

MassDOT Rail & Transit Division

Advancing Public Transportation through Infrastructure and Policy

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American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) – MA
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MassDOT Rail & Transit Division

Organization and Responsibilities

Freight Rail

- Maintain state-owned assets
- Administer programs to strengthen network
- Manage operating agreements

Passenger Rail

- Administer intercity passenger rail program
- Build and managed assets
- Coordinate multimodal connections

Bus Transit

- Assist, fund and/or collaborate with Regional Transit Authorities (RTA)
- Administer grant programs
- Promote mobility through transit

Compass Rail

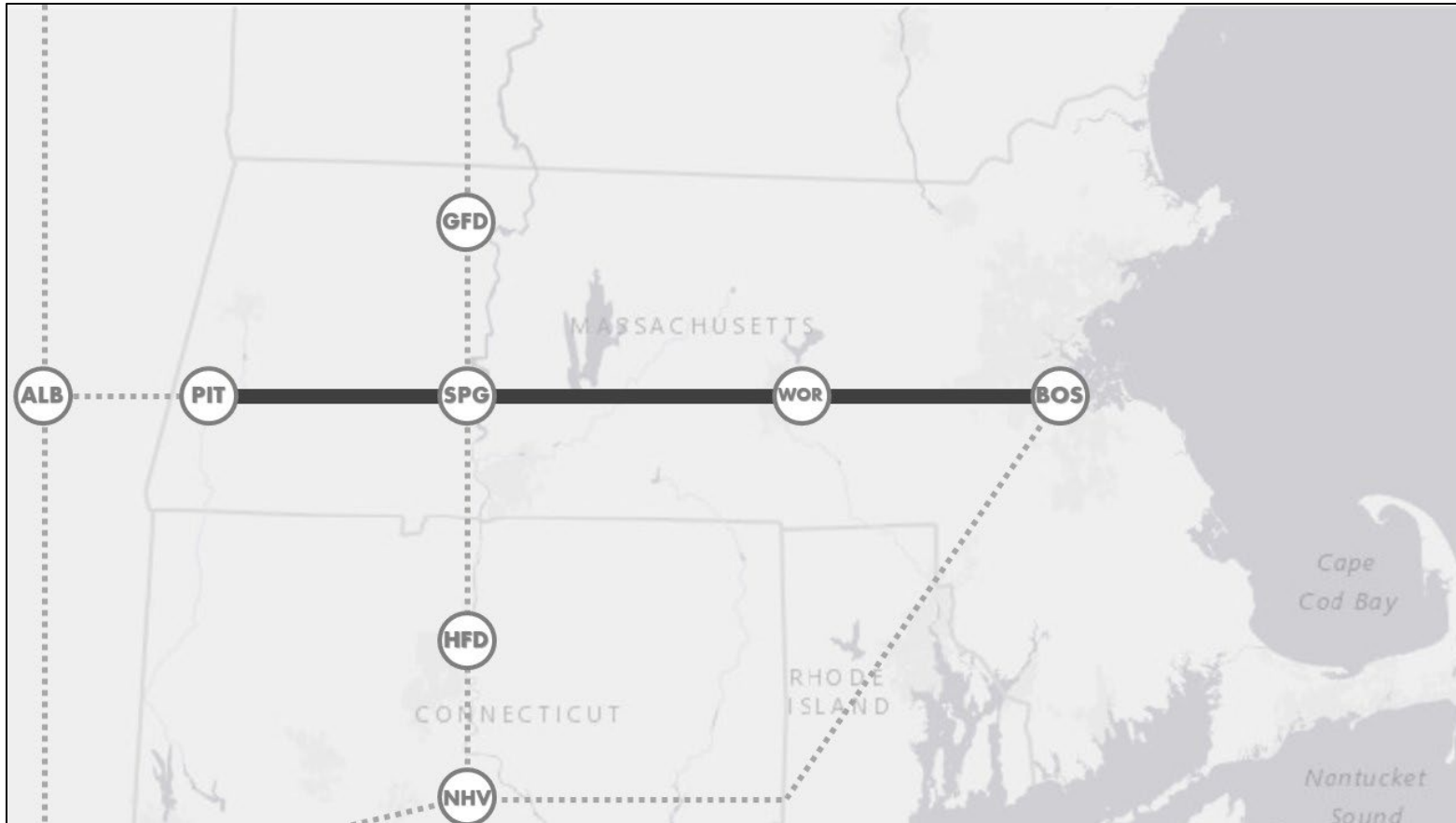
Passenger Rail for the Commonwealth



- Demonstrate short- and long-term visions for intercity passenger rail
- Strategize funding opportunities for capital projects
- Clarify incremental projects

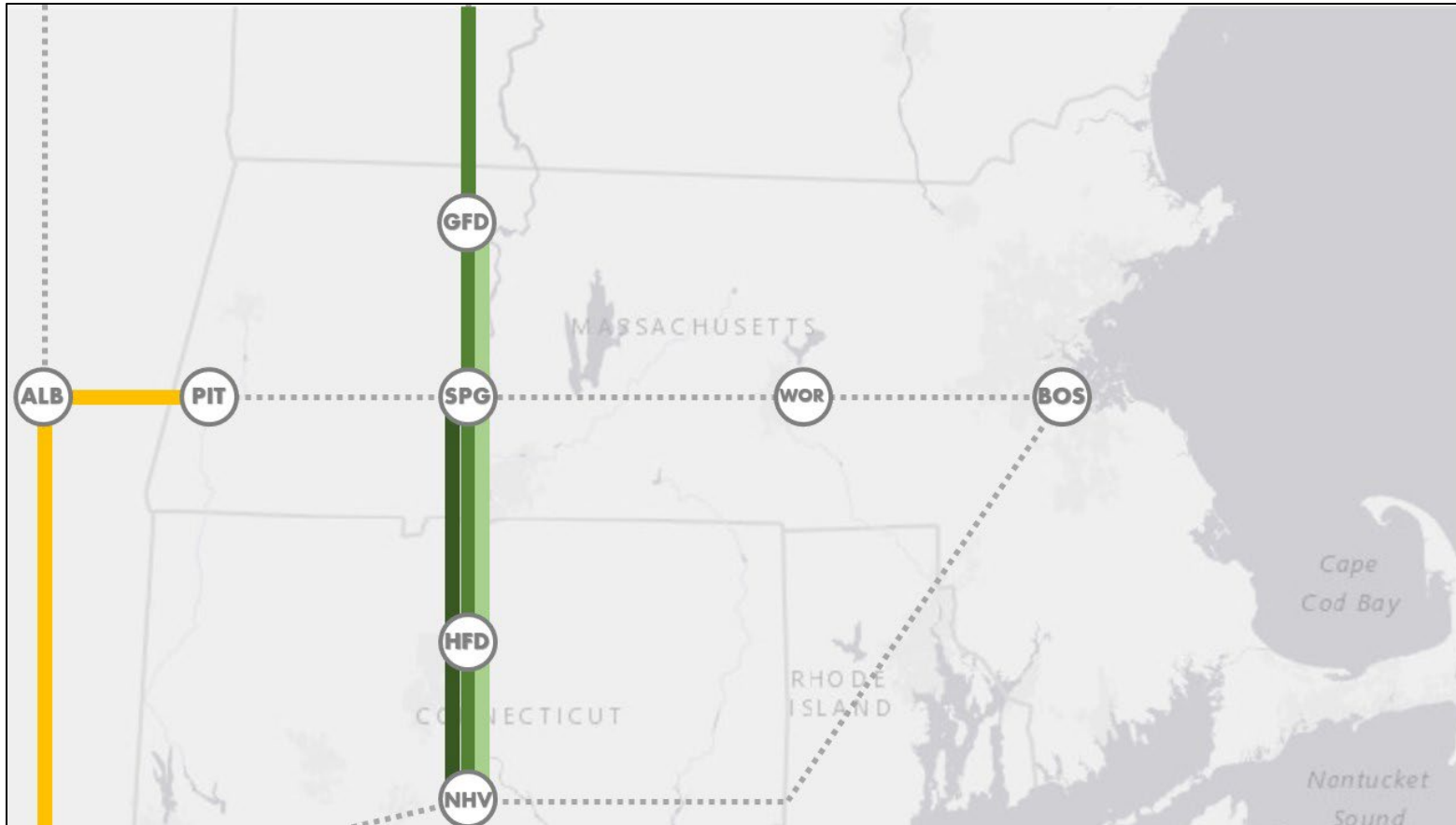
West-East Rail

AKA East-West Rail



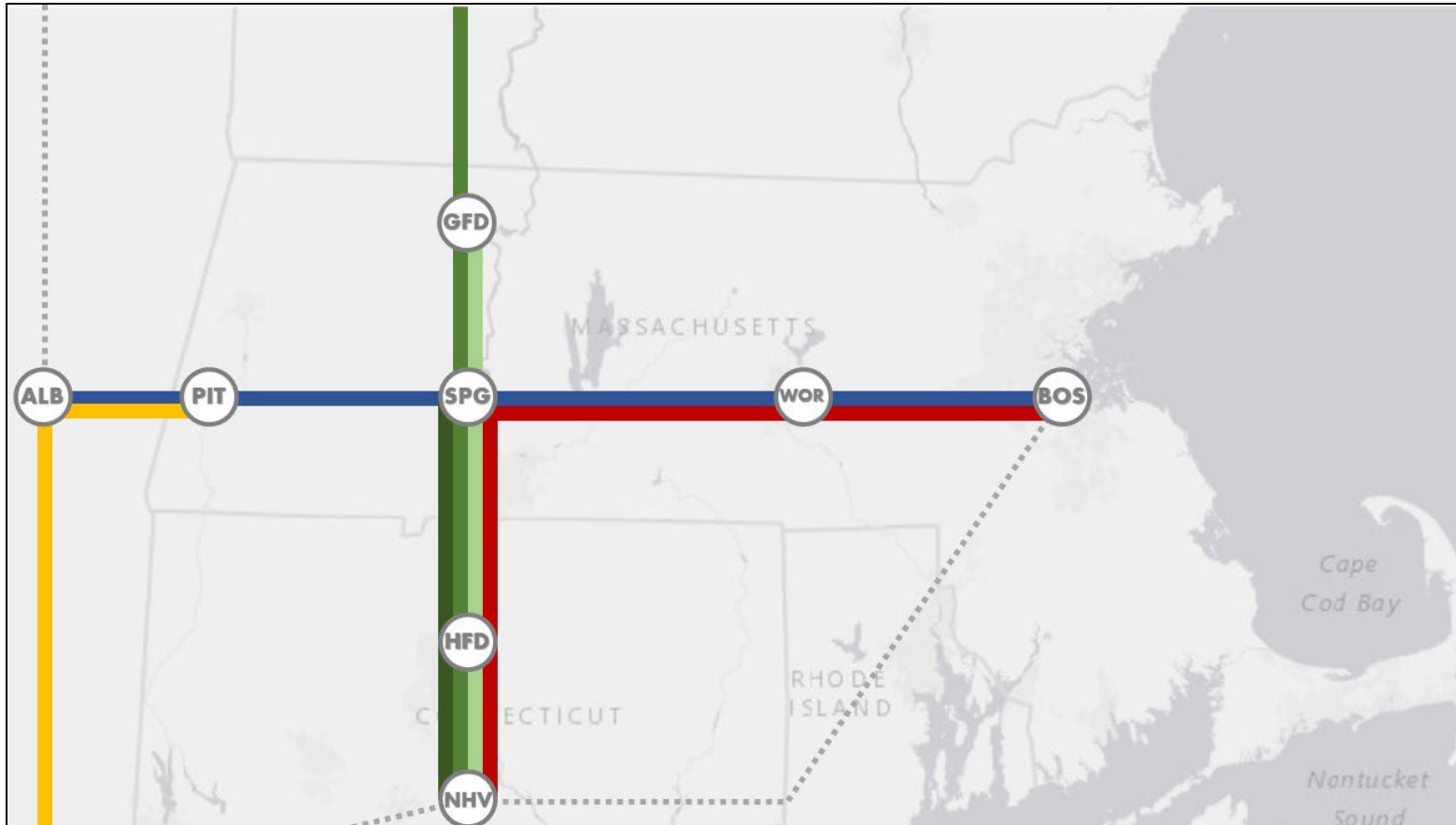
- West-East Rail capital and service objectives will be achieved through a program of projects.

Existing Services



- North-South services along the Knowledge Corridor: Vermonter, Valley Flyer, and Amtrak Hartford Line and Northeast Regional
- Seasonal Berkshire Flyer service from New York to Pittsfield

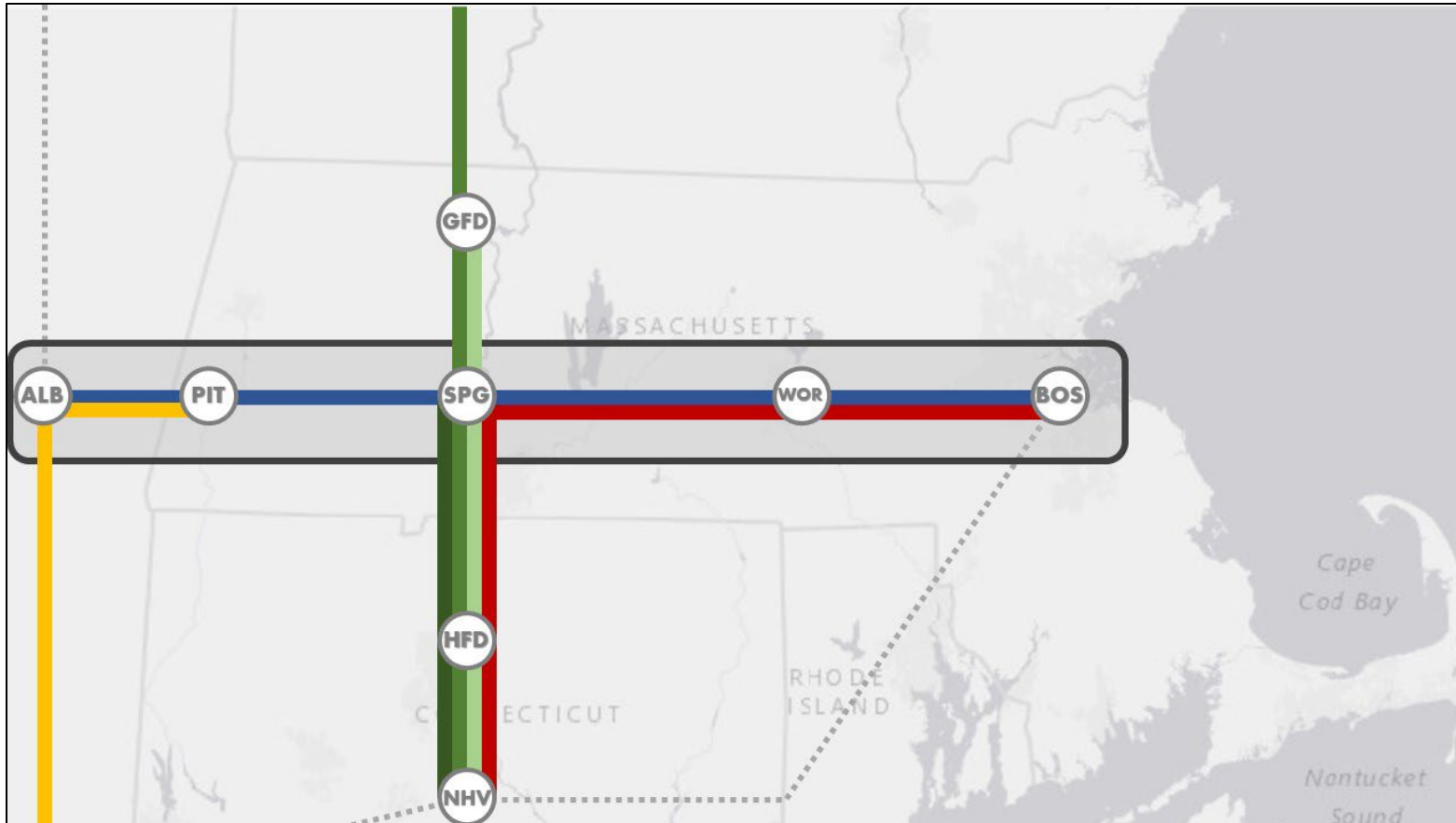
Proposed Services



- Proposed **"Inland Route"** from Boston to New Haven, CT via Springfield
- Proposed **"Boston & Albany"** service

West-East Rail Vision

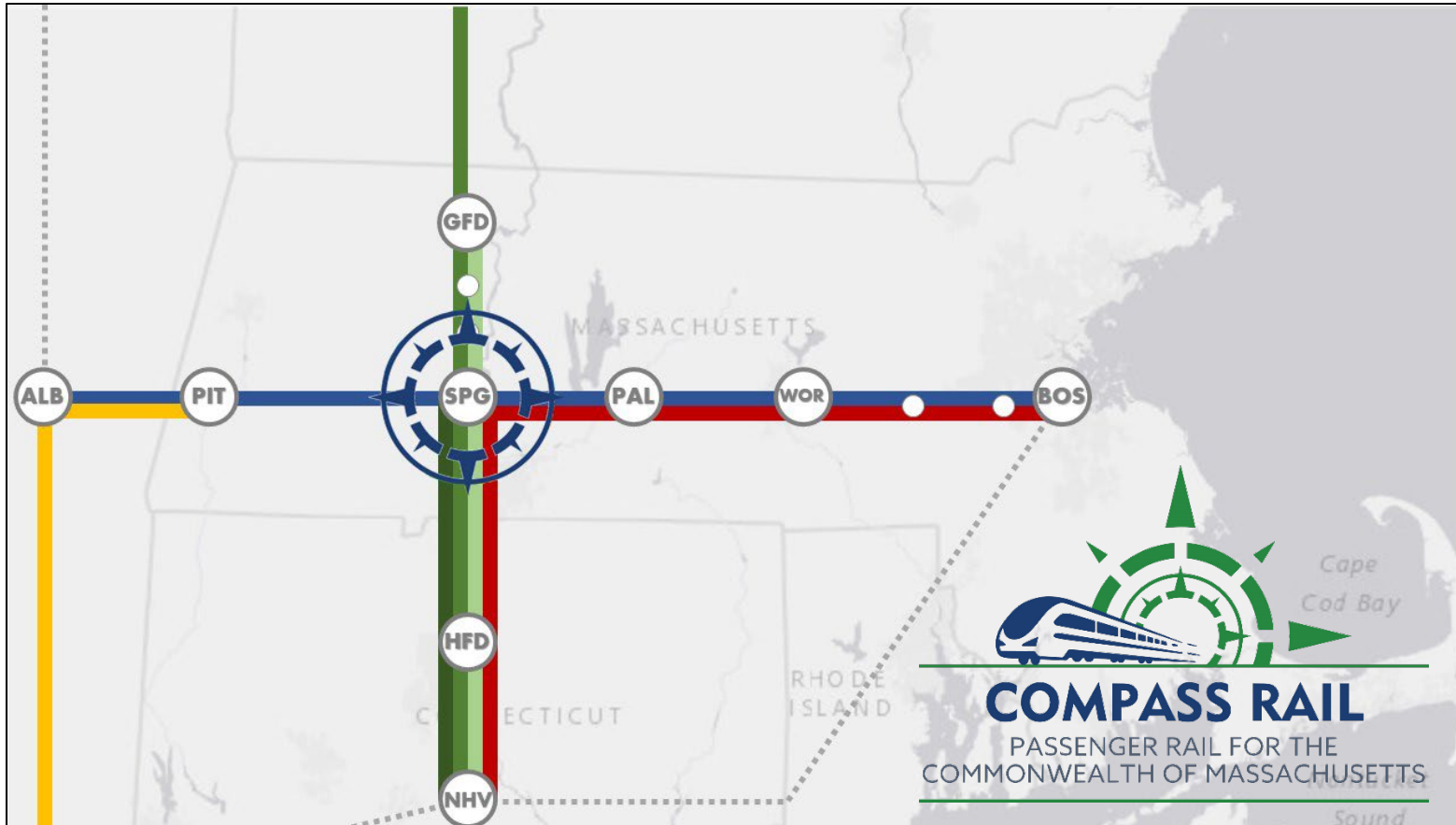
Achieved through Compass Rail



- Overlapping services build to West-East Rail vision.

Compass Rail

Passenger Rail for the Commonwealth



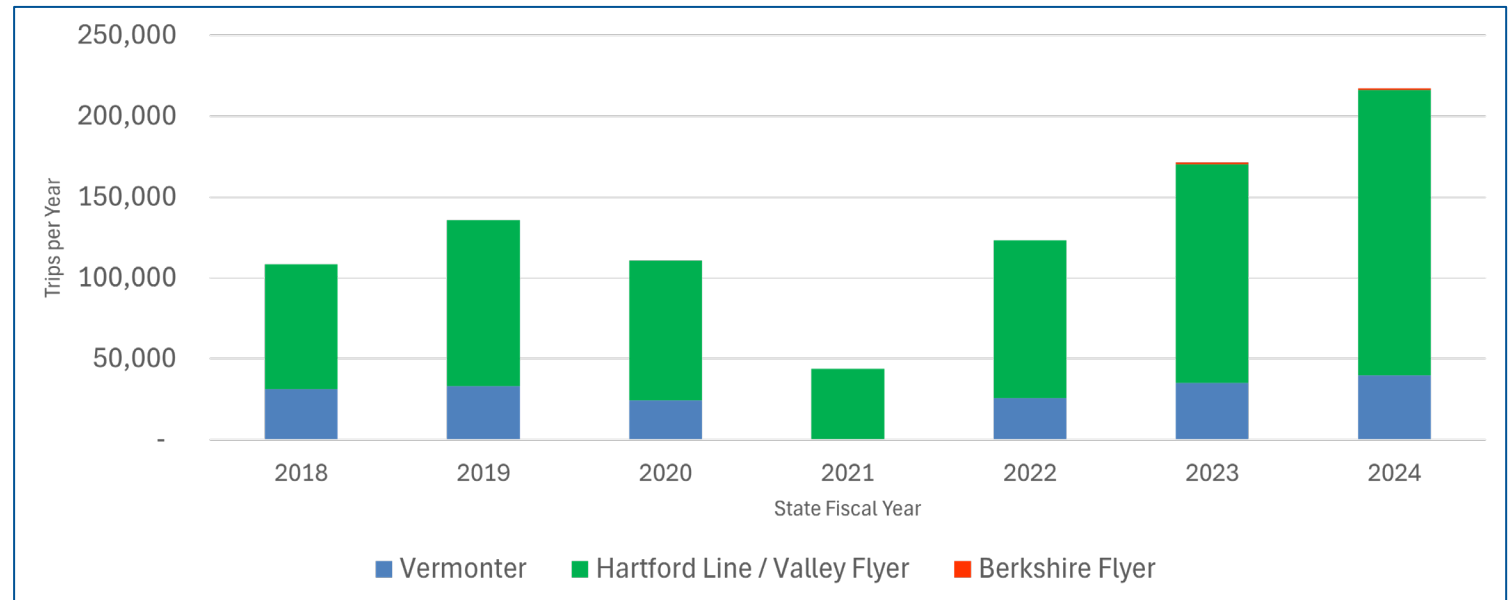
- West-East and North-South services comprise Compass Rail.
- Intercity rail not commuter rail; includes robust Springfield hub
- Administered by MassDOT Rail and Transit Division with partners Amtrak, CSX, CT/NY/VT, and others
- Increases transportation options, supports economic development, improves the freight network, and shifts car trips to greener modes
- Pursue federal funding from historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Compass Rail Ridership Updates

Ridership Continues to Grow for Amtrak-Operated, State-Supported Service

State-Supported Amtrak Services Annual Ridership to Massachusetts Stations

- Today's Hartford Line service began in 2018, and the Valley Flyer began in 2019.
- The Berkshire Flyer has been operating seasonally for most recent three summers.
- MassDOT has continually worked to improve service by adding trips and modifying schedules.
- Ridership has grown 99% between 2018 and 2024.
- Ridership has grown 26% between 2023 and 2024.



Corridor ID Program

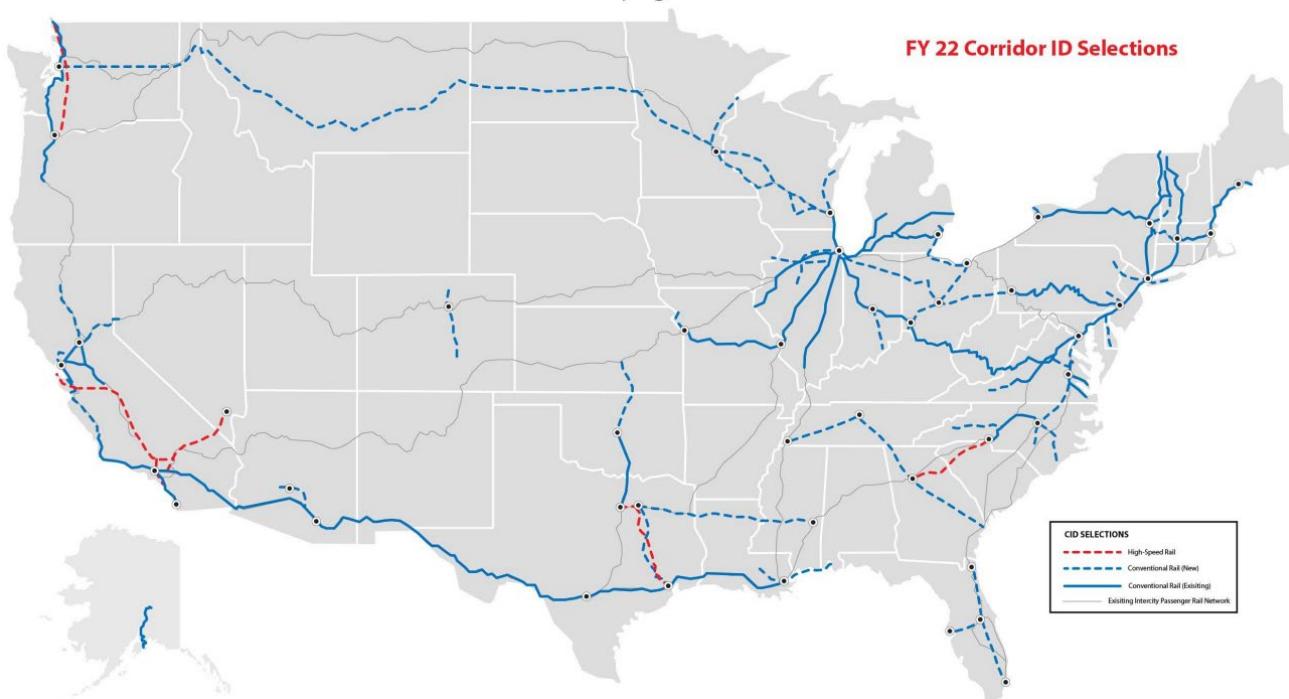
Next Phase of planning for Compass Rail Corridors



Investments to Enhance Intercity Passenger Rail

Laying the foundation for world-class rail in America

FY 22 Corridor ID Selections



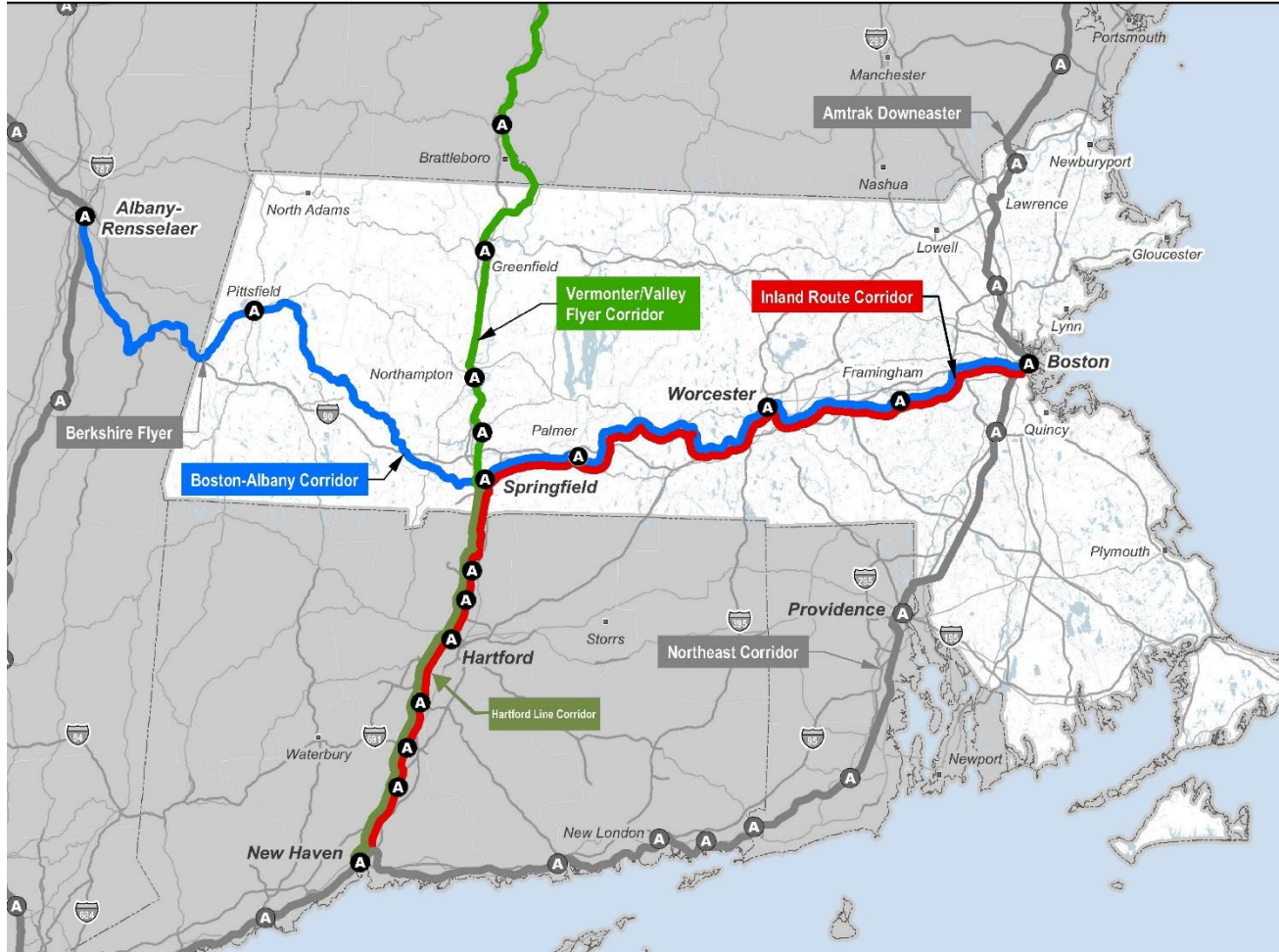
Source: <https://railroads.dot.gov/corridor-ID-program>

The **benefits** of being accepted into the Corridor ID Program include:

- FRA support for the preparation (or update) of a Service Development Plan (SDP)
- Development of a “Corridor Project Inventory” – or listing of upcoming projects – at the conclusion of the SDP
- The project inventories from each Corridor populate a National “Pipeline” of projects
- Projects in FRA’s Corridor ID Pipeline prioritized for funding under FRA’s financial assistance programs

Upcoming Corridor Planning Efforts

Upcoming corridor studies in support of Compass Rail



FRA's Corridor Identification and Development Program awards:

- MassDOT **Boston & Albany Corridor**.
- Vermont (VTrans) **Vermont Corridor** (Springfield to Montreal)
- Connecticut (CTDOT) **Hartford Line Corridor** (New Haven to Springfield)
- NNEPRA **Downeaster** (Boston to Brunswick, ME)

Selection into the Corridor ID Program advances corridor planning.

Compass Rail

Ongoing Progress



*Boston & Albany Corridor just west of
Springfield Union Station*

- **Inland Route** modeling complete, design to begin in near-term. Pending FRA review.
- Design underway for \$20+ million **grade crossing elimination project** in West Springfield.
- Advancing **Boston & Albany Corridor ID** towards Step 2 service development plan.
- Site selection alternatives analysis for **Palmer Station Planning and Design** has identified six feasible sites for further evaluation.
- Completed Berkshire Flyer modeling report that offers project concepts for a **Pittsfield Track Capacity Project**.
- \$36.8 million CRISI award from FRA for **Springfield Area Track Reconfiguration** final design.

Transit Grant Programs

Rail & Transit Division administers grants to improve services statewide



PVTA Bus at Springfield Union Station November 4, 2024

- Community Transit Grant Program
- Fare Free Transit
- Regional Transit Innovation Grant
- Transit Connectivity Grant
- Climate Friendly Workforce Transportation

Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP)

Vehicle Procurements and Operations & Mobility Management



- An annual competitive grant program to meet the mobility needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities.
- Provides funds for the purchase of vehicles, mobility management activities, and operating costs.
- The FY25 Operating and Mobility Management cycle recently closed, and applications are under review.
- The FY25 Accessible Vehicle cycle is open, with applications due November 22.

MassDOT delivers a new vehicle to a grantee

Fare Free Transit

Grants awarded to 13 Regional Transit Authorities to provide year-round, fare free service



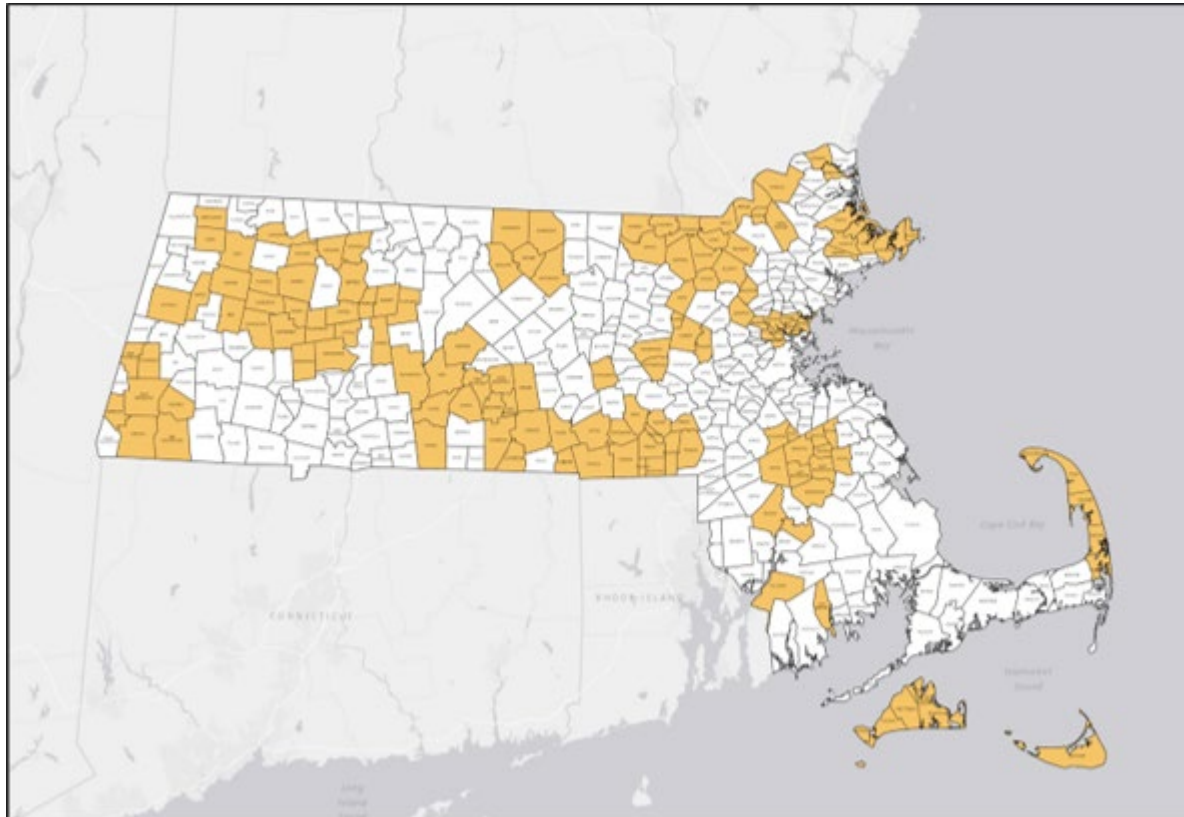
Governor Healey speaks in Greenfield October 24, 2024

- The grant provides \$30 million to 13 Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) to provide year-round, fare free service.
- The RTAs submitted a joint application.
- The program builds off of two years of successful pilot programs.
- The program saves money for riders and encourages more people to use public transportation.
- The initiative promotes equity and greater access to mobility options.
- It is funded through the Fair Share Amendment's Education and Transportation Fund.

Regional Transit Innovation Grant Program

New MassDOT program generates 60 proposals

Award Areas of the FY24 Regional Transit Innovation Grant



- \$15M SFY 24 grant program for enhancing, expanding, or implementing new and innovative transit services, including connectivity between rural communities or RTAs, expansion of service hours, electrification, and operating and capital expenses.
- MassDOT solicited proposals from all transit providers.
- Received 60 proposals totaling \$47.5M; 18 projects were funded.

Transit Connectivity Grant Awards

Projects to advance transit connectivity

- \$10 million grant program
- Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) can apply for grants for the creation or altering of routes that advance connectivity between existing public transportation routes.
- For operating projects that increase ridership, increase coverage, and improve reach to low-income individuals
- Ten project applications submitted by nine RTAs.



A Berkshire Regional Transit Authority bus

Climate-Friendly Workforce Transportation

MassDOT awards \$3 million to Transportation Management Associations (TMAs)



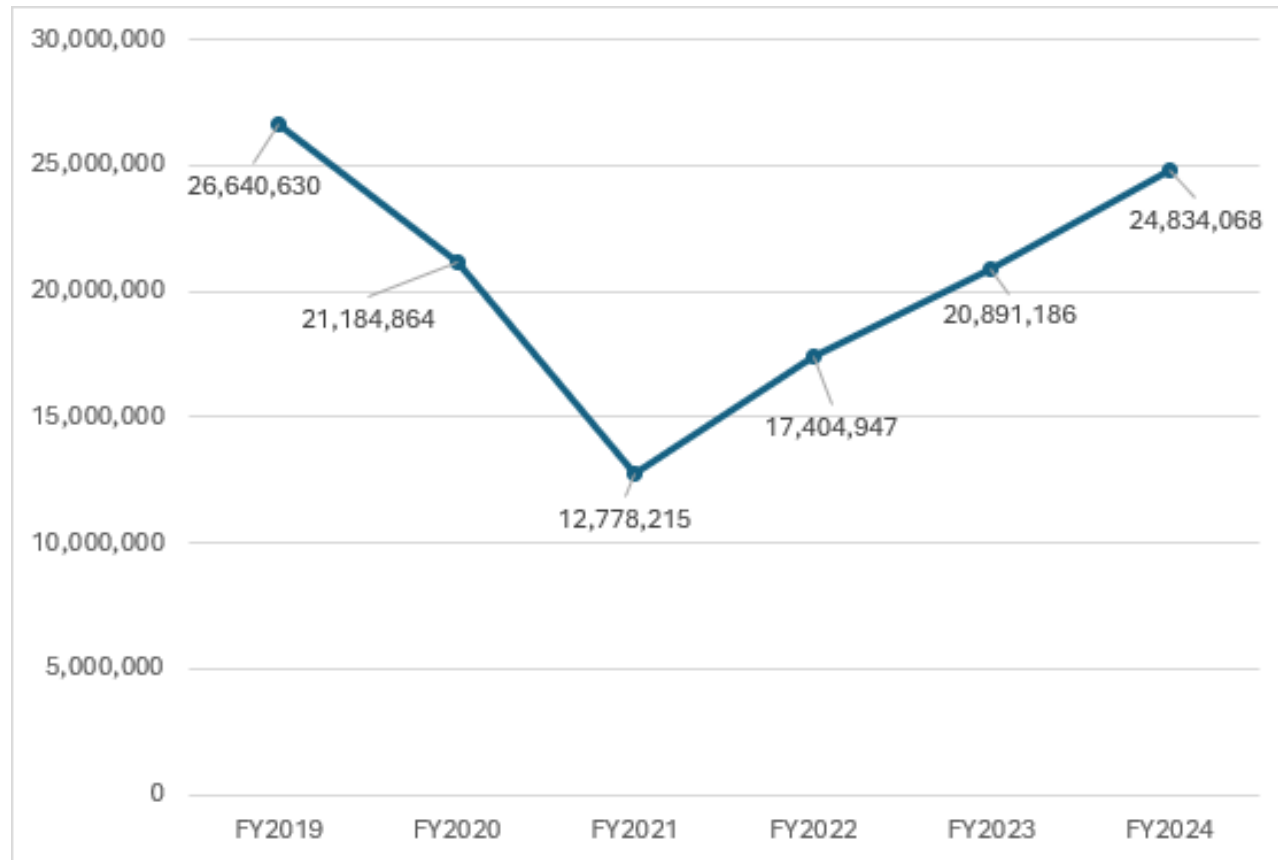
A Better City Guided Bicycle received a grant to support guided bike rides to help the "bike-curious" and "interested but concerned" learn how to navigate downtown streets.

- Nearly \$3 million awarded to twelve TMAs to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, facilitate mode shift, and expand mobility.
- 18 projects funded
- This is the first round of awards through the MassDOT TMA Grant Program, which launched this year.
- A TMA is a non-profit, membership-based organization that focuses on improving transportation options and infrastructure within a specific region or community.

Tracking Transit Performance Measures

Ridership gains track with investments

Annual Fixed Route Ridership from FY19–FY24 for Fifteen RTAs



- MassDOT collects performance metrics from all fifteen Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs).
- Ridership has rebounded from pandemic lows.
- Ridership gains track with investments in service, vehicles, and fare equity.

Thank you

