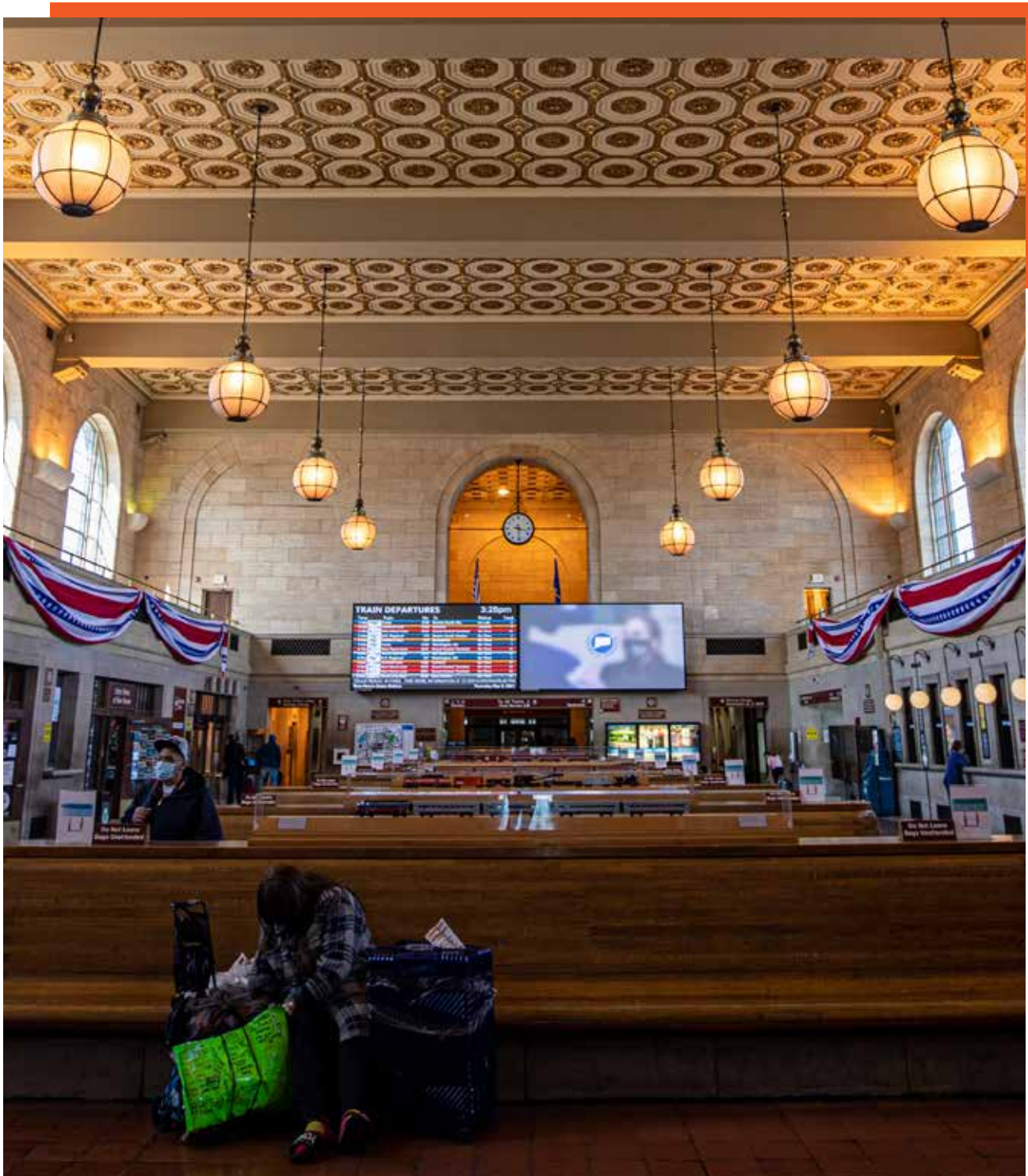


Next Steps

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C35 represents the most ambitious reinvestment program in the NEC's history and a new way of planning: a multi-agency, multi-year, shared action plan guided by a long-term vision. As a result, its success will require a new level of coordination among NEC agencies and USDOT as well as new ways of doing business across a broad spectrum of activities, including human resources/labor relations, procurement, and project delivery.

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The main waiting area at New Haven Union Station (CT)

Though the C35 plan was not constrained by funding, workforce, or equipment availability, the C35 analysis tools have identified the resource needs in each of these areas to accomplish our shared goals and vision at a level of detail that is actionable by NEC stakeholders. The C35 analyses revealed the enormity of the task before us: investing \$117 billion over 15 years, and dramatically expanding our workforce levels and equipment inventory. However, with a dedicated, predictable funding source for C35, the Commission would have the certainty needed to fundamentally change the way projects are implemented along the corridor and mobilize the entire industry to rise to the challenge.

The Commission plans to update the CONNECT NEC project delivery analysis roughly every two years. The next iteration is CONNECT NEC 2037 (C37). Prior to the C37 update, Commission member agencies will take the following actions to build upon the significant planning work undertaken to date and ensure we are well positioned to implement the C35 plan:

- **Develop agency Program Management Plans (PMP).** Efforts have been underway at Commission member agencies to improve the ability to deliver individual projects according to a planned scope, schedule, and budget. To ensure the entire program of C35 projects can be delivered, project sponsors will develop a PMP for their C35 projects to facilitate the establishment of workforce development plans, equipment and material procurement plans, contracting plans, and protocols for internal decision-making and external coordination. Developing PMPs will help agencies identify where changes in policies and business practices are needed to address C35's unprecedented level of investment. Project sponsor PMPs will be incorporated into a corridor-wide plan.
- **Create a corridor-wide Program Coordination Office (PCO).** While individual C35 project management responsibilities (planning, design, permitting, budgeting, procurement, contract management, construction management, etc.) will reside within project sponsor agencies, many cross-cutting issues, such as track outage schedules and workforce allocations, will affect multiple projects managed by different sponsors. A corridor-wide PCO will provide overall coordination to ensure construction schedules are aligned and resources are available for all project sponsors to successfully implement their projects. The PCO will provide a forum for planning track outages and will allow NEC agencies to coordinate temporary service changes, reducing impacts to NEC customers and maximizing advance notice of such impacts.

In addition to a new focus on implementation, planning and design activities must continue as well:

- **Advance project-level planning.** C35 projects are at various stages of development, from projects already under construction to projects in the earliest stages of conceptual planning. Project sponsors, in collaboration with their partners, will advance planning, design, and other pre-construction activities according to the coordinated schedules laid out in C35 as much as possible. This project-level planning may include required environmental review and associated project-level stakeholder and public engagement. All new information generated during project-level planning and design will in turn feed the next generation of the CONNECT NEC project delivery analysis (C37).
- **Identify opportunities to utilize innovative project delivery, labor practices, and construction methods.** C35 presumes more construction work can be delivered during coordinated track outages than typically takes place today. For example, an outage with a single track out of service may need to support track renewal, catenary system replacement, an undergrade bridge rehabilitation, and the construction of new assets that add capacity all at the same time. During planning and design, project sponsors will identify opportunities to utilize innovative project delivery and construction methods with the goals of expediting delivery, growing resource availability, and maximizing cost efficiency.
- **Continue to use, refine, and improve the CONNECT NEC project delivery analysis tool and update sequencing as needed.** C35 created a sophisticated delivery analysis tool for standardizing and organizing the way NEC agencies analyze future investments; however, there are several factors the project delivery tool does not yet account for and the Commission will build its capability to do so. Future enhancements will:
 - Evaluate the challenge of project sponsors’ feasible rates of ramping up of workforce and equipment resources based on the PMPs and adjust project sequencing accordingly
 - Refine program sequencing based on anticipated levels of funding
 - Re-evaluation of delivery analysis track outages, frequency/advanced notice of temporary schedule changes, and dispatch protocols to minimize overall reliability impacts to all operators
 - Consider condition assessments beyond asset age for more asset types in planning capital renewal programs
 - Evaluate what service growth opportunities may exist at milestones before 2035
- **Continue to improve all commuter and intercity rail services.** Each commuter rail system and Amtrak includes non-NEC territories with similar investment and modernization demands. Agencies will be working to expand operating and capital budgets to support service improvements that have network benefits to corridor and off-corridor connecting services.



A passenger boards the Amtrak Northeast Regional train at Washington Union Station (DC)

CONSISTENCY WITH NEC FUTURE AND ADVANCING THE VISION

The NEC FUTURE Tier 1 EIS and ROD defined the future vision of the NEC. C35 defines construction sequencing for a first 15-year phase of that vision and anticipated progress on its goals.

- Improve Rail Service – By 2035, Amtrak Acela travel time reduction of 26 minutes between DC and NYC and 28 minutes between NYC and Boston, representing over 50 percent progress toward the NEC FUTURE goal. Doubling of overall commuter rail service and 33 percent growth in Amtrak service.
- Modernize NEC Infrastructure - 100 percent progress towards eliminating major backlog bridges and tunnels. Major progress toward bringing all assets on the NEC to a state of good repair, with limited sections programmed through C35 but completed beyond 2035.
- Expand Rail Capacity – Elimination of all major chokepoints along the NEC. Additional infrastructure capacity between New York City and Newark, NJ, along the Hell Gate Line in NY, in the Baltimore and Wilmington areas, and around the Route 128 (MA) station. Expanded capacity on the Hartford Line in Connecticut and the Harrisburg Line between Philadelphia and Harrisburg in Pennsylvania.

C35 also identifies the following planning activities that will take place over the first 15 years to set the stage for future phases of development.

- Project level environmental reviews tiering off the NEC FUTURE Final EIS and ROD (i.e., Gateway Penn Station Expansion, Pelham Bay Bridge Replacement, Saugatuck and Cos Cob Bridge Replacements)
- New high-speed segment planning studies (New Haven to Providence and Maryland to Delaware)

Future CONNECT NEC efforts (C37) will continue to assess and monitor progress in advancing the NEC FUTURE vision and will develop strategies and timelines to achieve the full vision as defined in the ROD.

C37 will reflect changing conditions on the ground, new information discovered during project-level planning, and refined methods as the sophistication of our planning tools grows. This rolling 15-year program will be a direct input to the Commission's annual five-year Capital Investment Plan (CIP) process that identifies a more detailed level of available funding sources, anticipated scopes of work, and upcoming project milestones. The CIP also serves as the baseline for measuring annual capital program delivery performance. Through this process, the Commission will report on future progress in advancing the CONNECT NEC 15-year plan.

Advancing a plan that dramatically increases the pace and magnitude of improvements requires innovative thinking and greater collaboration. Unprecedented financial investment will also require elevated transparency, oversight, and reporting to build confidence among stakeholders and to keep the plan on track. The CONNECT NEC process will leverage existing systems to the extent practicable and initiate processes where they don't exist.

The Commission is ready to rise to these challenges and others that are certain to emerge as work progresses. The foundation of partnership is strong. Together, we can at long last rebuild this critical public asset and ensure a bright future for this region and the nation.



Passengers at 30th Street Station (PA)

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