

NORTH ATLANTIC RAIL

Executive Summary: Advancing a Passenger Rail-Based Economic Transformation for the New England - Downstate New York Region

The Challenge: to recover from the Covid-19-induced recession, while laying the foundation for long-term economic transformation — building on the multi-state collaboration already initiated by New York - New England governors to reopen the economy in the aftermath of the pandemic

The Concept: a rail-enabled economic transformation strategy that creates one integrated market for ideas, capital and talent across the economic geography encompassing New York City, Boston and all of the smaller cities of New England

Key Elements:

1. Early execution of shovel ready rail projects that are the top priority of each state, and which are each an essential element of a regional high-performance rail network (\$35 billion)
2. A high-speed trunk line connecting the individual projects into a network and enabling 100-minute service between NYC and Boston (\$70 billion)
3. Establish North Atlantic Rail, Inc., a federal-state partnership to fund and implement the program working with existing stakeholders but requiring new procurement methods and P3 ventures to accelerate investments

Where We Stand: top priority state projects identified, some engineering work completed, preliminary ROW for the high-speed trunk line identified, leadership mobilized

What We Need: a total of \$105 billion to design and build both the top priority state projects and the trunk line; and a new federal-state partnership, North Atlantic Rail, Inc. (NARI), to expedite execution. This would represent 5% of a \$2 trillion infrastructure program for a region that contains 11% of the nation's population, 14% of its economy and an even larger share of its tax base, and more than 2/3 of US rail ridership.

Outcomes / Benefits:

Jobs: Create tens of thousands of jobs designing and building the system over a multi-year period —several of these projects can be shovel ready in a year to 15 months, putting people to work almost immediately;

Economic transformation and housing affordability: Mid-sized cities with large low-income and working-class minority and immigrant populations will be revitalized and connected to job centers;

Climate and energy: Renewable energy powered electric rail lines will significantly reduce carbon production;

Traffic Relief and Reduced Congestion in Northeast Corridor: Utilization of this fast, clean and efficient rail network will reduce reliance on SOVs and congestion and improve economic efficiency across the region;

Public health and social equity: Air pollution and PM 2.5 particulates will be cut, reducing asthma, lung and heart disease in low-income communities of color across the region.

Priority Investments:

- Connecticut: New Haven and Hartford Line modernization; double track and electrification of Waterbury & Danbury branch lines; upgrades to Hartford - Springfield line
- Rhode Island: Expansion of high-speed, frequent rail service from Kingston, Green Airport and Providence to South Station
- Massachusetts: East-West Rail Line from Boston-Worcester-Springfield, and potential extension to Pittsfield; Transformation of MBTA Commuter Rail into regional rail network with extensions to Fall River, New Bedford and electrification of Fairmont, Lynn, and Providence service; construction of North-South Rail Link
- New Hampshire: New commuter rail link from Manchester and Nashua to Boston;
- Maine: Modernization of Downeaster Service to Portland and Brunswick, extension to Lewiston-Auburn and possibly to Bangor;
- Vermont: Modernization and extension of Valley Flyer service from Greenfield to White River Junction and beyond.
- New York: New high-speed rail line from Ronkonkoma to Penn Station; New Haven Line modernization from Port Chester and New Rochelle to Penn Station and Grand Central.
- Entire Seven-State Region: New 100-minute high-speed rail link from Manhattan to Boston with connecting service to all of New England’s mid-sized cities.

