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CONNECT NEC 2037 (C37) Press Release

Northeast Corridor Commission Announces CONNECT NEC 2037

Plan initiates era of reinvestment in Northeast Corridor rail network

Washington, D.C. (November 16, 2023)—The Northeast Corridor Commission released CONNECT NEC 2037 (C37) today—a 15-year plan that, thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), for the first time benefits from dedicated funding for the corridor’s most urgent capital repairs and improvements. Commission members representing the states, commuter agencies, Amtrak, and USDOT are now initiating an historic era of reinvestment in the Northeast Corridor (NEC) which will provide faster, more frequent, more reliable service for the millions of Americans that rely on this rail system to travel for work and leisure. The \$16 billion in Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail grants that President Biden announced last week will help to advance a number of critical state-of-good-repair and improvement projects included in C37.

The Commission’s CONNECT NEC program is a pioneering planning process that integrates investments across four infrastructure owners and nine passenger rail operators. The funding from BIL is critical to advancing C37 and is a downpayment that will start to rebuild the NEC—a corridor that serves the nation’s most densely populated region and supports a \$3 trillion economy. While BIL funds will go a long way toward rebuilding the NEC, continued annual funding appropriated by Congress and guaranteed funding beyond FY26 are needed to realize the full benefits of this plan.

C37 is an update to C35, completed in 2021, which assessed NEC-wide rail service and state-of-good-repair goals and the infrastructure investments necessary to meet them. C35’s level of collaboration and credibility encouraged Congress to allocate historic levels of funding for the NEC in BIL. C37 defines the plan in much greater detail, updates service goals based on new travel trends, provides additional analysis of workforce and other resource constraints, and refines future funding needs.

“The region coming together behind a unified plan for the NEC was a key factor in securing money for the corridor through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. We are ready to rebuild after decades of woefully insufficient investment,” said Kevin S. Corbett, President & CEO of NJ TRANSIT and NEC Commission Co-Chair. “The projects in this plan will create jobs, grow the economy, and improve the lives of the hundreds of thousands of New Jersey residents who depend on NJ TRANSIT and Amtrak services.”

"The Northeast Corridor is vital to hundreds of thousands of Americans and the American economy, and investing in it is a priority of the Biden-Harris Administration. Major projects are now receiving federal support, with the Federal Railroad Administration recently awarding \$16.4 billion to 25 NEC projects through our Federal State Partnership Program. Projects like the Hudson River Tunnel have entered engineering with \$6.8 billion through the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant Program. The NEC represents infrastructure of national significance, and we look forward to working with Amtrak and state partners to maximize funding in President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and to advance projects that reduce delays, allow for increased speeds, and make trips more reliable and convenient for riders," said Amit Bose, Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration and Co-Chair of the NEC Commission. "Coordination is necessary and important in this effort, and I applaud the Northeast states and Amtrak for coming together through the NEC Commission to ensure continued progress on America's busiest rail corridor."

If fully funded and implemented, the plan will rebuild the corridor's critical infrastructure, resulting in faster, more reliable, and more frequent trains; new connections for underserved communities and new markets; new jobs; and more resilient, sustainable infrastructure, including:

- More frequent Amtrak service on modern trainsets and expanded commuter rail services
 - 50% more Amtrak trains between Boston and New York
 - Nearly 100% more Amtrak service between New York and Washington, D.C.
 - 60% more commuter trains, making rail travel more attractive to both existing and new riders
 - MBTA riders will travel from Boston to Providence in less than an hour
 - Metro-North riders will enjoy 51 new weekday round trips to Penn Station on the New Haven Line
 - MARC service between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore will increase from 27 to 37 round trips per day
- Expanded access to downtowns, housing, and opportunities
 - More than 300,000 households within 15 minutes of new stations will be better connected to the corridor than they are today, including communities in the Bronx, NY; along the Hartford Line in Connecticut; North Brunswick, NJ; as well as Elkton and southeast Baltimore, MD.
 - NEC riders will also enjoy the comfort of new one-seat Metro-North service between New York City and Waterbury, CT, and new hourly one-seat Amtrak service between New York City, Hartford, CT, and Springfield, MA.
- High-quality job and career opportunities
 - C37 investment will support over 900,000 jobs over 15 years throughout the United States, including direct jobs that will execute projects, indirect jobs that provide goods and services to support construction, and induced jobs generated by the personal spending of direct and indirect employees.

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions by moving more people by train
 - Enhanced NEC rail services will accommodate 51 million more travelers each year, shifting approximately 38 million annual car trips and nearly 600,000 short-haul plane trips to rail.
 - Up to 750,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions will be eliminated annually from new riders choosing rail.
- A resilient rail network for a changing climate
 - C37 investments in the corridor will keep riders moving reliably by addressing delays and cancellations due to flooding, extreme heat, severe weather events, or infrastructure failures.

“A modern, reliable Northeast Corridor is essential to the region’s economic future,” said Stephen Gardner, Chief Executive Officer of Amtrak. “Amtrak ridership on the Northeast Corridor is at all-time record levels, and the projects included in this plan will provide the capacity, reliability, and service improvements that our customers need and deserve.”

“For transit riders all along the east coast, the Northeast Corridor is a critical connection that expands their community from one neighborhood to an entire region,” said Federal Transit Administrator Nuria Fernandez. “The C37 plan is essential to protect and improve those opportunities. Thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law many of these projects will soon move forward, creating good new jobs and renewing the Northeast region’s economic engine.”

“Through our collective regional efforts, this plan for strategic investments along the Northeast Corridor provides a roadmap for substantial enhancements to the daily lives of Connecticut residents,” said Garrett Eucalitto, Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Transportation. “Because of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we have dedicated historic funding to address the backlog of needs to take C37 from plan to reality. These proposed improvements will result in faster travel times, expanded rail services, better access to employment opportunities, and fortified infrastructure for a more resilient future.”

“Predictable funding is essential to the meaningful planning and efficient delivery of this 15-year major rail improvement program,” said Laura Mason, Executive Vice President of Major Project Deliver at Amtrak. “With long-term funding sources through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the NEC’s rail agencies can hire workforces, procure equipment, and advance project engineering with confidence that projects will have the funding needed to enter construction.”

“Amtrak, the states, and the federal government all recognize the importance of the Northeast Corridor to the regional and national economy. They have come together behind a coordinated plan that will guide a new era of reinvestment in the busiest rail corridor in North America thanks to the funding provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law,” said Mitch Warren, Executive Director of the Northeast Corridor Commission.

CONNECT NEC is a living plan guided and regularly updated by the Commission. In 2025, C40 will further advance the plan and integrate new ridership trends and lessons learned from C37, with a particular focus on resource constraints and funding availability. The

Commission is also developing an Implementation Coordination Program to carry over the same transparency, collaboration, and accountability of CONNECT NEC to project delivery.

The complete CONNECT NEC 2037 plan and state fact sheets are available online at <https://nec-commission.com/connect-nec-2037/>

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About the Northeast Corridor Commission

The Northeast Corridor Commission was established by Congress in 2008 (49 U.S.C. §24905) to develop coordinated strategies to improve the Northeast's core rail network in recognition of the inherent challenges of planning, financing, and implementing major infrastructure improvements that cross multiple jurisdictions. The expectation is that by coming together to take collective responsibility for the NEC, Commission member agencies will achieve a level of success that far exceeds the potential reach of any individual organization.

The Commission is governed by a board comprised of one member from each of the NEC states (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland) and the District of Columbia; four members from Amtrak; and five members from the U.S. Department of Transportation. The Commission also includes non-voting representatives from freight railroads, states with connecting corridors, and commuter operators.

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