



THE FUTURE OF

THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR





History of the Northeast Corridor

The Northeast Corridor was originally built by the Pennsylvania and New Haven Railroads between 1850 and 1917. Original infrastructure, which included electrification between Washington, D.C. and New Haven, CT, was built to a high standard for the time. Following the bankruptcy of Penn Central—the dominant railroad in the Northeastern United States—in the early 1970s, the Federal Government assumed control of assets and intercity passenger service operations under a hybrid public-private entity, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, doing business as Amtrak. Amtrak began operations on May 1, 1971.

MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE A VALUABLE REGIONAL ASSET

The dense population of the Northeastern United States contributes to the Northeast Corridor (NEC) being the most heavily traveled portion of America's passenger rail system. Amtrak's ownership of the track in the NEC is also a major contributing factor to its success. Amtrak's Acela Express service, which operates between Washington, D.C. and Boston, via Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York City along the Northeast Corridor, has experienced consistently increasing demand since its inception. Yet despite growing demand, there has been no major investment in the NEC since the electrification of the north end of the Corridor in preparation for Acela Express service in the late 1990s to expand capacity and reduce trip times.

This investment in the Corridor's infrastructure is a federal responsibility. Truckers, bus operators and private automobiles rely on the government to maintain the network of roads and highways on which they operate. Likewise, private airlines rely on federal investment to maintain the nation's airports and air traffic control system. The federal government must also invest in the nation's rail infrastructure to ensure that it is a

viable alternative to air travel and driving for intercity and regional travel.

With President Bush's recent signing of the Rail Safety Enhancement Act of 2008, which includes a multi-year authorization for increasing funding to Amtrak and states to expand and improve intercity rail service, the time is right to remedy years of neglect. Securing the authorized funding levels will allow Amtrak to bring the Corridor back to a state of good repair, improve the reliability of Amtrak and local commuter services, and lay a foundation for growth.

This funding for the NEC is sorely needed, and will help restore to optimal operation this critical regional transportation resource that serves more than 750,000 commuter and intercity passengers every day. ●




RAIL: A VITAL ECONOMIC STIMULANT

“Verizon New Jersey’s decision to retain its 700-employee presence in Newark, and to invest more than \$25 million, was influenced strongly by the City’s rail connections and access to the Northeast Corridor. As a company that spends hundreds of millions of dollars each year on our own infrastructure, we understand the importance of returning the Corridor to a state of good repair.”

*– Dennis M. Bone, President,
Verizon New Jersey*

The Northeast megaregion, which is served by Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor, had a \$2.4-trillion economy in 2005, one-fifth of the nation’s gross domestic product. Future economic growth in this area, which extends from Southern Maine to Northern Virginia, depends on the ability to move goods and people quickly and reliably between the region’s urban centers.

Central business districts, and research and development clusters around universities, are the engines of the economy in the Northeast. These research and industry hubs are powered by face-to-face communication, which, in turn, depends on efficient and reliable people movement. Intercity and commuter rail expand the scale of these networks, extending them beyond individual metropolitan areas to adjacent and outlying communities. The result: increased synergy and innovation.

Bottom line: the continued stability and growth of rail service on the NEC is of vital economic importance. 



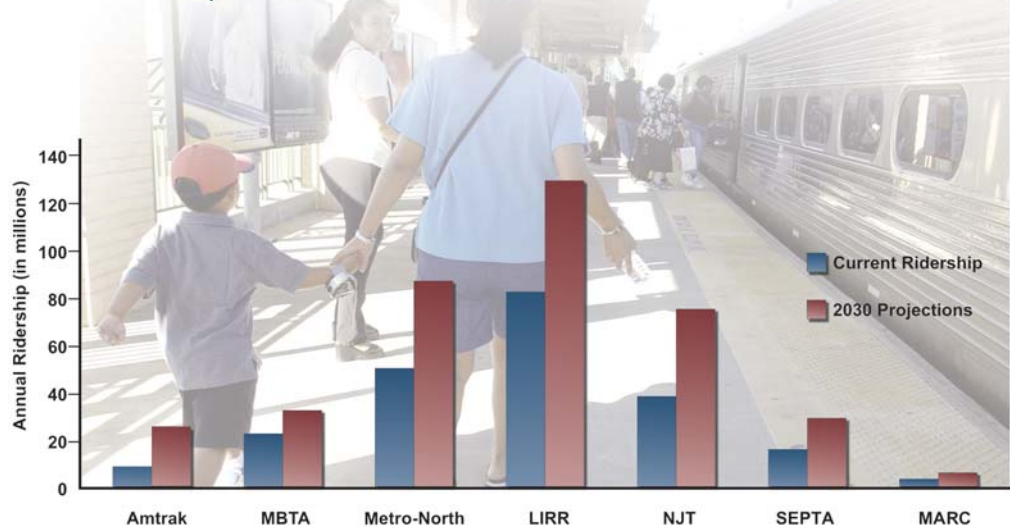
CHALLENGES FACING THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR

To envision the future of Northeast Corridor rail passenger service, one first needs a clear view of its current condition, as well as the issues and constraints affecting its operation. A major concern is balancing soaring ridership with diminishing capacity, including severe constraints in major terminals such as Boston, New York City and Washington, D.C.

Skyrocketing Ridership

- While Amtrak system-wide ridership was up 11% to 29.7 million in FY 2008, Acela ridership grew just 6.5% due to lack of capacity and equipment shortages.
- Yet Amtrak predicts ridership on the NEC will double by 2030, from 13 million to 26 million.
- Over that same time period, total volume on the corridor, including commuter service, is expected to grow from approximately 250 million to close to 400 million riders per year.

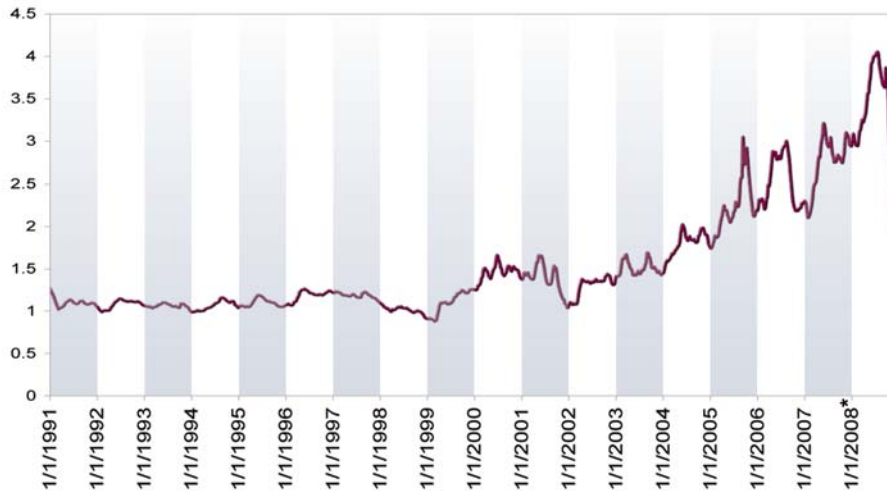
Annual Ridership in the NEC



Current and projected ridership in the NEC

Source: NEC Infrastructure Master Plan

Average National Retail Price for One Gallon of Gas



Source: Energy Information Administration

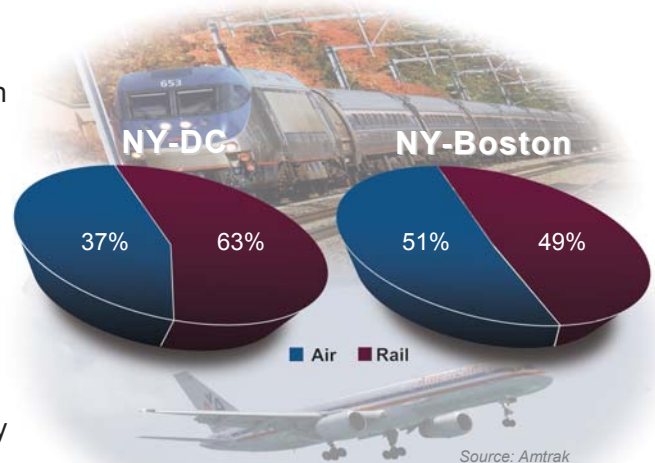
*2008 data through November 17, 2008



Rail vs. Car vs. Plane

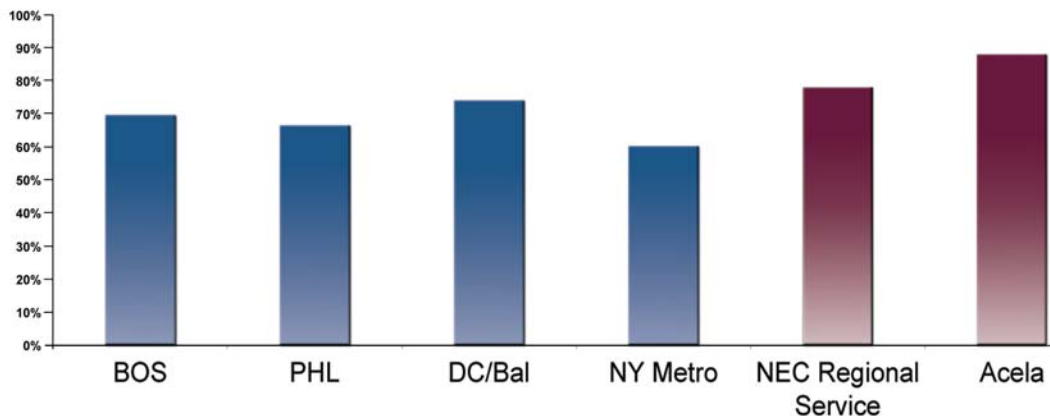
- Congestion, concerns over rising carbon emissions, and volatile gasoline prices have contributed to increased rail passenger ridership.
- Airports are nearing capacity, made worse by the growth in short-haul air travel within the megaregion. Over 20 percent of all flights out of the three major New York City area airports are less than 350 miles, and the vast majority of these are to destinations within the Northeast megaregion.
- Trains on the NEC consume less than half of the energy-per-passenger-mile than private automobile or short-haul air flights. Travel between New York City and Washington, D.C. on Amtrak consumes the equivalent of three gallons of gasoline per passenger, compared to nearly seven for private car or air travel.
- Rail has gained in market share; however, significant upgrades to the Corridor must occur to relieve capacity issues if this growth is to continue. 🚆

Rail/Air Market Share



Source: Amtrak

On-Time Performance For Major Northeast Airports (2007) and Amtrak NEC Service (FY2007)



Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics



WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

Funding aimed at bringing the NEC up to a state of good repair would be spread over numerous initiatives. “Must do” targets for investment include:

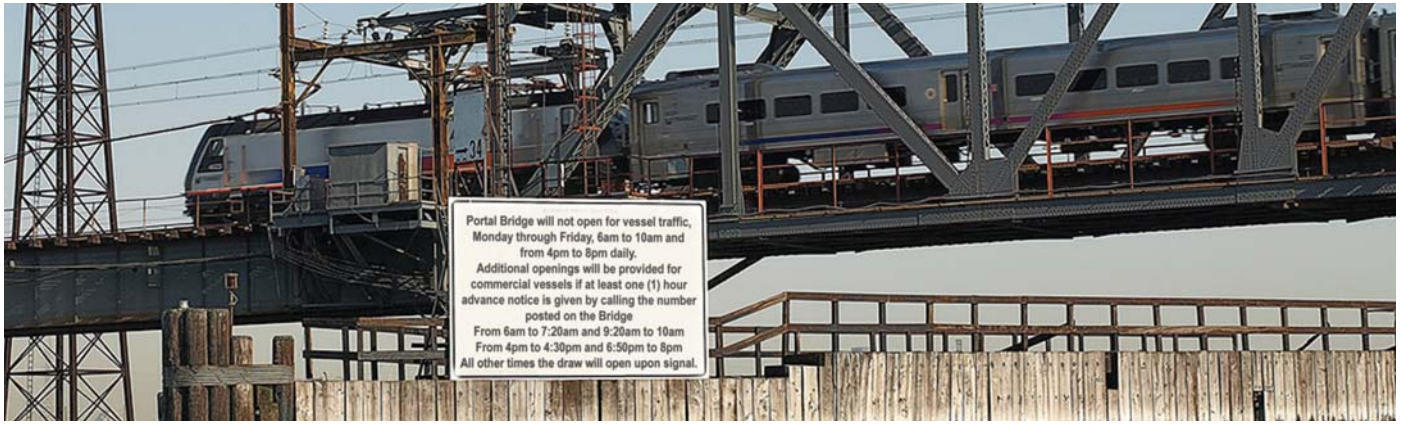
Basic Infrastructure Repairs

Approximately \$5 billion (in 2007 dollars) in improvements to the Washington, D.C.-to-Boston rail corridor, including:

- Replacement and repair of hundreds of bridges more than a century old, including major movable bridges in Connecticut and Maryland;

- Replacement of the B&P Tunnel in Baltimore dating to the 1870s;
- Track and switch upgrades from wood to concrete to ensure reliable service;
- Full installation of Automatic Stop Train Control for monitoring and controlling train movements to provide increased safety on all locomotives;
- Replacement of electric converters and transformers installed in the 1930s;
- Signal system upgrades.





Improvements to Enhance Safety, Expand Capacity, and Reduce Trip Times

In addition to \$5 billion in basic infrastructure work, the following improvements are proposed to enhance safety, expand capacity and reduce trip times in the Corridor:

- \$1 billion for improvements to the Portal Bridge in New Jersey;
- Station track upgrades at six stations, in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, New York City and Connecticut;
- Speed improvements to allow 15- to 30-minute reductions in trip times between Boston and New York City and New York City and Washington, D.C.;
- Installation of “constant tension” catenary between New York City

and Washington, D.C. to permit speeds of up to 150 mph;

- In the long term, capacity increases at New York City’s Penn Station (in the form of additional platforms and/or additional tunnels to New Jersey or Queens) will also be necessary.

Equipment and Facilities Investments

In addition to infrastructure improvements, Amtrak’s intercity fleet and support facilities require renewal, as follows:

- Lengthening and expanding the number of existing train sets to meet increased demand;
- Beginning replacement of Amtrak regional trains, which average about 40 years in service;
- Modernization and expansion of maintenance facilities. ➔



THE COST OF NEGLECT

When rail lines are not maintained in a state of good repair there are major repercussions for systems, operations and performance, and, inevitably, for rail passengers.

Rail systems, such as Amtrak’s NEC service, that are not kept to state of good repair standards experience:

- Declining reliability and on-time performance
- Increased maintenance and labor costs
- Additional rolling stock breakdowns
- Track work delays
- Electrical system problems (catenary, third-rail, signal)
- Reduced track speeds due to Federal Railroad Administration inspections that increase trip times
- Reduced track capacity due to variations in grades and track curvature



NEC SERVICE THAT MEETS TODAY'S NEEDS AND FULFILLS TOMORROW'S PROMISE

Investments in Amtrak's NEC that bring the line up to a state of good repair would boost reliability and lay the groundwork for increased capacity and improved trip times. For example:

- A near-term goal for Acela service is to reduce travel time between Washington, D.C. and New York City by 15 minutes from 2 hours, 45 minutes to 2 hours, 30 minutes and to reduce travel time between New York City and Boston from the current 3 hours, 35 minutes to 3 hours, 15 minutes.
- On-time performance, which was 85% for Acela and 76% for regional service on the NEC in FY2008, is targeted to rise to 90% for all services over the next five years.

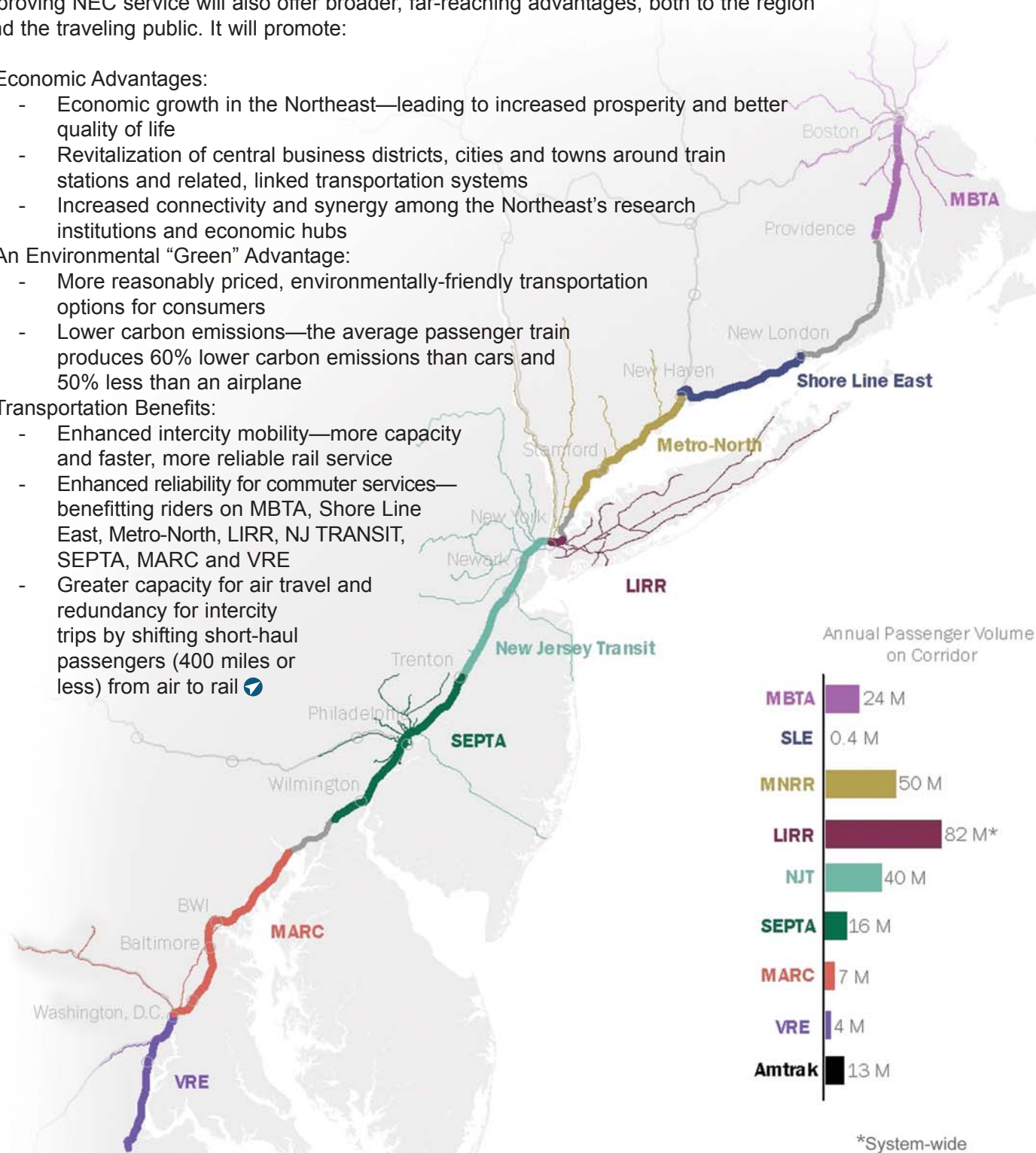


THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR IS ESSENTIAL TO AMTRAK AND COMMUTER SERVICES

A Win-Win for the Northeast

Improving NEC service will also offer broader, far-reaching advantages, both to the region and the traveling public. It will promote:

- Economic Advantages:
 - Economic growth in the Northeast—leading to increased prosperity and better quality of life
 - Revitalization of central business districts, cities and towns around train stations and related, linked transportation systems
 - Increased connectivity and synergy among the Northeast’s research institutions and economic hubs
- An Environmental “Green” Advantage:
 - More reasonably priced, environmentally-friendly transportation options for consumers
 - Lower carbon emissions—the average passenger train produces 60% lower carbon emissions than cars and 50% less than an airplane
- Transportation Benefits:
 - Enhanced intercity mobility—more capacity and faster, more reliable rail service
 - Enhanced reliability for commuter services—benefitting riders on MBTA, Shore Line East, Metro-North, LIRR, NJ TRANSIT, SEPTA, MARC and VRE
 - Greater capacity for air travel and redundancy for intercity trips by shifting short-haul passengers (400 miles or less) from air to rail





Speakers in photos (from left to right): Senator Tom Carper, former Governor Mark Schweiker, Senator Frank Lautenberg, and Business Alliance Member George Vradenburg.

A CALL TO ACTION

The passage of the Rail Safety Enhancement Act of 2008 provides real hope that years of gridlock in Washington, D.C. on intercity passenger rail, which has resulted in serious neglect of the NEC, is finally coming to an end.

The Business Alliance for Northeast Mobility looks forward to engaging with the NEC Infrastructure and Operations Advisory Commission, Northeastern governors and state officials, the Obama Administration, the 111th Congress, and other decision-makers and stakeholders to secure adequate funding to ensure the fast, reliable intercity rail service the region needs.

The long-term potential for the Northeast Corridor is enormous. The initial focus, however, must be on returning the NEC to a state of good repair through implementation of a NEC Master Capital Plan. That plan will include broad-based investments in tunnels, new train sets, and catenaries, as well as signal and communications upgrades. These investments will benefit not only the tens of thousands of daily Amtrak riders, but also the hundreds of thousands of daily commuters who rely on regional rail services along the Corridor.

Next Steps

A longer-term priority is expanding the reach of high-speed service on the Northeast Corridor to fast-growing areas of the region such as Richmond, VA, rehabilitating and extending branch and feeder lines, and adding new and improved services. Destinations that would benefit from improved services include Springfield, MA; Hartford, CT; Albany and Binghamton, NY; Scranton, Allentown, and Harrisburg, PA; Atlantic City, NJ; Dover, DE; Ocean City, MD; and Bristol, Lynchburg and Newport News, VA.

These improvements could pave the way for exciting future transportation options, including opportunities for true high-speed rail, a premium service with high appeal for business travelers that will further enhance economic competitiveness in the Northeast. ➤

STRENGTHENING CONNECTING SERVICES

The Business Alliance for Northeast Mobility is working to develop a shared vision for the expansion of the Northeast Corridor and its local feeder networks, with the long-term goal of greatly strengthening connecting rail services and transit-oriented development.



Annual Amtrak Station Volume



The
**Business
Alliance**
for **Northeast
Mobility**

**The Business
Alliance for
Northeast Mobility**

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**About the Business Alliance for Northeast
Mobility**

The Business Alliance for Northeast Mobility is a coalition of more than 30 of the Northeast's leading business and civic groups, established to promote improved transportation links in the Northeast megaregion—an interconnected network of metropolitan regions stretching from Portland, ME to Richmond, VA. The Alliance seeks to bring the region's political and intellectual resources together to address the threat to future economic growth posed by the deterioration of aging infrastructure and worsening congestion.

Business Alliance Members

A Better City
American Institute of Architects, New York Chapter
The Boston Foundation
The Business Council of Fairfield County
The Business Council of New York State
The BWI Business Partnership, Inc.
Capitol Region Council of Governments
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance
Central Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce
CEO Council for Growth/Greater Philadelphia
Chamber of Commerce
Chesapeake Crescent Initiative
Connecticut Economic Resources Center (CERC)
Connecticut Technology Council
Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
General Contractors Association of New York
Greater Baltimore Committee
Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce
Greater Washington Board of Trade
Mercer Regional Chamber of Commerce
Metro Hartford Alliance
Middlesex County Regional Chamber of Commerce
New Castle County Chamber of Commerce
New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce
Newark Regional Business Partnership
Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Providence-Warwick Convention and Visitors Bureau
Regional Plan Association, Inc.
Select Greater Philadelphia
Staten Island Chamber of Commerce
Washington, D.C. Convention & Tourism Corporation

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