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## NEC FUTURE Study Advances

The Northeast Corridor – the 457-mile rail-road from Boston South Station to Washington Union Station – is the nation's busiest rail line. Much of it was built over 100 years ago. Some 200 million passengers per year use its 2,200 daily trains to commute to work and travel across the region, supporting the region's economy and providing an alternative to the severe highway and airport congestion in the Northeast. As busy as the NEC is today, it will need to handle significantly more trains and passengers over the next decades as the region grows a projected 15-25 percent by 2040.

More trains, faster trip time and better service – that is the goal for the NEC, requiring major, sustained investment in the rail line in the coming years. Defining how that happens – which projects are built, where, and how they are prioritized – is the focus of

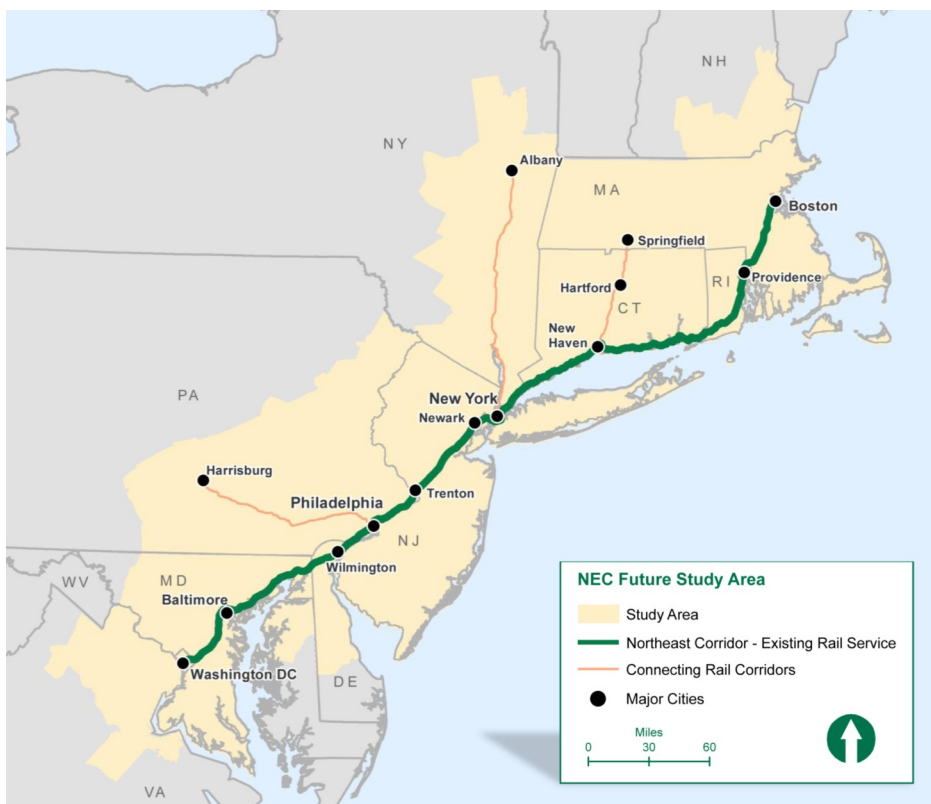
NEC FUTURE, a strategic rail planning and environmental impact review program initiated by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in 2012. NEC FUTURE will evaluate alternatives that accommodate the growth of the region's intercity, commuter and freight rail services through 2040. Investment in the NEC is essential to improve regional mobility, meet future travel demand, support economic development and enhance sustainable transportation.

NEC FUTURE has two major components:

- A Service Development Plan (SDP) that provides a detailed plan for proposed rail service on the NEC, and
- A Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that assesses the broad corridor-wide impacts of proposed improvements, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). More detailed Tier 2 environmental reviews, which are not included in this effort, would examine potential impacts of site-specific projects that are advanced to implement the Tier 1 alternative selected.

Together, these components form a Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan (PRCIP), in accordance with the guidelines established by the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). The PRCIP is a foundation for future project development including engineering design, Tier 2 environmental reviews, environmental permitting and construction.

NEC FUTURE will create the opportunity for a broad public dialogue to establish a future vision for the corridor. By bringing together numerous stakeholders from the corridor's eight states and the District of Columbia, the planning process will help foster broad agreement on future directions for corridor investment.





# What alternatives will NEC FUTURE study?

NEC FUTURE will identify and evaluate a full range of investment alternatives to meet the region's passenger rail transportation needs. Both near and long term investments will be included in the analysis. A broadly defined set of Initial Alternatives will seek to capture the reasonable range of potential options that warrant consideration. The Scoping process will provide input to the development of this list, which will then be refined through a three-step screening process performed in conjunction with the Tier 1 EIS.

A "No Action Alternative", which is required under NEPA, and "Build Alternatives" will be considered in the Tier 1 EIS. The No Action Alternative represents the future rail system with planned/funded improvements and provides a baseline against which proposed improvements can be compared. The Build Alternatives may include physical improvements to expand capacity, investments to relieve key bottlenecks and efficiency improvements to reduce trip time.

The outcome will be a preferred program of investments to guide future project development.

### How will alternatives be evaluated?

As alternatives are developed, they will undergo an increasingly detailed evaluation to narrow the number of alternatives to one or more that best address the problems identified in the Purpose and Need. The evaluation includes screening the alternatives to quantify their impacts, benefits and costs. This will include consideration of environmental impacts, ridership, operational impacts, capital and operating costs, and cost-benefit analysis. An initial "coarse screen" will follow the Scoping phase to eliminate alternatives that do not address the Purpose and Need or that are fatally flawed based on measureable criteria. The alternatives will then be subjected to more refined analysis as the project advances. Opportunities for public dialogue will be provided during this process.





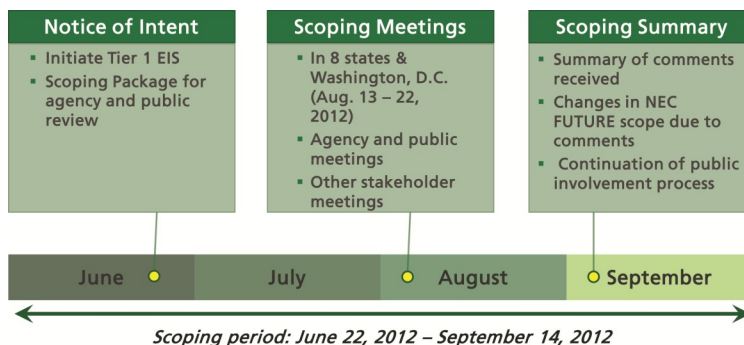
## NEC FUTURE Scoping Meetings Scheduled for August

On June 22, 2012, FRA published a Notice of Intent in the Federal Register formally notifying agencies and the public of the intent to complete a Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the NEC FUTURE project. As part of the EIS, a series of Scoping Meetings will be held to seek input from stakeholders on the transportation issues, concerns, and needs to be addressed in the NEC FUTURE study.

The Scoping Package, available on the NEC FUTURE website ([www.necfuture.com](http://www.necfuture.com)), provides a project overview, outlines the purpose and need for the project, and describes the Tier 1 EIS process in detail.

A series of nine Scoping Meetings will be held, one in each of the study area states and the District of

Columbia (*see Scoping Meetings – You’re Invited*). Attendees will have the opportunity to review display boards, meet with study team members and view a presentation. Each meeting will also include opportunities for public comment. At the conclusion of the Scoping process, a Scoping Summary will be prepared and posted on the NEC FUTURE website ([www.necfuture.com](http://www.necfuture.com)). The summary will describe the overall results of the scoping process, including comments received and any adjustments to the scope to reflect comments received from agencies, other interested parties and the general public.



### Scoping Meetings—You’re Invited

#### BOSTON, MA

Massachusetts State Transportation Building  
10 Park Plaza  
Conference Rooms 1, 2 and 3  
Boston, MA  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 13, 2012

#### NEW HAVEN, CT

Shubert Theatre  
247 College Street  
New Haven, CT  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 14, 2012

#### BALTIMORE, MD

University of Baltimore  
Thumel Conference Facilities  
11 W. Mount Royal Street  
Baltimore, MD  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 15, 2012

#### NEWARK, NJ

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJPTA) Board Room  
One Newark Center, 17th Floor  
Newark, NJ  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 15, 2012

#### NEW YORK, NY

Farley Post Office/Moynihan Station  
380 W. 33rd Street, Room 4500  
New York, NY  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 16, 2012

#### PHILADELPHIA, PA

SEPTA Board Room Complex  
1234 Market Street  
Mezzanine Level  
Philadelphia, PA  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 20, 2012

#### WILMINGTON, DE

Carvel State Office Building  
820 N. French Street  
Wilmington, DE  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 20, 2012

#### WASHINGTON, DC

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 N. Capitol Street NE  
Washington, DC  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 21, 2012

#### PROVIDENCE, RI

Department of Administration  
One Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI  
Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.  
Date: August 22, 2012

See the NEC FUTURE website ([www.necfuture.com](http://www.necfuture.com)) for directions to the Scoping Meetings.



# Stay Informed

There are many opportunities for the public to stay informed about the NEC FUTURE program. The project website ([www.necfuture.com](http://www.necfuture.com)) provides up-to-date information and the opportunity to submit a comment or sign up to receive emails with project news. Project documents and presentations from public meetings will be available on the website.



## More information

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact us at:

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Or you may write to:

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 Mail Stop 20  
 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
 Washington, DC 20590

# What's Next?

NEC FUTURE began in February 2012. Initial activities included data collection and validation, stakeholder outreach, agency coordination, and the initiation of the Tier 1 EIS and Scoping process. Upcoming activities include the development of initial alternatives and ridership forecasts. In 2013, efforts will focus on the Draft Tier 1 EIS and the Draft Service Development Plan (SDP), which are scheduled for completion in the spring of 2014. These documents will then be finalized by early 2015. The overall project is scheduled for completion in the Spring of 2015, when a Record of Decision (ROD) is anticipated.

## Upcoming Activities

ACTIVITY	DATE
Stakeholder Outreach	Ongoing
Data Collection & Validation	March—August 2012
Agency Coordination	Ongoing
Tier I EIS Scoping Period	June 22, 2012—September 14, 2012
Preliminary Alternatives	September 2012—January 2013

