

# Here's what the future of rail travel in the Northeast could be like



By [Jonathan D. Salant | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

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**WASHINGTON** -- U.S. transportation officials **proposed spending** more than \$120 billion over the next 30 years to revamp and overhaul railroad tracks in the Northeast Corridor, more than an hour off the trip between Washington and Boston, and expanding rail service throughout New Jersey.

The report by the [Federal Railroad Administration](#) said a mixture of funding sources would need to be tapped to fulfill the plan of improved service along the 457-mile corridor, including some new tracks, new stations and new trains. The cost: \$123 billion to \$128 billion.

Additional trains would provide connections to Newark Airport, Metropark and Secaucus Junction, stations would be expanded, and **a new station would be built in North Brunswick.**



## Gateway Tunnel is top Amtrak priority

"While building this recommendation would require significant investment, the cost of doing nothing is much greater," U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said. "The communities and the economies of the Northeast cannot grow and flourish without significant, new investment."

The report is the product of studies, [hearings](#) and comments about a corridor that carries 750,000 passengers every day on 2,200 trains and moves more than 350,000 car loads of freight annually. It rejected more ambitious alternatives such as building a parallel high-speed corridor between Washington and Boston to accommodate trains going 220 miles per hour.

The recommendations include projects already underway, such as the [Gateway Tunnel](#) under the Hudson River and the [Portal Bridge](#) replacement.

New construction would include access to the Northeast Corridor from the NJ Transit's Raritan Valley Line, known as the Hudson Flyover; a Westbound Waterfront Connect to improve connections to NJ Transit's Hoboken Terminal; new tracks from North Brunswick to Kearney; a Secaucus/Bergen Loop that would begin at the Secaucus station; and improvements to Trenton station and its adjacent yard, Metropark in Iselin, Secaucus Junction, and Penn Station in Newark.

Amtrak is already on board.

"It will take all the stakeholders - the federal government, states, cities, and the railroads - working and investing together to turn this vision of a renewed and modern Northeast Corridor into reality," said Stephen Gardner, executive vice president, infrastructure and investment development.

The first priority would be to repair Northeast Corridor tracks, then work to eliminate sharp curves, add tracks, and take other steps to make the ride smoother and faster. The work is projected to create 47,000 jobs annually for 30 years.

When the work is completed, the average travel time between Washington and Newark would be reduced to 2:05, down 25 minutes.

President-elect Donald Trump pledged during the campaign to **put Americans to work** on major public works projects.

Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-11th Dist.), **the incoming chairman** of the **House Appropriations Committee** that writes the annual spending bills, will have a major role to play in deciding how much money the federal government will spend.

Frelinghuysen spokesman Steve Wilson did not respond to a request for comment.

**Jonathan D. Salant** may be reached at [jsalant@njadvancedmedia.com](mailto:jsalant@njadvancedmedia.com). Follow him on Twitter [@JDSalant](#). Find [NJ.com Politics on Facebook](#)

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