement, Susquehanna River Bridge, East River Tunnel rehab, as well as other aging infrastructure and major station development projects

- Amtrak has commenced Major Station Asset Development Programs on the five Amtrak-owned stations with the highest ridership (4 on the NEC):
 - New York Penn Station (#1 in ridership)
 - Washington Union Station (#2)
 - Philadelphia William H. Gray III 30th Street Station (#3) (Philadelphia 30th Street Station)
 - Chicago Union Station (#4)
 - Baltimore Penn Station (#8)

- New Moynihan Train Hall scheduled to open in late 2020

Thank you, RPA!

QUESTIONS?



RAIL PASSENGERS
ASSOCIATION

Conversation on Regional Rail

Jarred Johnson, Director
TransitMatters



Synergies between Regional and Inter-City Rail

A Plan For Regional Rail

TRANSITMATTERS



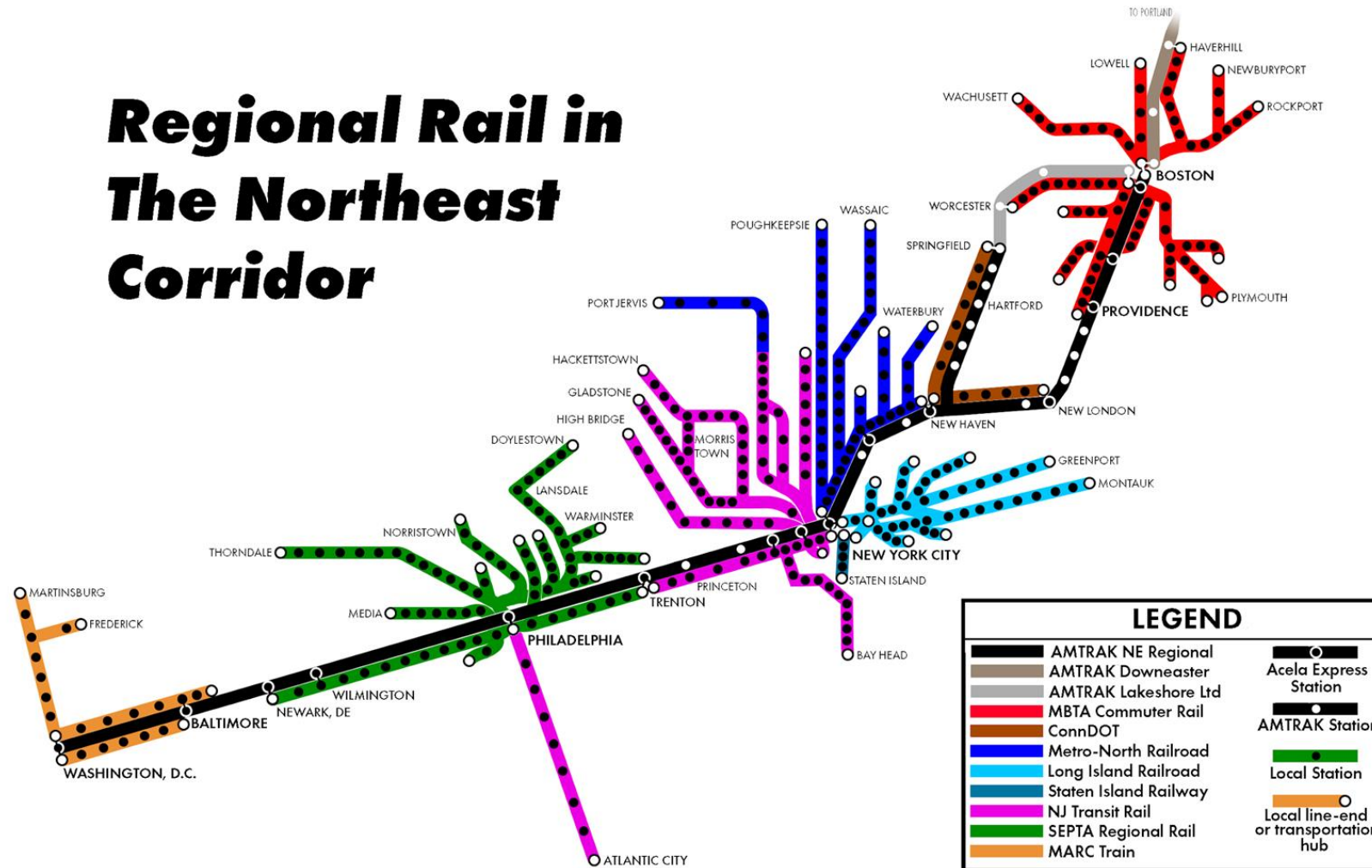
Our Mission

TransitMatters is dedicated to improving transit in and around Boston by offering new perspectives, uniting transit advocates, and informing the public. We utilize a high level of critical analysis to advocate for plans and policies that promote convenient, effective, and equitable transportation for everyone.

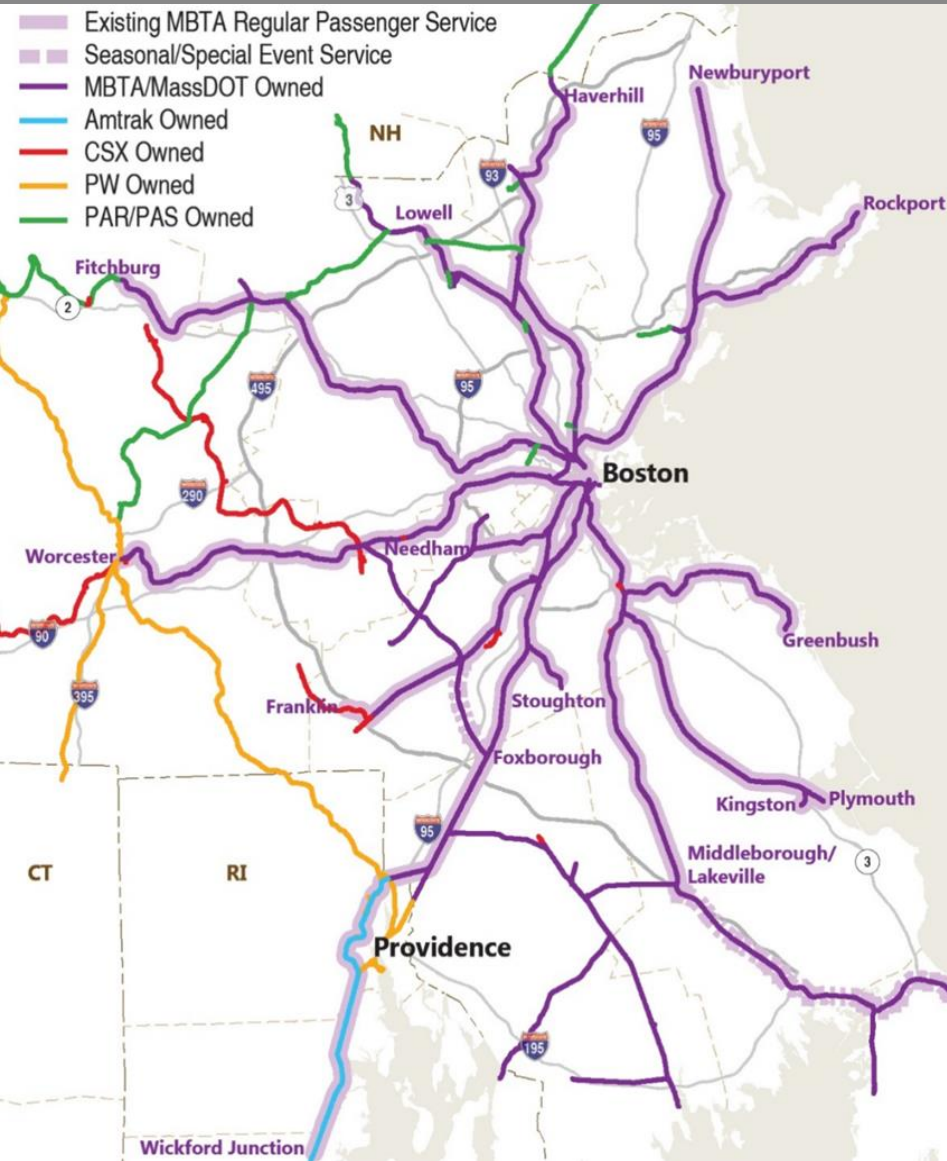


COMMUTER RAIL IN THE CORRIDOR

Regional Rail in The Northeast Corridor



COMMUTER RAIL IN THE CORRIDOR



MBTA owns the right of way used for existing passenger service within Massachusetts

Amtrak is the primary owner of the Northeast Corridor outside of Massachusetts

Proposed extension of service to Wachusett Station would operate over a segment of Pan Am track

Proposed extension of service beyond Forge Park would operate over CSX track



A FAILING SYSTEM

Transit needs to be:

Reliable

Frequent

Affordable

Commuter Rail costs “way too much money for way too little ridership.”

Unfortunately,

commuter rail just isn't up to the task.

A NEW CRISIS

Now more than ever, commuter rail needs to shift to a new business model which...

- Around 7% of AM peak ridership has returned while all day ridership has trended at about 11%

nic mobility

Supports new working options

MBTA Fall 2020 Bus Service

Expanding due to Ridership

Provides affordable service

Demand and to Prevent

Crowding, Service Being Added





Regional Rail



FIVE CRITICAL COMPONENTS



Systemwide electrification and the purchase of high-performance electric trains.



High platforms, providing universal access and speeding up boarding for everyone.



Strategic infrastructure investments to relieve bottlenecks.



Frequent service all day: every 30 minutes outside 128, and every 15 minutes in the city and inner suburbs.



Free transfers between regional trains, subways, and buses, and fare equalization with the subway in the subway's service area.

THE NEXT STEP



A critical later step to Regional Rail is the North-South Rail Link (NSRL) between North and South Stations, allowing service between any two stations with either a direct trip or a single, seamless transfer, would be a highly useful enhancement providing the flexibility and connectivity to which many riders and potential riders would be drawn.

MAKING THE PLAN

READ THE REPORTS



THE TRANSITMATTERS PLAN FOR REGIONAL RAIL PHASE 1

Read our latest report detailing how to begin modernizing the lines that the FMCB endorsed for an early transition to Regional Rail and operate frequent service systemwide, and how this process can aid the region's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

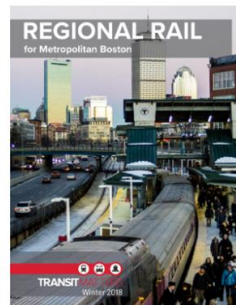
Released: June 2020



REGIONAL RAIL PROOF OF CONCEPT

Read the Fall 2019 supplement to our original Regional Rail vision demonstrating how modern operating practice can add capacity to the current Commuter Rail network and how these modest operational changes can be implemented to improve service on the Worcester line during I-90 construction as a first step to Regional Rail.

Released: Sep 2019



REGIONAL RAIL FOR METROPOLITAN BOSTON

Read our groundbreaking Winter 2018 report that laid out the vision and new business model and ultimately changed the narrative about Regional Rail in MA politics.

Released: Feb 2018



MAKING IT HAPPEN



TransitMatters
@transitmatters

What a great crowd we had from all over #RhodeIsland and #mapoli who came out to hear about our #RegionalRail plan! Thanks to our co-hosts @GrowSmartRI and our speakers: Mayor @Jorge_Elorza, our COO @jarjoh, @PeterBrassard and @aiellobytrain. Event photo gallery is coming soon!



- We traveled from Providence to Haverhill to Worcester to talk Regional Rail!
- We worked with municipal leaders from across the region to make RailVision a bold visionary process

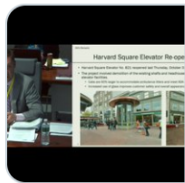


MAKING IT HAPPEN



Monica TN
@MonicaTibbitsN

Yesterday was one of my proudest moments on the [#MBTA](#) FMCB when we voted unanimously to form a Commuter Rail Transformation Office. [#RailVision](#) [#RegionalRail](#) [#CommuterRail](#) [@TransitMatters](#) To understand what this means, watch from around the 1:23:02 mark:



FMCB Meeting (Part 2)
On Livestream
[livestream.com](#)

- We won!
 - We'll have a frequent electrified system
 - FMCB will prioritize EJ communities



TransitMatters
@transitmatters

We did it!! The FMCB has resolved to transform [@MBTA_CR](#) into electrified, accessible, frequent [#REGIONALRAIL](#) essentially using the phased framework we laid out in our reports. THANK YOU!!!

2:56 PM · Nov 4, 2019 · [Twitter Web App](#)



NETWORK-WIDE BENEFITS

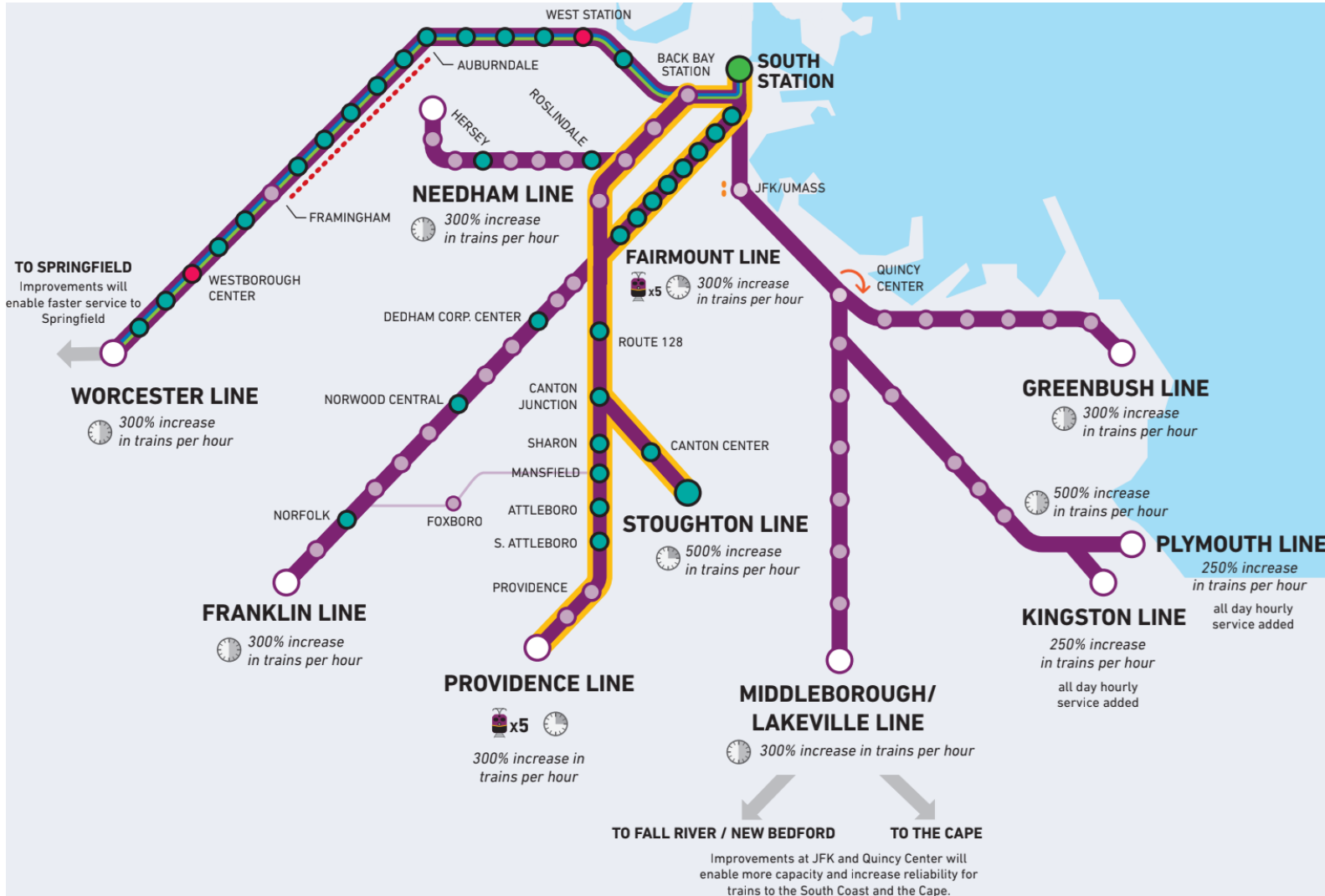


KEY

- ELECTRIFICATION
- UPGRADE TRACKS AND SIGNALS
- REMOVE SPEED RESTRICTIONS/ INCREASE SPEEDS
- DOUBLE TRACK SECTIONS
- TRIPLE TRACK SECTIONS
- PASSING TRACK
- SWITCH UPGRADES, IMPROVE ACCESS POINTS & INCREASE SPEED ON ARRIVAL, DEDICATED PLATFORMS
- NEW STATION
- NEW HIGH LEVEL PLATFORM
- 2ND PLATFORM ADDITION
- NEW ELECTRIC TRAINS
- 15 MIN. SERVICE FREQUENCIES
- 30 MIN. SERVICE FREQUENCIES



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NETWORK-WIDE BENEFITS



INCREASE IN PEAK & OFF-PEAK SERVICE

UNIVERSAL IMPROVEMENT

- 15-minute all-day frequencies on Early Action lines
- 30-minute all-day frequencies everywhere else by 2026
- Increased span of the frequency (frequency is higher all day)
- Frequency will be the same inbound and outbound



ELECTRIFICATION

Adding electric power infrastructure to a line.

→ *Faster service and decrease in CO2 emissions*



UPGRADE TRACK AND SIGNALS

Renewing signalling and infrastructure to a line.

→ *Faster, more frequent, and more reliable service*



REMOVE SPEED RESTRICTIONS/ INCREASE SPEEDS

Eliminate outdated speed restrictions.

→ *Faster, more frequent service*



PASSING TRACK

Adding second tracks to single-track segment.

→ *More frequent, more reliable service*



DOUBLE TRACK SECTIONS

Add segments of double track.

→ *More frequent, more reliable service*



TRIPLE TRACK SECTIONS

Add segments of a third track.

→ *Faster, more frequent, more reliable, more accessible service*



SWITCH UPGRADES

Replacing and upgrading switches.

→ *More frequent service, more reliable service*



NEW HIGH-LEVEL PLATFORM

Building platforms that line up with most or all of a train.

→ *Faster trips (less time at the station)*



2ND PLATFORM

Add platforms on opposite side of single platform stations.

→ *Faster, more frequent, more accessible, more reliable service*



DEDICATED PLATFORMS

Assign specific terminal platforms to all lines or groups of lines. For example, currently Providence/Stoughton, Franklin, Needham, and Amtrak all share platform groups.

→ *Faster and more reliable service*



IMPROVE ACCESS POINTS AND SAFELY INCREASED SPEEDS NEAR TERMINAL STATIONS

Increase speeds from 10 to 30 mph.

→ *Increased system capacity and faster service, more frequent service*



NEW STATIONS

Building new stations along current lines.

→ *Serving Gateway cities, universities and hospitals, access for low income populations*



NEW ELECTRIC TRAINS

Buying electric multiple unit (EMU) trains.

→ *Faster service, more frequent service, more reliable service, decrease in CO2 emissions*

A more resilient network

Faster, more frequent service

More reliable service

Reduce CO2 emissions

More accessible service

NETWORK-WIDE BENEFITS



Improves service to Gateway Cities and environmental justice communities

Improves reliability and add flexibility on the 3 corridors shared with Amtrak

A SHORT AND LONG TERM PLAN

By 2021...

We can start

30-60 min. all-day service
everywhere

Expand Zone 1A and
discounts

Expand free transfers



A SHORT AND LONG TERM PLAN

By 2026...

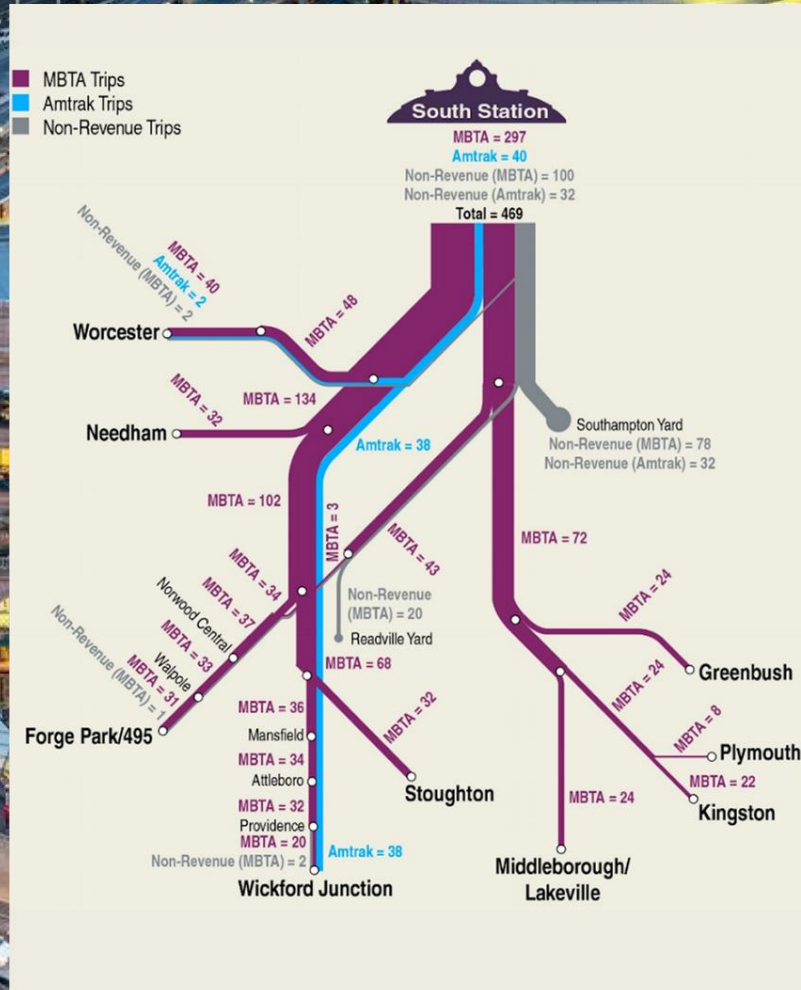
...while at the same time planning for and beginning the major investments needed to transform the system

Electrification, step-free access, and 15-min. all-day service on early action lines

Expanded step-free access systemwide on a metrics basis

Bottlenecks eliminated for 30-min. all-day service systemwide

COMPLEX OPERATIONS



SOUTH STATION EXPANSION?

\$2-3 Billion Dollars With Little
Transportation Value

Doubles Down On An Outdated
Model

Huge Housing/ Climate Impacts

A BETTER PLAN

Organization before Electronics before Concrete

Move to Clockface Scheduling

Turn Trains Faster

Use Dedicated Platforms

A BETTER PLAN

Relatively modest changes to the switches and track layout on the approach to South Station will enable faster speeds into South Station and add capacity

EXAMPLES OF A RADICAL SHIFT IN COMMUTER RAIL



The RER led to a renaissance of rail in Paris transforming the slow, dirty commuter trains into a second subway for Paris

Toronto spent millions of dollars and years studying transit options and came to eerily similar conclusions to TransitMatters

Brookline's Highland Branch went from a failing commuter rail with little more than 3,000 daily riders to the "D" Branch with 25K!

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR AMTRAK

Slower and less reliable diesel trains on the NEC threaten the service expansion of the Acela and Northeast Regional

Investment is needed on the Haverhill Line to ensure the Downeaster can continue to expand

The busy Worcester Line needs a third track to handle Commuter Rail expansion, East- West, and Amtrak



GUIDING THE RECOVERY



Phase 1 will generate over 22,000 direct jobs and an additional 23,000 indirect jobs.

THANK YOU!





RAIL PASSENGERS
ASSOCIATION

Q&A

Jim Mathews, President & CEO
Rail Passengers Association

Caroline Decker, Vice President for the Northeast Corridor Service Line
Amtrak

Jarred Johnson, Executive Director
TransitMatters



Answering your questions

Q: Whatever happened to the study that the FRA was leading several years ago about the NEC. There were 4 options (I think) being studied.

- Mike Wilkinson



Answering your questions

Q: What is the current status associated with progress, funding, support, and impediments for the Hudson River Gateway Project?

- John Stengel



Answering your questions

Q: (For Jarred) The rail planning in Massachusetts and New York has been undesirably siloed, with Massachusetts and New York not communicating, and this is preventing proper connectivity planning. The East-West Rail proposal in Massachusetts, currently from Boston to Pittsfield, would benefit immensely from going all the way to Albany, so that I would have a second option for getting from Syracuse to Boston or Syracuse to Northampton (both trips I take regularly). What is being done to promote a connected-up, network-based thinking to avoid this silo mentality? Shorter, probably better, version: Why is Massachusetts considering additional frequencies only from Boston to Pittsfield when Boston-Albany would get a lot more riders, including me? How can we fix this attitude problem and promote network connectivity rather than siloed one-state thinking?

-Nathanael



Answering your questions

Q: The currently projected cost of the Hudson tunnel is \$3.5 billion per mile, which is totally unprecedented. Tunnels on the nearby Second Avenue Subway phase 1--the most expensive subway line built in the world to date--cost \$500 million per mile. The Gotthard Base Tunnel cost \$350 million per mile. Both of these are at the high end of the global cost spectrum for rail tunnels. What is Amtrak doing to learn from its international, especially non-Anglophone, peers, and implement best practices in construction management so that its needed infrastructure projects get built affordably?



Answering your questions

Q: It seems the status of bptunnel.com is they have finalized the route selection, but nothing will happen until funding is secured. Is this being worked on? Who has the lead on securing funding? What is the outlook?



Answering your questions

Q: The "airport style" of boarding in DC (and elsewhere) has long been an inconvenience and an annoyance, making people wait in a crowded area with no line management. When will Amtrak let passengers wait on the platforms, as is common elsewhere?



Answering your questions

Q: Amtrak has stubbornly resisted offering open data, to enable third parties to access train data. There is no official repository for static content like GTFS or dynamic data via APIs. They need to create a portal at amtrak.com/data, like most federal agencies do (just look at transportation.gov/data). What will it take for Amtrak to offer open data?

- **Michael Schade**



Answering your questions

Q: (For Jarred) What needs to happen to expand the NEC north of Boston to the rest of the Northeast? How can a single-seat service be provided to places like Portland, Manchester, Burlington, and even Montreal?



Thank You!

Next month's webinar:

Post-Election Briefing

- Wednesday, November 18th
- Featuring: Rail Passengers Association & One Rail staff