

## Tonight's Agenda

- ▶ 4:30-7:30 pm: View Displays
  - › Introduction and study process
  - › Purpose, goals and key issues
  - › Alternatives development
  - › How to stay involved
- ▶ 5:30 pm: Presentation
- ▶ Comments
  - › Public or private comment
  - › Comment cards



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# What is NEC FUTURE?

**NEC FUTURE** is the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) comprehensive planning process for future rail investment in the Northeast Corridor (NEC), the rail spine that links Boston, New York and Washington, D.C.

- ▶ NEC FUTURE has two major components that will identify and evaluate a full range of alternatives to improve passenger rail service in the Northeast:
  - **Service Development Plan (SDP)** - defines alternatives for rail service improvements, evaluates their impact on the existing network and operations, and assesses costs and benefits of the proposed plan.
  - **Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** - addresses the broad environmental effects of the alternatives for the entire corridor.
- ▶ 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, subsequent environmental reviews, environmental permitting and construction.



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# NEC FUTURE Study Area

The NEC, the rail transportation spine of the Northeast region, is a key component of the region's transportation system and vital to its sustained economic growth.

Today, the 457-mile NEC – anchored by Boston's South Station in the north, New York's Pennsylvania Station in the center, and Washington's Union Station in the south – is one of the most heavily traveled rail corridors in the world.

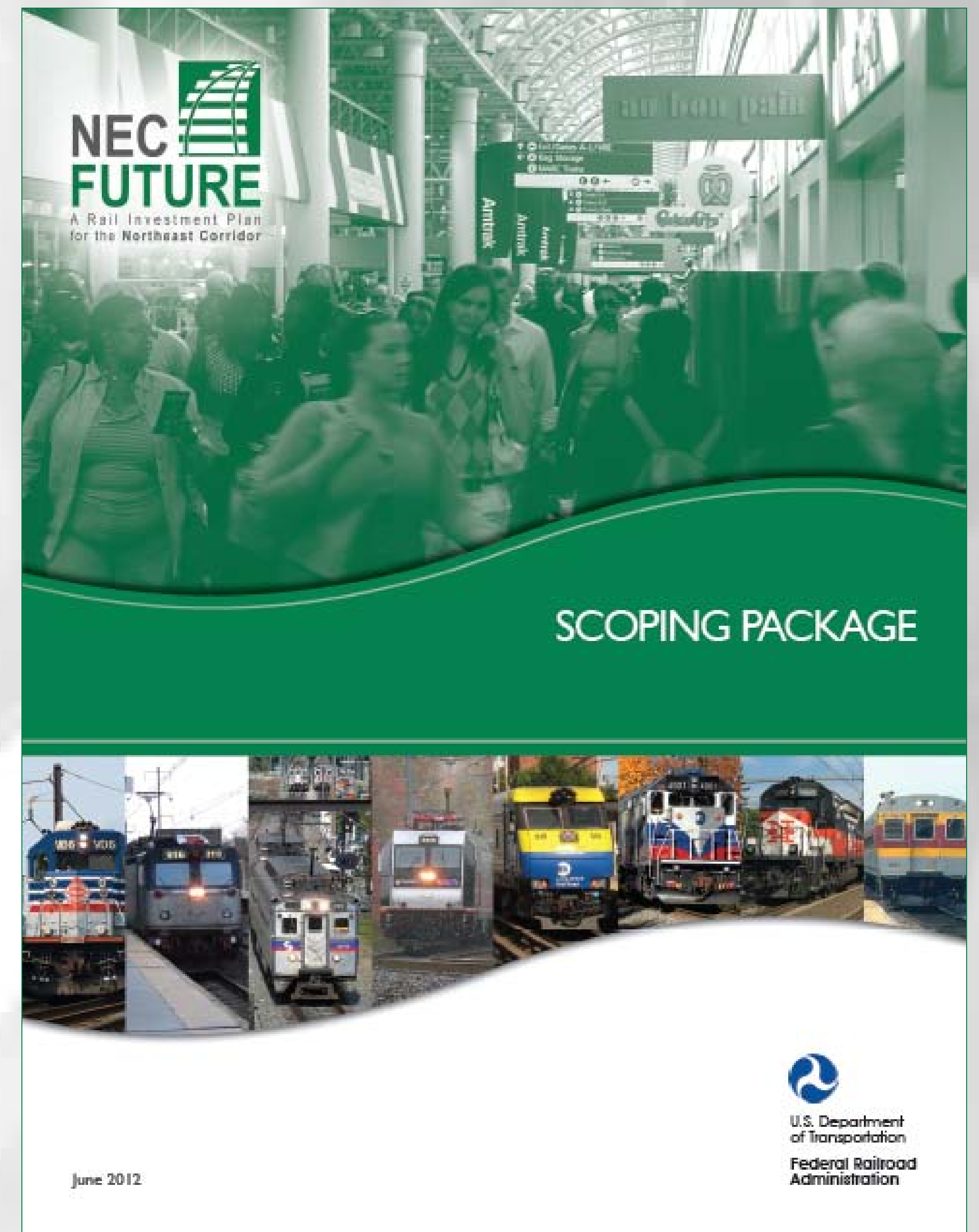


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# What is Scoping?

- ▶ Scoping is an opportunity for the public to help shape the study process for NEC FUTURE
  - Feedback will help identify reasonable alternatives and potential environmental considerations
- ▶ You may wish to comment on:
  - Study purpose, need and goals
  - Key issues to be considered
  - Potential environmental impacts
  - Alternatives development process
  - Other related issues of interest to you
    - › What works well on the NEC today?
    - › What needs to be improved?



Learn more in the Scoping Package at [www.necfuture.com](http://www.necfuture.com)



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# NEC FUTURE Process and Timeline

Spring 2012	Project Initiation	
	Initial Stakeholder Outreach	Data Collection
Summer 2012	Define Purpose and Need	
	Scoping	
Fall 2012 – Winter 2014	Alternatives Development	
Winter 2013 – Summer 2014	Draft Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement Draft Service Development Plan	
Fall 2014 – Spring 2015	Final Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement Final Service Development Plan Record of Decision	



# NEPA Environmental Review Process

- ▶ The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider the environmental consequences of their decisions prior to taking any action
  - Environmental review incorporates compliance with other federal laws, including Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act
- ▶ The key principles of environmental impact assessment are:
  - Full and open disclosure of environmental consequences
  - Interdisciplinary approach
  - Objective consideration of all reasonable alternatives
  - Focus on key issues
  - Measures to avoid or minimize adverse impacts
  - Consultation and coordination among agencies
  - Encouragement of public participation



- ▶ What Types of impacts may be evaluated in the Tier 1 EIS?
  - Transportation effects
  - Air quality, noise, and vibration
  - Energy
  - Land use
  - Communities and socioeconomic conditions
  - Open space, parklands and farmlands
  - Visual and aesthetic effects
  - Contamination and hazardous materials
  - Cultural resources
  - Water and geologic resources
  - Protected species and critical habitats
  - Secondary and cumulative effects



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# Tier 1 Environmental Review Process

The FRA is complying with NEPA for the NEC FUTURE program by preparing a Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

- ▶ A Tiered Approach was selected for NEC FUTURE due to the scope, complexity and long-term nature of this multi-state planning effort
- ▶ A Tier 1 EIS provides a broad evaluation of large-scale programs

<b>Alternatives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ General (Planning-Level):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Service types</li><li>▪ Alignments</li><li>▪ Stations</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Engineering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Very Conceptual</li></ul>
<b>Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Broad</li><li>▶ GIS-Based mapping</li><li>▶ Relies heavily on readily available information</li></ul>
<b>Permits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Identify likely permits and requirements</li></ul>
<b>Environmental Finding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Results in “Finding” for the Preferred Alternative, in this case the selected Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan (PRCIP)</li></ul>

- ▶ The outcome of the Tier 1 EIS will be the selection of a Preferred Alternative consisting of a program of investments for the NEC



# Tier 1 Environmental Review Process

## Preparation of the Tier 1 DEIS

The Tier 1 Draft EIS will contain the following elements:

- Project Purpose and Need
- Alternatives Considered
- Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences
- Potential Measures to Minimize or Mitigate Impacts

## Circulation of the Tier 1 DEIS

The Tier 1 Draft EIS will be circulated for public and agency comment.

## Selection of a Preferred Alternative\*

The FRA will review all comments and select the Preferred Alternative\* based on the Tier 1 Draft EIS analysis and public input.

## Preparation and Circulation of the Tier 1 FEIS

The Tier 1 Final EIS will present an evaluation of the Preferred Alternative\* and include the FRA's response to comments on the Tier 1 Draft EIS.

## Preparation of the ROD

After public review of the Tier 1 Final EIS, the FRA will prepare a Record of Decision (ROD) that documents:

- Selection of the Preferred Alternative\*
- Mitigation strategies
- Project commitments to be carried out in subsequent environmental reviews





# What is Section 106 Review?

- ▶ Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires the FRA to consider the potential impact of the NEC FUTURE investment program on historic properties
  
- ▶ NEC FUTURE is following a phased approach to Section 106 consultation, concurrent with the Tier 1 EIS
  - Initiation of Section 106 consultation with State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) across the eight states and the District of Columbia along the NEC
  - Provide Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment
  - Framework for initiating Section 106 consultation in Tier 1 and completing Section 106 consultation at the project level
  
- ▶ The Section 106 review includes:
  - Identification of important historic, architectural and archaeological resources
  - Evaluation of significance for the National Register of Historic Places
  - Evaluation of potential impacts
  - Development of measures to avoid and minimize harm to historic properties
  - Extensive consultation with the public, interested organizations, and corridor-wide SHPOs/THPOs



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# What is the Need for NEC FUTURE?

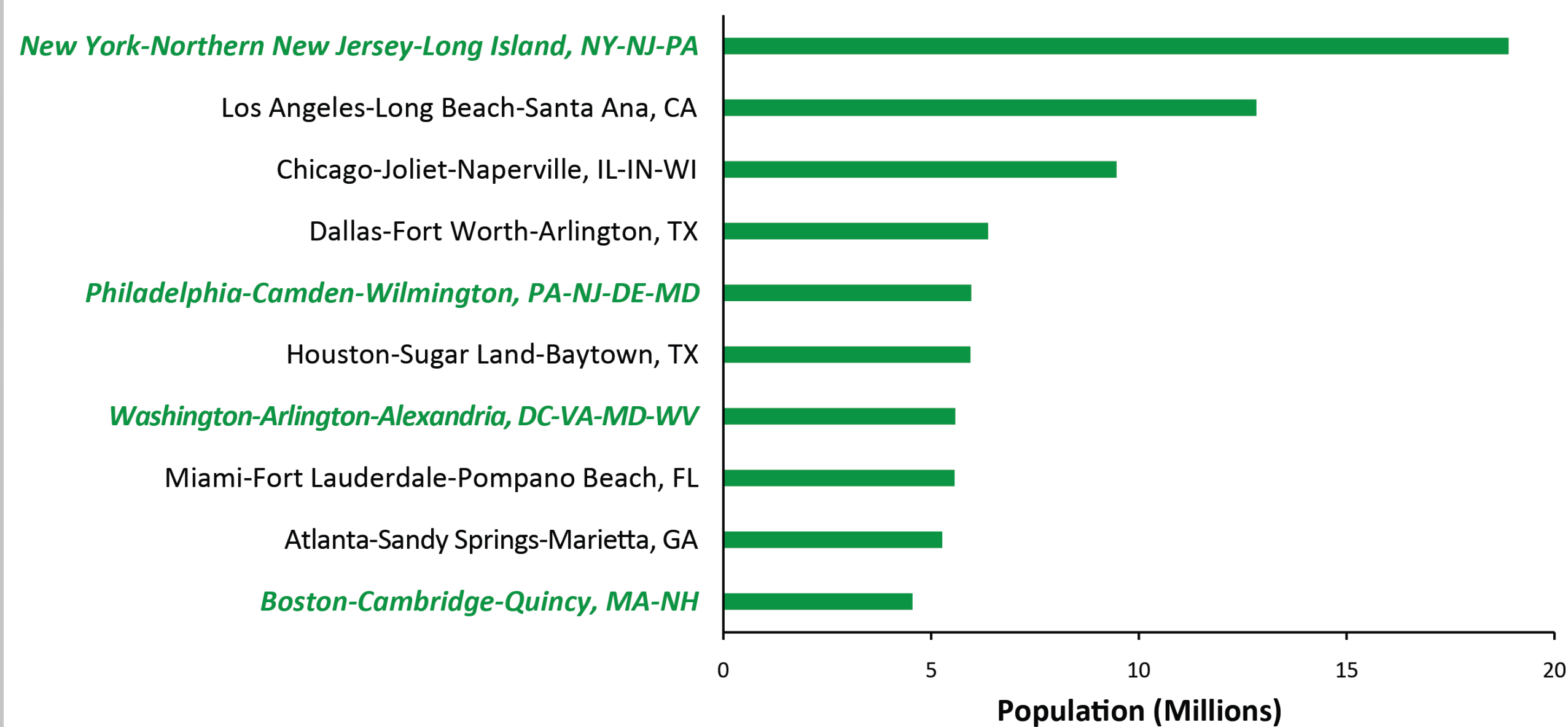
- ▶ The Northeast faces serious mobility challenges
- ▶ NEC is an economic anchor for the Nation
- ▶ NEC FUTURE is part of a comprehensive transportation solution

## The Northeast Region is growing...

### From 2010 to 2040...

- › Population **+13%**
- › Employment **+23%**
- › Most growth in Northeast is concentrated in the four largest urban areas (among 10 largest US cities).

**Largest U.S. Metropolitan Areas (2010)**

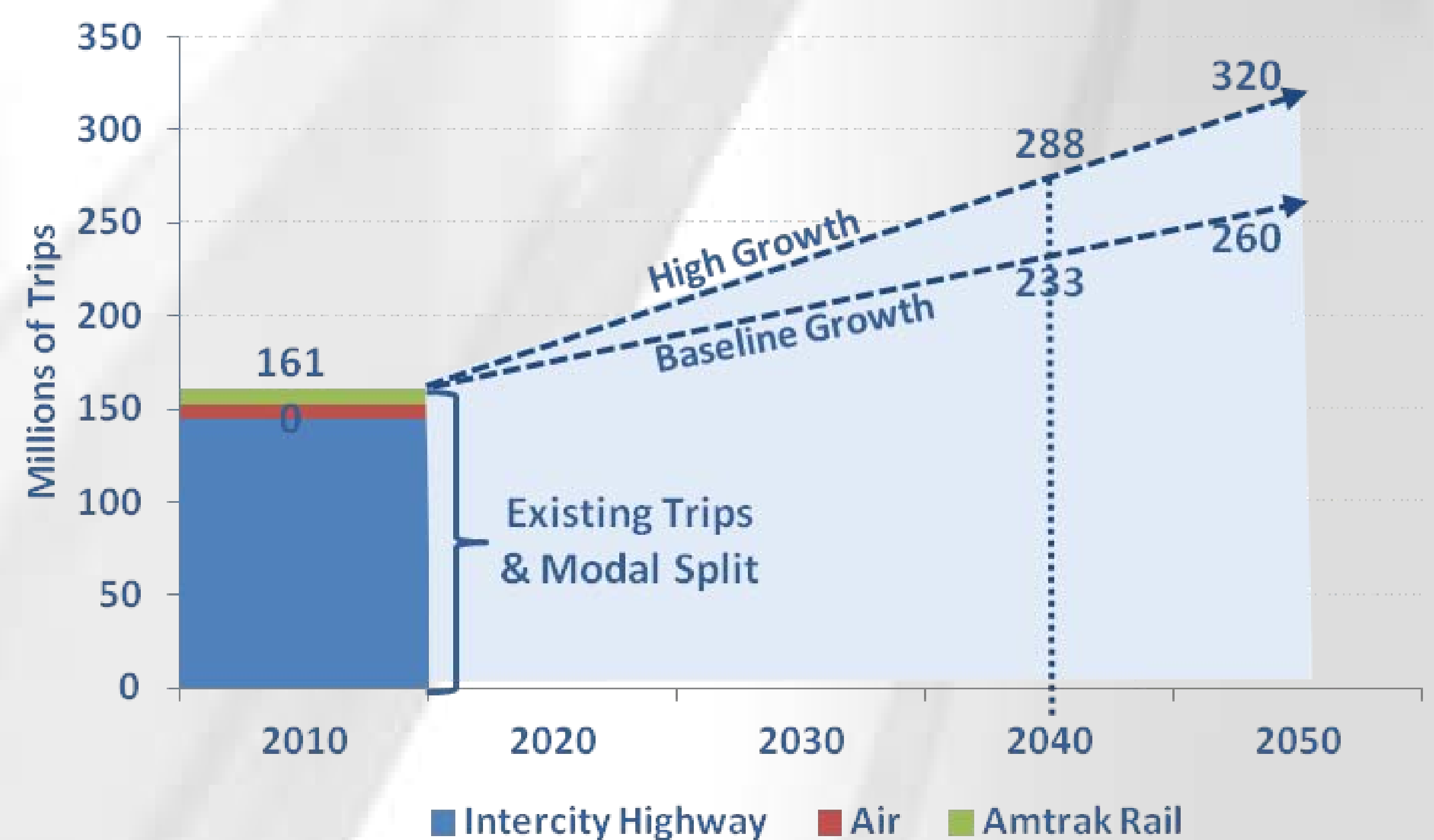


## Intercity Travel Demand is also growing...

### From 2010 to 2040...

- › Total intercity trips **+45%**
- › Future mode share shaped by transportation investment decisions

**Annual Intercity Travel Volumes Along the NEC**



## Growth affects all modes of travel

### From 2010 to 2040...

- › Air passenger demand **+122%**
- › Highway congestion – worsening metropolitan areas congestion
- › Freight demand **+34%**

**Annual Boardings for "Core Airports" in the NEC (000s)**

Airport	2010	2040	Growth
JFK	22,395	64,707	189%
Newark	16,498	34,281	108%
Philadelphia	14,827	30,972	109%
Boston	13,234	24,264	83%
LaGuardia	11,801	16,508	40%
Dulles	11,160	35,676	220%
BWI	10,611	23,321	120%
Reagan National	8,536	11,934	40%
<b>Total Boardings</b>	<b>109,062</b>	<b>241,663</b>	<b>122%</b>



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# What is the Need for NEC FUTURE?

- ▶ Limited capacity constrains growth
- ▶ Critical chokepoints
- ▶ Aging and obsolete infrastructure



# What is the Need for NEC FUTURE? Why invest in rail?

Transportation networks in the Northeast are constrained and all intercity modes face challenges to meet even existing travel demand.



**NEC Rail Network:** Aging infrastructure, limited track capacity, critical chokepoints.



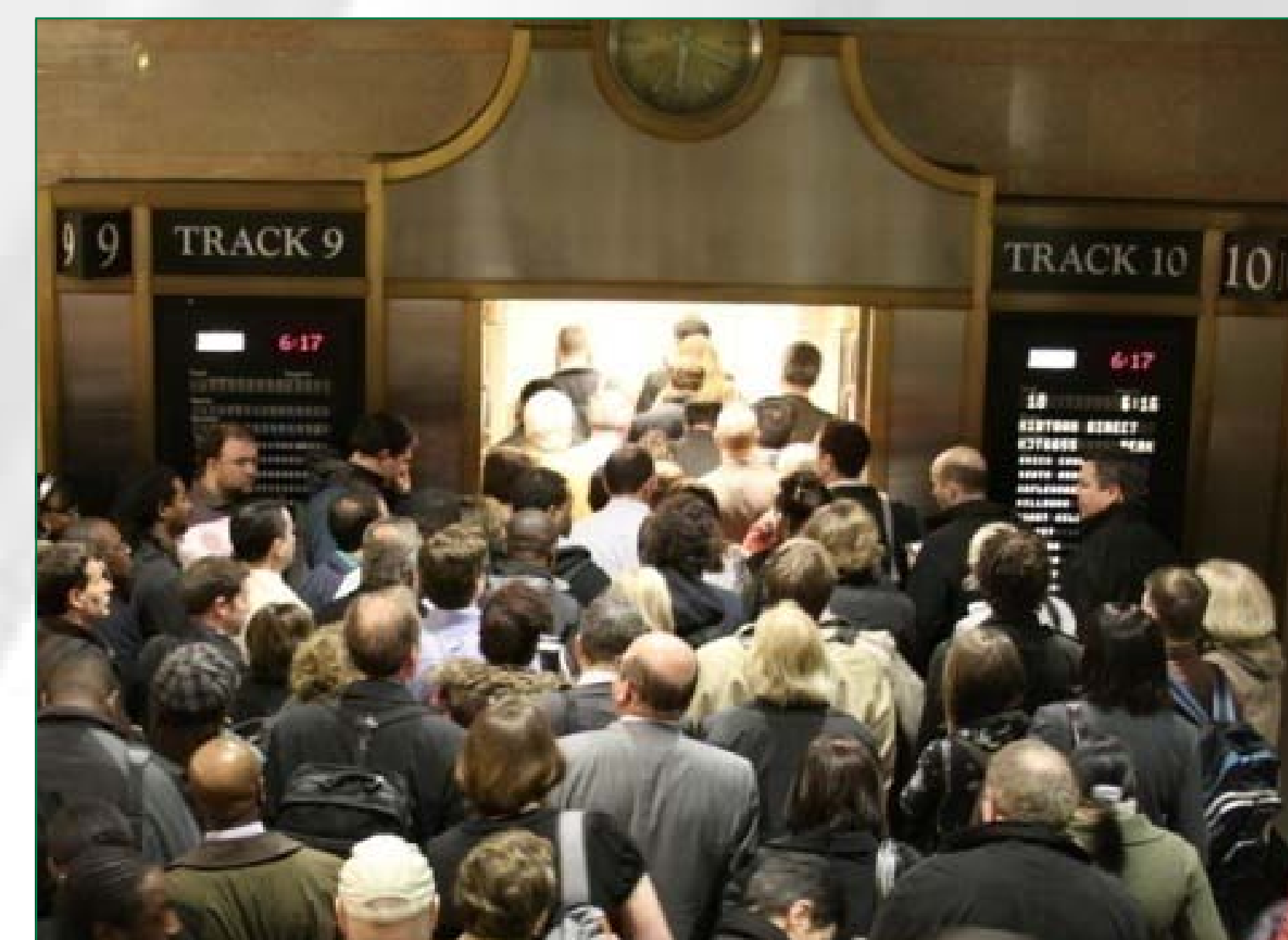
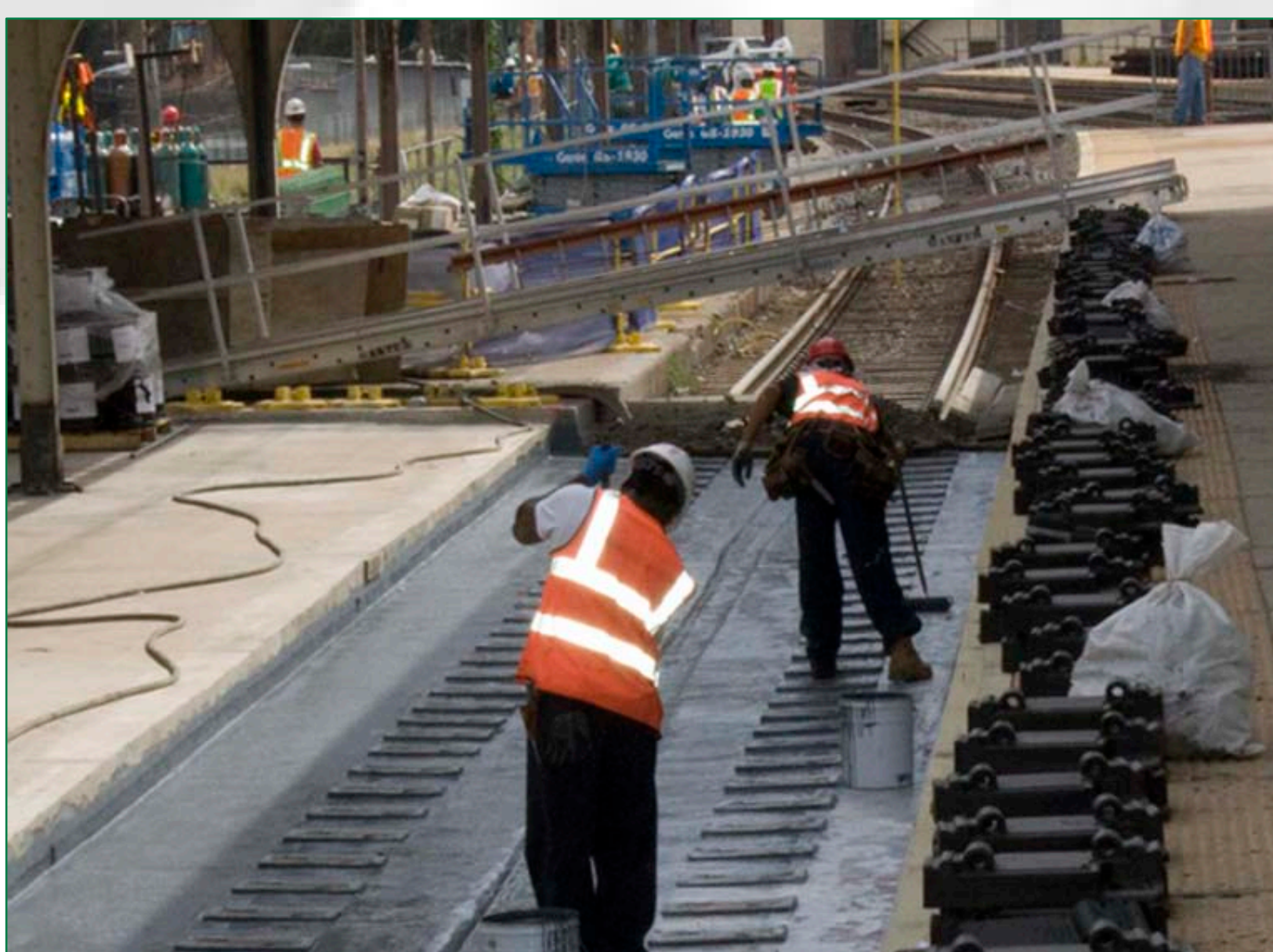
**Aviation Network:** Congestion at regional airports



**Highway Network:** Aging infrastructure and heavily congested roadways.

Repairing and upgrading the NEC network will improve reliability and performance and set the stage for future growth

- ▶ NEC repairs & upgrades needed to address long-standing problems
- ▶ Further rail investments needed to meet growing travel demand.
- ▶ Rail can play greater role in meeting future intercity travel demand in Northeast



An investment in rail is part of an overall transportation solution to promote sustainability and economic growth in the Northeast region

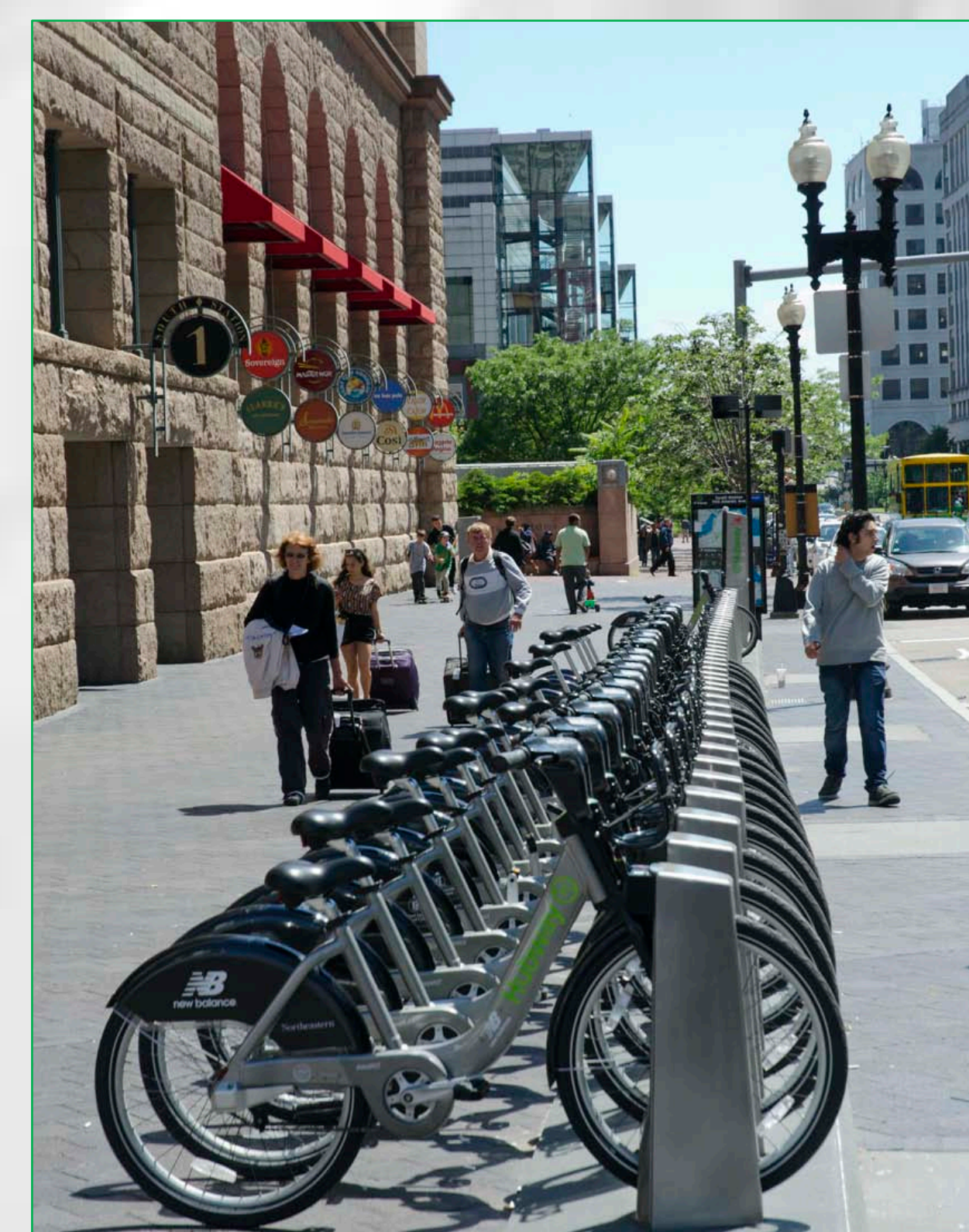


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# NEC FUTURE Goals and Objectives

- ▶ Develop an integrated passenger rail solution that complements investments in the region's other modes
- ▶ Provide attractive, high-quality passenger rail service with:
  - › Capacity to meet growing demand
  - › Improved connectivity (better timed connections, and access to other modes)
  - › Competitive travel times
  - › Highly reliable and user-friendly service
  - › Safe and secure travel
  - › Convenient service at competitive cost
  - › Strengthen connections among intercity, regional and local rail passenger and local transit modes.
- ▶ Provide near- and long-term solutions for identified Northeast passenger travel markets
- ▶ Support plans to meet future freight rail demand
- ▶ Reflect funding and financial limits and challenges of upgrading NEC under full operation
- ▶ Reduce environmental impacts and energy use due to projected travel demand growth
- ▶ Encourage private sector involvement in future corridor improvements and operations



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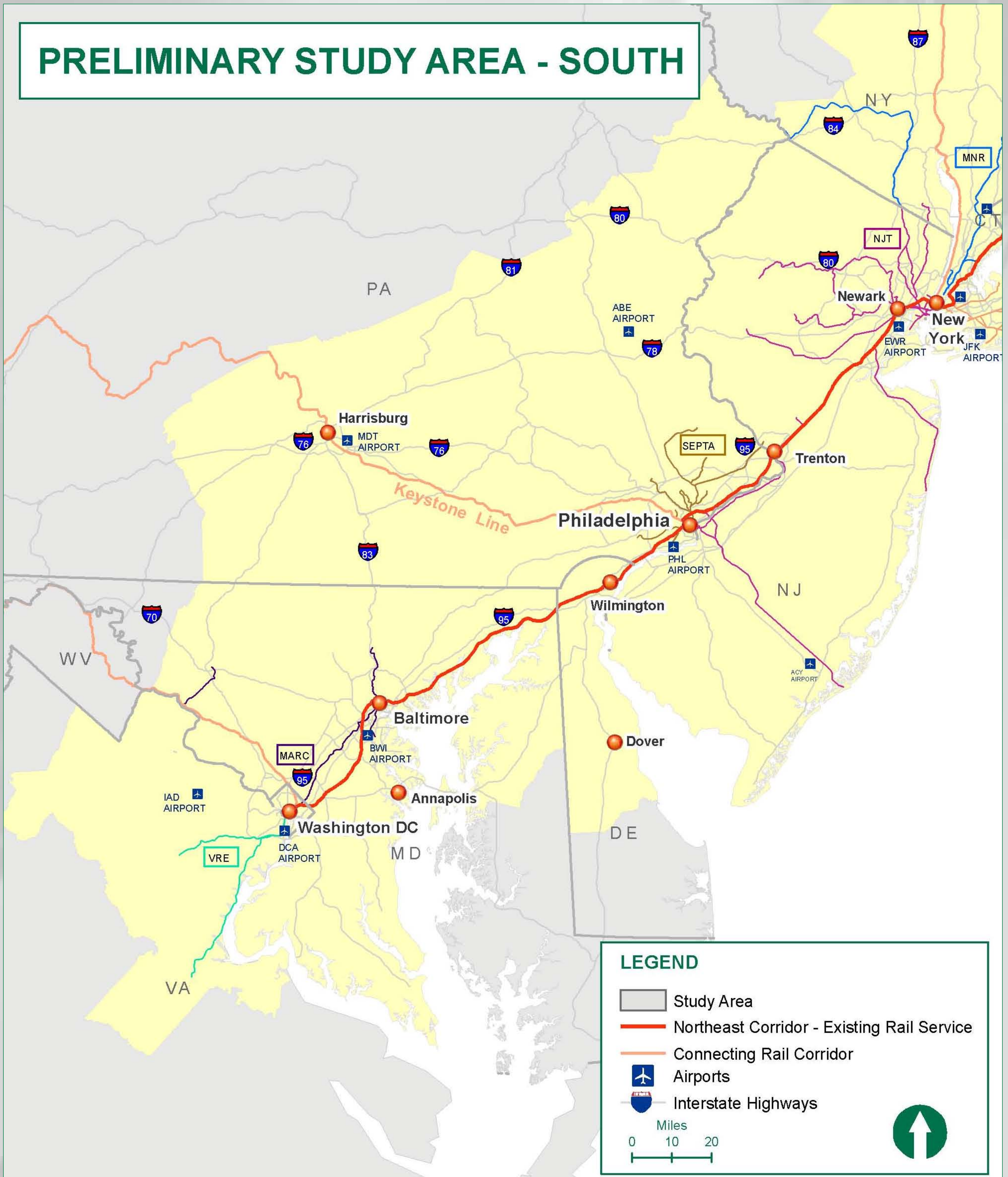
# What key issues should NEC FUTURE address in this region?



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# Alternatives Development

- ▶ Initial list of alternatives will be based on:
  - Markets - Geography
  - Travel Market Size - Existing and Future
  - Service
  - Infrastructure

- ▶ Many types of rail service:

**Intercity Rail** – Limited-stop passenger service focused on providing connections to multiple cities along a route. Top speed ranges from 79 to 125 mph. Amtrak operates intercity service across the NEC and along connecting corridors to the north, west and south of the NEC.

**High Speed Rail** – Limited-stop intercity passenger service focused on the fastest trip time between major urban centers. Top speed ranges from 125 to 225 mph. Amtrak's Acela trains operate between Washington and Boston at speeds up to 150 mph.

**Commuter Rail** – Local passenger rail service between a major urban center and the communities around it, serving daily passengers commuting to work. There are eight commuter rail services operating on portions of the NEC. Service is most frequent during the peak morning and evening hours.

**Freight Service** – Non-passenger trains serving individual businesses and/or providing through service to major ports and yards. Freight trains in the Northeast haul coal, agricultural products, finished products, automobiles and containers. Five major railroads operate along the NEC.



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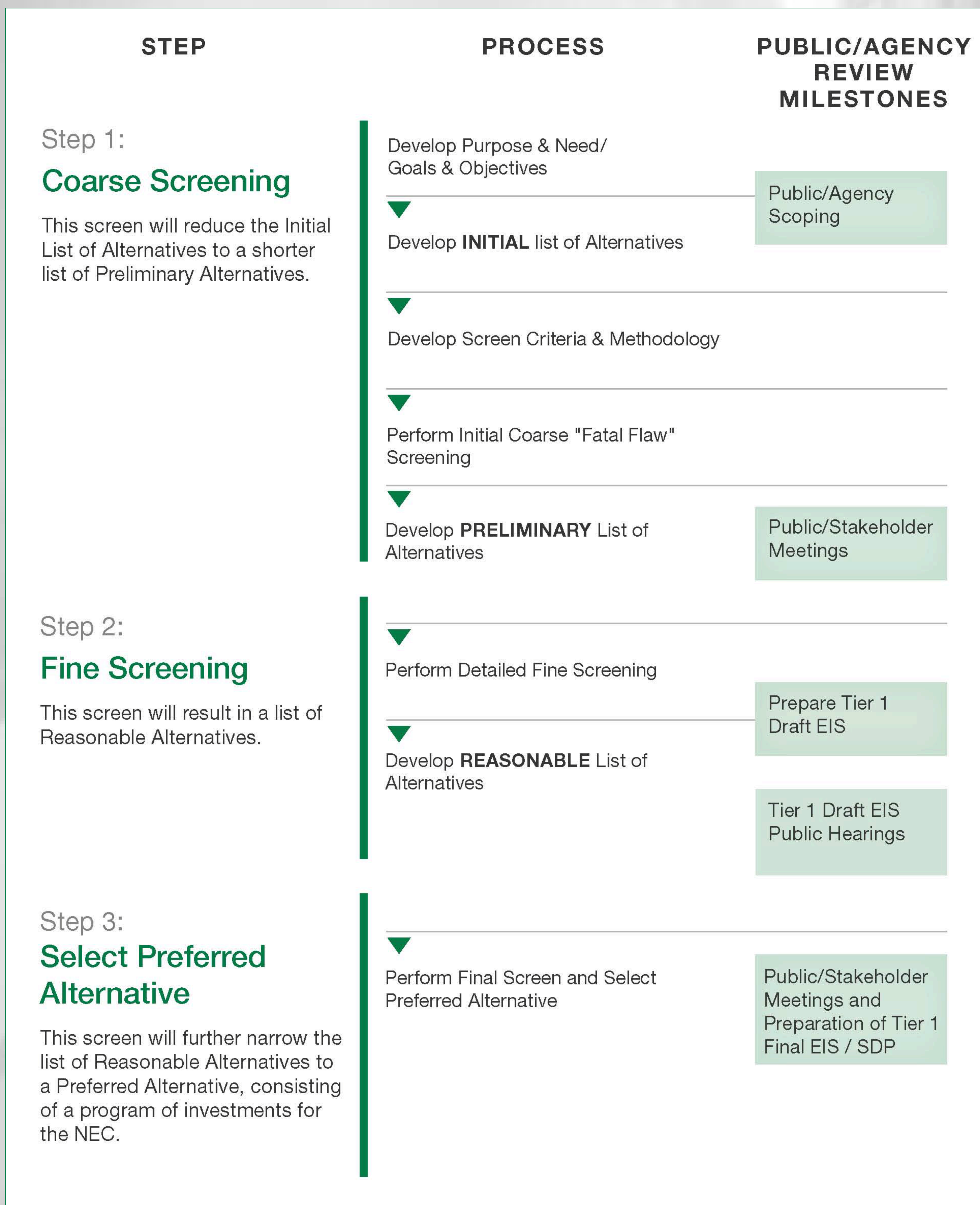
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# Alternatives Development

NEC FUTURE alternatives identified during scoping will be evaluated in a multi-step screening process. Alternatives development and screening (SDP) will advance in parallel with the environmental review process (Tier 1 EIS). Stakeholders, interested parties and the public will have opportunities to review and comment on the process and its findings. The outcome will be a preferred program of investments for the NEC.



# Stay Involved - Thank You!

## Next Steps

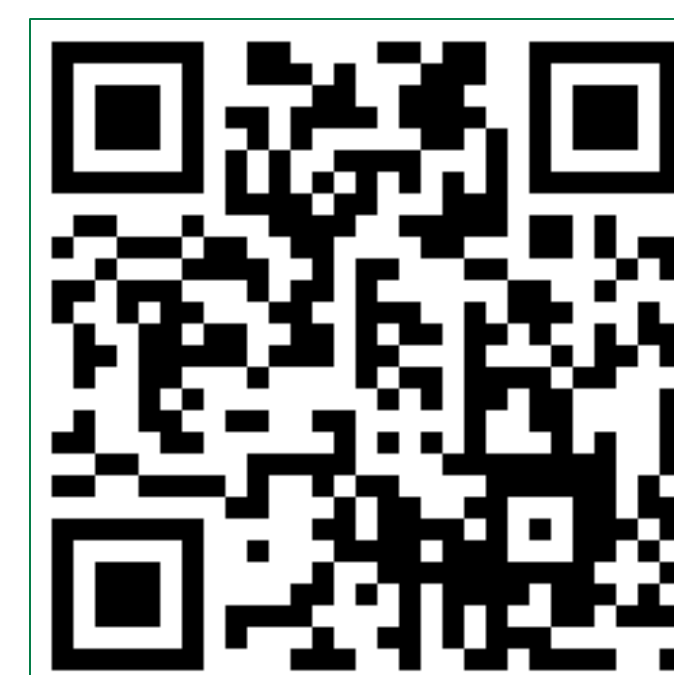
- ▶ All comments will be reviewed and summarized in a Scoping Summary to be posted on the project website
- ▶ Further opportunity for participation and comment during the development of the Tier 1 Draft EIS

## What you can do

- ▶ Attend and participate in our meetings
- ▶ Visit our website at [www.necfuture.com](http://www.necfuture.com)
- ▶ Sign up for email updates
- ▶ Submit a question or comment by Sept. 14

The screenshot shows the homepage of the NEC FUTURE website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Contact Us, Submit a Comment, and Glossary, along with a search box. The main header features the NEC FUTURE logo and the tagline 'A Rail Investment Plan for the Northeast Corridor'. A sidebar on the left contains a menu with items like 'About the Plan', 'The Planning Process', 'NEC Facts and Figures', 'Get Involved/Stay Informed', 'Project Documents', and 'Answers To Your FAQs'. The main content area is titled 'Our Future On Track' and includes a photograph of a train at a station platform. Below this, there is a 'NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS' section with two articles: 'NEC FUTURE Public Scoping Meetings' (dated 07.31.12) and 'FRA Initiates Environmental Review Process' (dated 06.25.12). A 'Study Area Map' is also visible at the bottom right of the main content area.

The screenshot shows the 'Comments & Updates' page on the NEC FUTURE website. It features a 'GET INVOLVED/STAY INFORMED' header and a 'Comments & Updates' section. Below this, there is a 'Get Email Updates' section with a sign-up form. The form includes fields for 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Business/Organization', 'Address', 'Apt./Suite No.', 'City', 'State' (with a dropdown menu), 'Email Address', and 'Zip Code'. There are also checkboxes for 'Add me to the mailing list' (with options for Email, U.S. Mail, and None) and 'Are you a:' (with options for Resident, Business Owner, Public Official, and Other). A 'Station Clock - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania' image is visible at the bottom left of the page.



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