



**NEC
FUTURE**
A Rail Investment Plan
for the Northeast Corridor

Economic Development Workshops Webinar

August 2015



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

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AGENDA

- Workshops – Role and Process
- Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights
- Applying Workshop Findings to Economic Effects Assessment
- Highlights from Individual Workshops



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Workshops – Role and Process



Workshops – Role and Process

Overview

- A total of nine workshops were held across the corridor in October 2014
- Workshop discussions helped in understanding the probable market response to the new passenger rail services offered under the Alternatives evaluated in the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
- Workshop Participants included
 - › Private Developers
 - › Local Planners/Economic Developers
 - › Academic Institution Administrators/Faculty
- Workshop findings contributed to the economic effects assessment within the Tier 1 Draft EIS

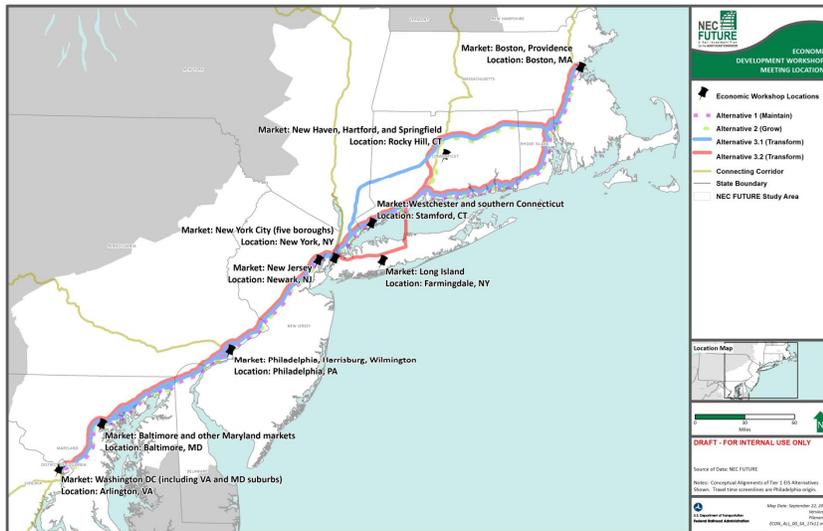


Workshops – Role and Process

Workshop Markets and Locations

- Washington, D.C., and suburban Maryland and Virginia (Arlington, VA)
- Baltimore and other Maryland markets (Baltimore, MD)
- Philadelphia, PA, and Wilmington, DE (Philadelphia, PA)
- New Jersey (Newark, NJ)
- New York City (five boroughs) (New York City, NY)
- Long Island (Farmingdale, NY)
- Westchester, NY, and Southern Connecticut (Stamford, CT)
- New Haven and Hartford, CT, Springfield, MA (Rocky Hill, CT)
- Boston, MA, and Providence, RI (Boston, MA)

Workshops – Role and Process



Workshops – Role and Process

Role of Workshops

- Rail service can accelerate and shape development if other factors are in place
- Workshops helped inform NEC FUTURE understanding of:
 - › Relative importance respondents placed on travel time, frequency, and reliability
 - › Economic connection among urban markets on the corridor as part of understanding agglomeration potential
 - › Possible labor market effects
 - › Importance of airport access for respondents, and
 - › Potential for station area development
- Together with quantitative elements, the workshop discussions helped frame the evaluation of the market response

Workshops – Role and Process

Workshop Participants

Participants	To help understand:
Private Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Factors that drive and hinder property investment › Role of rail connectivity/availability in supporting economic development
Local Planners/Economic Developers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Factors that drive economic development › Connectivity constraints to regional development › Transit-based factors that hinder businesses/people from locating there
Academic Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Importance of partnerships between institutions & major corporate landowners › Importance of connectivity to the local urban market <p>Academic Participants included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty, Researchers, and Transportation Experts • Administrative Officials

Workshops – Role and Process

Workshops helped identify metrics used to measure:

- Potential agglomeration/ productivity impacts
- Labor market effects
- Potential localized station-area development



Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights

- Reliability, Frequency, and Travel Time
- Agglomeration
- Labor Market Effects
- Airport Access
- Station Area Development

Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights

Participants Ranking of Reliability, Frequency, and Travel Time

- Reliability of service the most important service attribute in all markets
- Frequency next most important in most markets
 - › Frequency and types of service most important in most markets – Boston the exception
- Travel Time discussions suggested a threshold effect:
 - › *Travel times* were more important than other service attributes up to permitting a day trip to New York
 - › Beyond that, additional *frequencies* and *types of service* became more important

Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights

Participants Ranking of Reliability, Frequency, and Travel Time (continued)

- Direct “one-seat rides” are important, because the absence of a transfer fosters reliability
 - › Locations with direct access to many markets are favored for private development investment
 - › Reduced risk of delay attractive for developers and riders
 - › May result in greater station development potential
- All Alternatives are designed to offer reliability

Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights

Agglomeration

- Businesses gain productivity in large/dense economies
 - › Access to greater diversity of specialized skilled labor, information, and new innovations.
- Corridor will remain a New York-centric economy
 - › New York is the most important market for greater rail service connectivity, preferred even above markets that are closer in distance/travel time
 - › New York City itself seeks better mobility within its own economy; capacity needed for access to labor supply

Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights

Agglomeration (continued)

- “City Region User” concept developed
 - › Connecticut, Long Island, and New Jersey identified that the ability to “criss-cross” the region would change where they work, shop and play
- The City Region User has access to a greater range of
 - › Employment
 - › Shopping
 - › Entertainment, and
 - › Recreational options
- Greater mobility
 - › Makes the region more attractive for households
 - › Supports local economic activity

Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights

Labor Market Effects

- A variety of strategies on how enhanced rail service could offer labor market benefits

Select Areas	Expected Labor Market Effects
Boston, New York	Participants saw huge benefits
Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia	Greater labor market integration among themselves <input type="checkbox"/> Businesses in Baltimore and Wilmington could recruit talent instead of functioning as bedroom communities <input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore already feels well-connected to DC
Long Island, Connecticut	Attract and retain jobs; act as lower-cost alternatives to New York <input type="checkbox"/> Long Island could attract convention and tourism visitors <input type="checkbox"/> Both had bi-directional focus (south towards New York City and north towards Boston)

- Definition of an “acceptable” commute time:
 - › *New York and Philadelphia*: 1 hour
 - › *Smaller cities*: 30-45 minutes

Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights

Airport Access

- Increased rail access to BWI would help in the airport’s expansion/jobs and support the nearby emerging tech cluster
- Participants in Stamford discussed the need for better airport access which could alleviate air congestion in the region, and attract and retain business expansions
- Participants in New York thought additional means to access the region’s airports would be beneficial as a “global city”
- For Wilmington, a connection to the Philadelphia airport is key and could be a significant factor in economic development

Workshop Discussions: Findings and Insights

Station Area Development

- Rail service can accelerate and shape development if other factors are in place
 - › Good schools, low crime rates, availability of land, ability to assemble parcels, willing local government partners, appropriate zoning and density, utilities, and supportive infrastructure
- Rail service pricing may influence the type of development constructed near stations
 - › Higher cost rail service → business travel market and greater potential for office, hotel, and higher end residential
 - › Mid/Lower-cost rail service → broader travel market and more frequent use, greater mix of retail and mid-level residential anticipated

Applying Workshop Findings to Economic Effects Assessment

Applying Workshop Findings to Economic Effects Assessment

How were the Findings Used?

- 14 Evaluation Metrics to measure:
 - › Agglomeration Potential
 - › Labor Market Effect
 - › Station Area Development Potential
- Metrics measured at station area level and metropolitan area level, as appropriate
- Measured for No Action and Action Alternatives

Applying Workshop Findings to Economic Effects Assessment

Agglomeration Potential

- Uses timetables for each Alternative to derive metrics
- Metrics developed at the Metro Area Level

Metric	Details
New rail capacity	Ranging by Alternative, highlights the improvements in new rail capacity and accessibility in the corridor
Accessibility	
New trains traversing broader NY market	Highlights the Alternatives that add connectivity between Connecticut, Long Island, and New Jersey – pivoting off the 'City Region User' concept
Connections to NY Penn Station - Number of trains - Travel times to NY Penn Station	Across Alternatives, provides for a comparison of frequency of service and travel time to NY Penn Station

Applying Workshop Findings to Economic Effects Assessment

Labor Market Effects

- Uses timetables for each Alternative to derive metrics
- Metrics developed for Select Hub Stations along the Corridor

Metric	Details
From select hub stations, Stations reachable within - 30 minute train travel time - 45 minute train travel time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights stations that can be newly accessed within 30 minute and 45 minute train travel time • Across Alternatives, provides for a comparison of markets newly reachable within 30 minute and 45 minute train travel time
From select hub stations, total combined Employment and total combined Population of Markets Newly Reachable within - 30 minute train travel time - 45 minute train travel time	

Applying Workshop Findings to Economic Effects Assessment

Station Area Development Potential

- Metrics developed at the Metro Area Level

Metric	Details
Station Typology	Comparative concentration of local stations, hubs, major hubs Station types as indicators of accessibility to other modes
Summary of Planning by Market	Identifies presence of rail transportation and transit-oriented development planning in metro areas
Range of Pricing Options	Availability of range of pricing options - Low (Regional service) - Medium (Intercity services) - High (Intercity Express)

Highlights from Individual Workshops

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Highlights from Individual Workshops

General Trends Across Corridor Regions

- South (DC, MD, DE, PA)
 - › Wants to get to NYC
 - › Concerned about range of services and pricing
 - › Frequency and reliability more important than travel time
- Central (NJ, NY)
 - › Wants to expand labor pool
 - › 40-60 minute commute ideal
 - › Congestion and capacity are limiting growth
 - › City Region User concept introduced
- North (CT, RI, MA)
 - › Wants travel times sufficient to do day trips to NYC, some additional interest in DC
 - › Would like more air-rail connections
 - › Region getting more costly

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Highlights from Individual Workshops

South: DC, Baltimore, and Philadelphia/Wilmington Workshops

- DC:
 - › New York City is the prime destination for Washington, D.C., in terms of expanded rail service
 - › Trip time is less important than reliability and frequency
- Baltimore:
 - › Rail connectivity in the D.C.-Baltimore corridor is adequate
 - › Increasing connections to the north invites businesses to Baltimore; may help attract young workers
- Philadelphia and Wilmington:
 - › For Wilmington, a connection to the Philadelphia airport is key and a significant factor in economic development
 - › Respondents felt Alternative 2 made sufficiently large changes to rail service to elicit economic/market response

Highlights from Individual Workshops

Central: New Jersey, New York City, and Long Island Workshops

- New Jersey
 - › Fragmented planning hinders growth
 - › Need a champion to advance the importance of a coordinated NEC
 - › 40 minutes is the maximum “comfortable” commute time
- New York City
 - › Strong emphasis on accessing labor—pulling more people in—enhancing the commute shed
 - › The cost of inaction results in job loss to the periphery
 - › 1-hour commute is the tipping point
- Long Island
 - › Congestion is severe enough to change choices
 - › Access to job opportunities in multiple markets from one point is highly attractive
 - › Resistance to growth and changing character are concerns

Highlights from Individual Workshops

North: Westchester/Southern Connecticut, New Haven/Hartford/Springfield, and Boston Workshops

- Westchester and Southern Connecticut
 - › “Urban Region User” - ability to access a greater range of amenities within a region with enhanced mobility
 - › Region is in need of more air service options, rail–air connections help
- New Haven/Hartford/Springfield
 - › Connecticut's smaller cities face obstacles in assembling land for transit-oriented development
 - › Additional rail connectivity between Hartford-New Haven-Springfield could change how the cities work together
- Boston
 - › A trip time under 2 hours (and reliable) from Boston to NYC is a game changer
 - › Direct connections (one-seat rides) are highly valuable in picking development locations

In Closing

What's next?

- The Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be released for public review and comment in November 2015 at www.necfuture.com
- If you have any questions or comments, email Amishi Castelli at amishi.castelli@dot.gov, NEC FUTURE FRA Environmental Lead.

Thank You!