

Compass Rail Overview and Projects Update

Rail & Transit Administrator Meredith Slesinger

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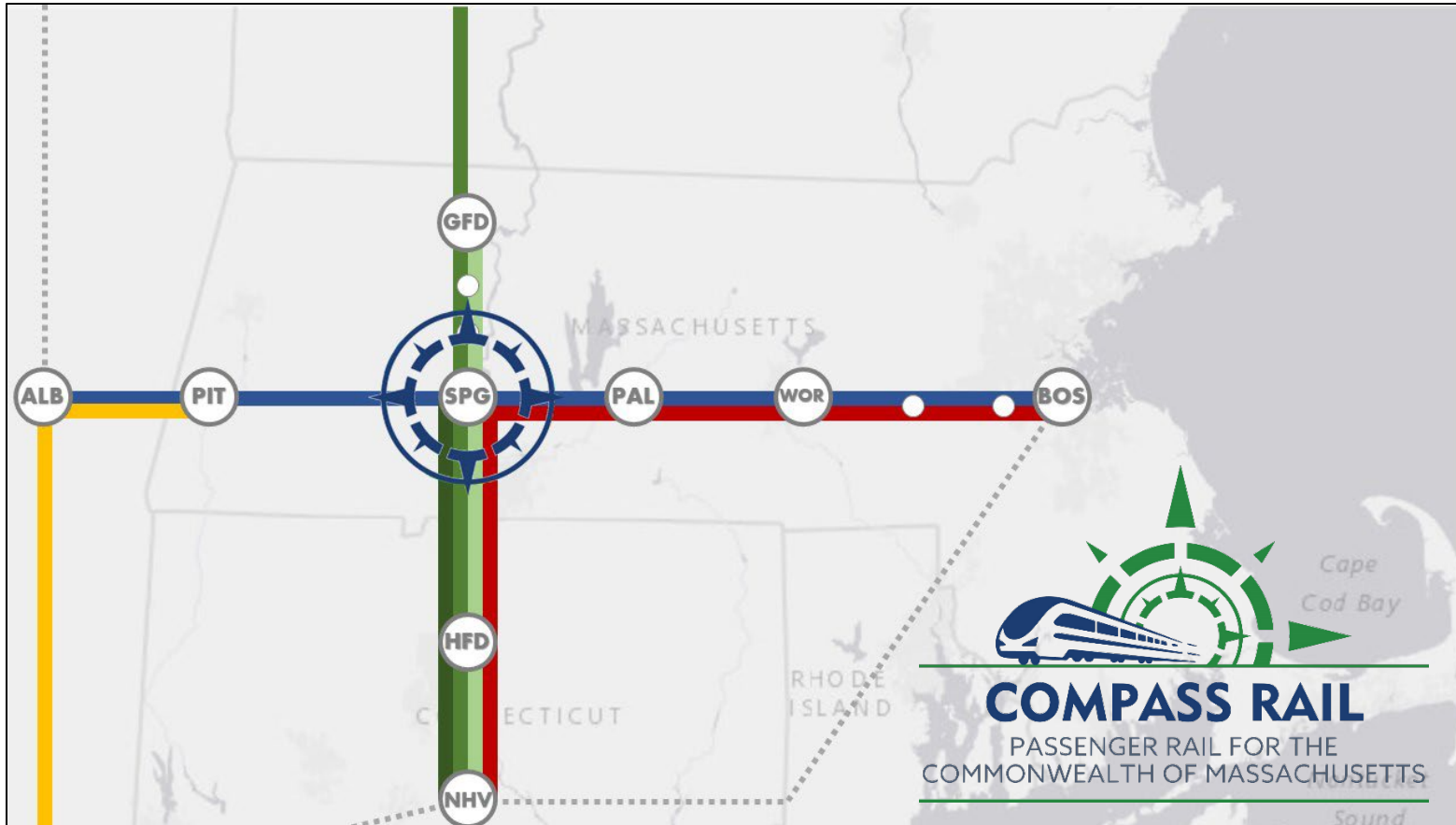


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Compass Rail

Passenger Rail for the Commonwealth

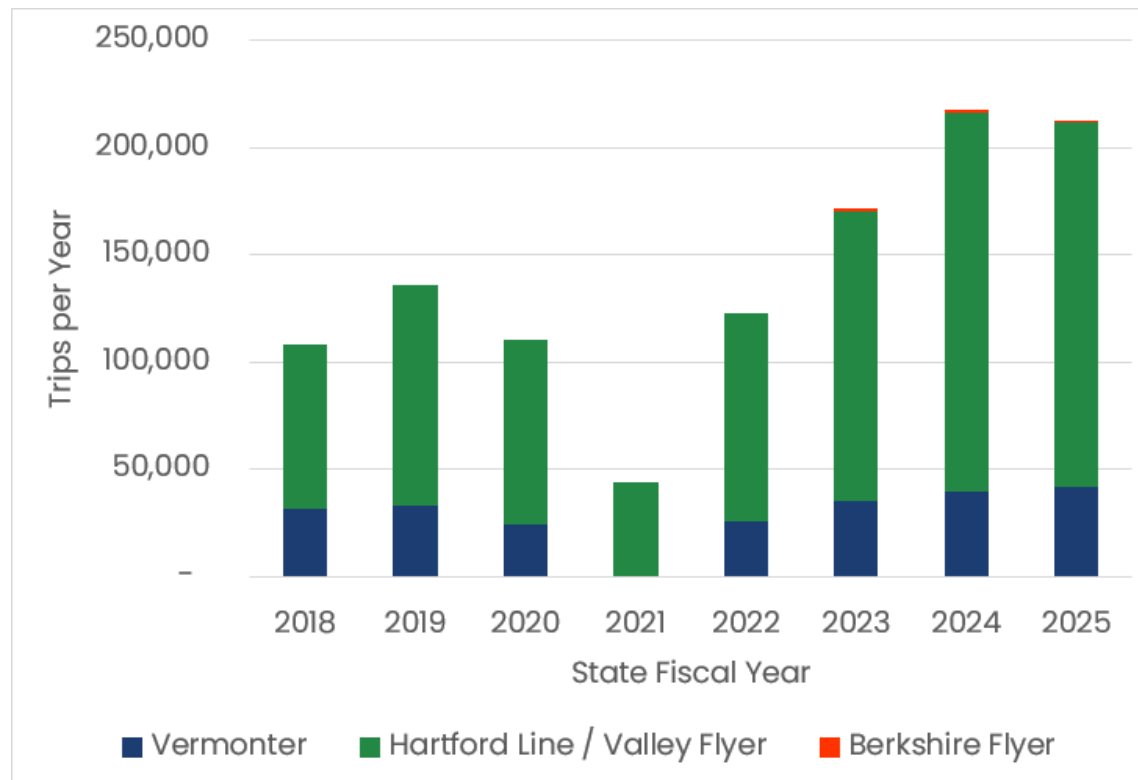


- Enhance mobility, expand transportation choices, and support economic development and climate goals through transportation investments.
- West-East and North-South services comprise Compass Rail.
- Amtrak-operated state-supported services governed by PRIIA Section 209.
- Mix of state, Amtrak, and CSX ROW ownership.
- Utilizes Amtrak statutory rights to access freight corridors.
- Incremental program with phased investment plan.

Compass Rail Ridership

Ridership Growth 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 since 2022.
- MassDOT has continually worked to improve service by adding trips and modifying schedules.
- Ridership had grown 99% between 2018 and 2024.
- Knowledge Corridor Station ridership growth from 2024 to 2025 is 4%.
- Construction related service reductions to Springfield resulted in ridership decline of 4% and overall 2% reduction for all stations during this period.
- 2025 Berkshire Flyer summer season was due to a landslide.

Compass Rail Ridership

Ridership Growth for Amtrak-Operated, State-Supported Service



- The most popular trips from Massachusetts stations are longer distance trips to New York City and beyond.
- Northeast Regional one-seat rides to New York generate high ridership.
- MassDOT plans schedules for connections at New Haven for seamless long-distance rides.



Riders boarding the Vermonter in Northampton, MA.

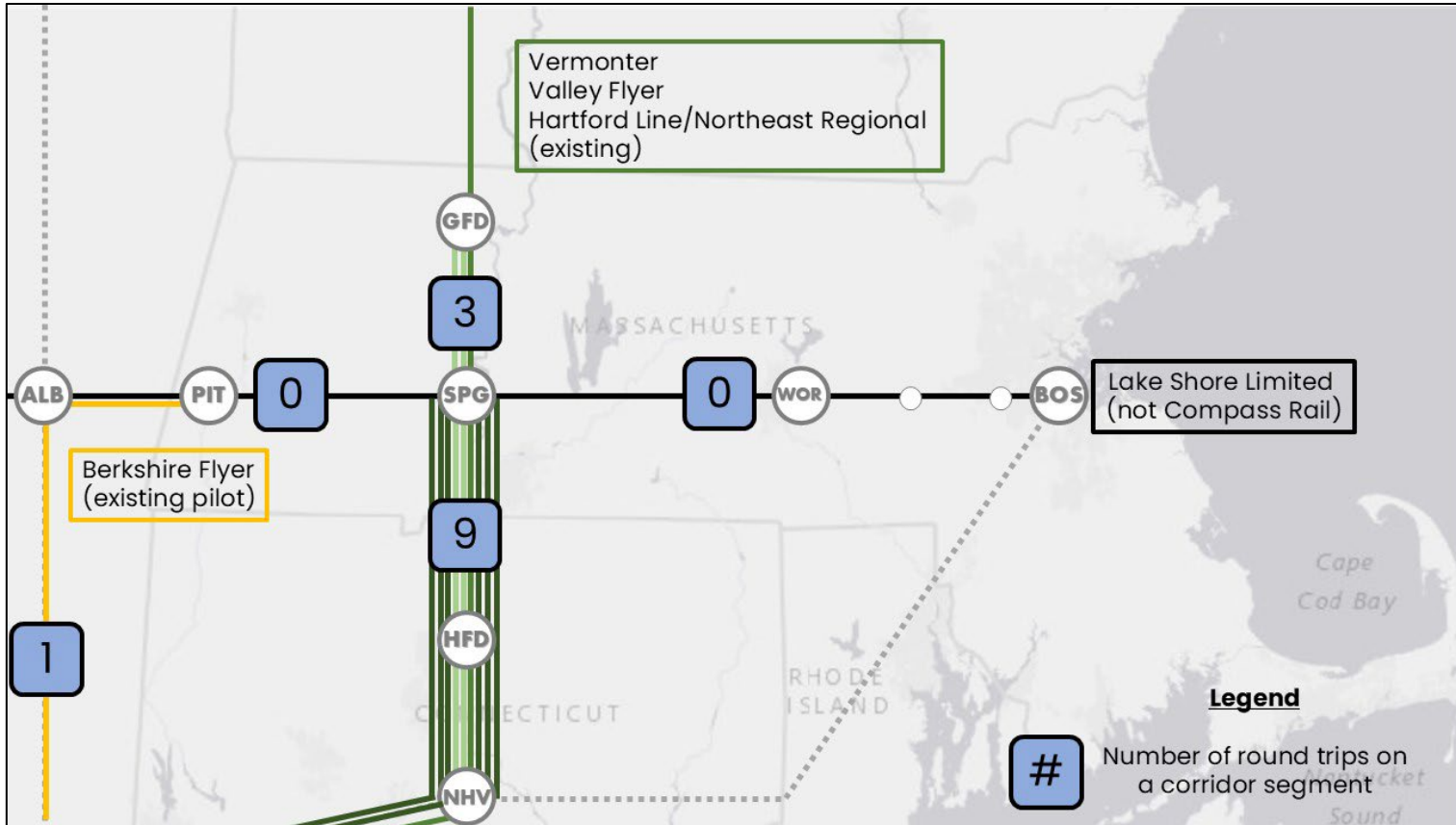
Rail Grant Overview

Snapshot of Federal Rail Grants ~\$157M secured

Project	Amount	Status
Awarded		
Springfield Area Track Reconfiguration Project, Preliminary Engineering	\$1.75 million	Awarded
East Deerfield Yard Project	\$4.48 million	Awarded
Early Actions for the Inland Route	\$108 million	Awarded
Boston and Albany Corridor Service Development Plan	\$3.5 million	Awarded
Longmeadow Passive Crossing Improvement Project	\$1.2 million	Awarded
Pending Obligation		
Springfield Area Track Reconfiguration Project	\$36.8 million	Pending
Knowledge Corridor Positive Train Control Design	\$1.2 million	Pending
Proposed		
Springfield Maintenance Modernization Project	\$173.2 million	Proposed
Amtrak Fleet and Facilities Development (Amtrak Lead)	\$2.7 billion	Proposed

Existing Service

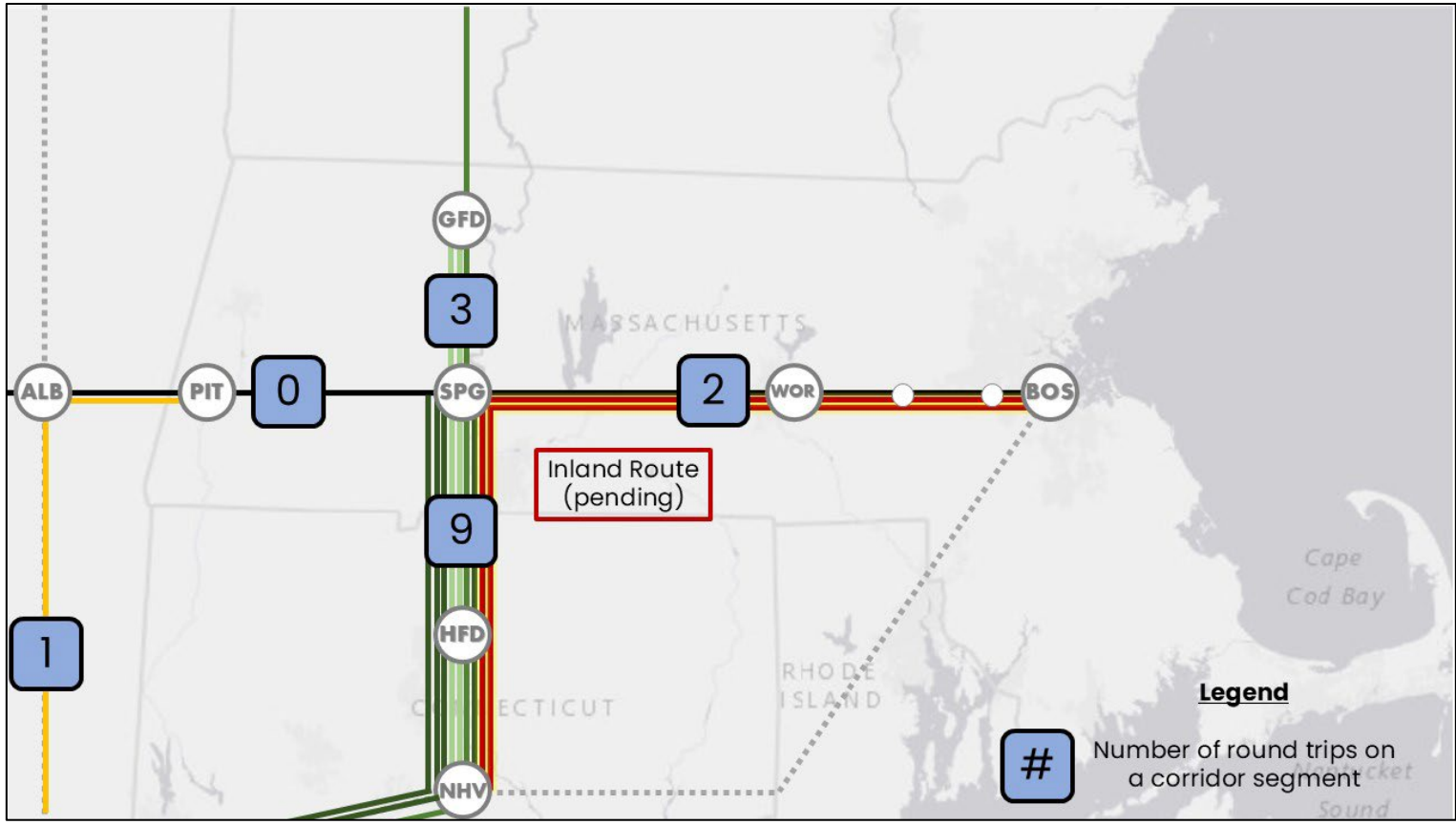
North-south service and seasonal Berkshire Flyer



- Existing Amtrak Compass Rail fleet is now anticipated to be retired in 2030-2031.
- Existing operating costs ~\$7.5 million per year.
- Currently ~230,000 MA trips per year

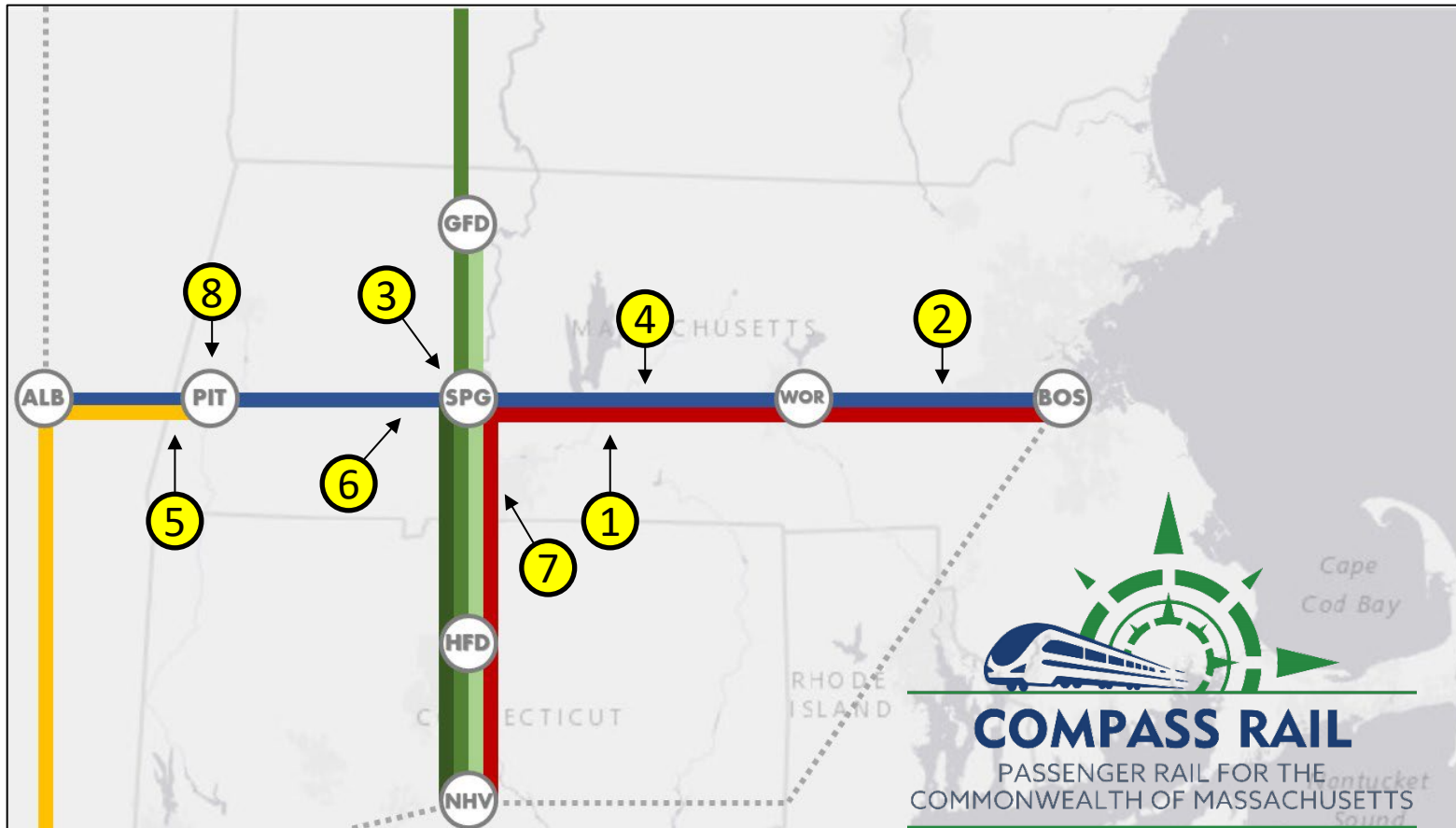
Phase I - 2030

Introduction of Inland Route as first phase of West-East Rail



- Inland Route design/construction underway, but Amtrak fleet no longer reliable to operate. Requires 2 "Airo" trainsets.
- Amtrak submitted \$2.7B NRPP application for fleet with coalition of state support.
- New Layover/maintenance facility needed to support existing service at ~ \$220M in Springfield; NRPP application was submitted 2/6.
- Inland Route anticipates Boston layover/maintenance needs estimated at ~\$200 million. Site analysis underway.
- Increased operating costs to \$11.5 million per year (increase of \$4M/yr).
- Ridership projections increase from 230,000 to 280,000 MA trips per year

Projects Underway



1. Early actions for the **Inland Route**
2. **Boston & Albany** Corridor ID Program
3. Springfield Area Track Reconfiguration Project
4. Palmer Station Planning and Design
5. Pittsfield Track Capacity Project
6. West Springfield Grade Crossing Elimination
7. Longmeadow Passive Crossing Improvement Project
8. Pittsfield Station Second Platform Planning and Design

Inland Route

Federally-funded Early Actions for the Inland Route



Administrator Slesinger speaks at 9/22/23 press event announcing \$108 million federal grant for Inland Route

- MassDOT received a \$108M award from the Federal Railroad Administration.
- Project scope includes planning, design, and construction.
- Service goal is two round trips between Boston and New Haven, CT via Springfield; Amtrak-operated.
- MassDOT is placing emphasis on reduced travel times (i.e. higher speeds) between Boston and Springfield.
- Strong partnerships with CSX and Amtrak.

2025: begin design

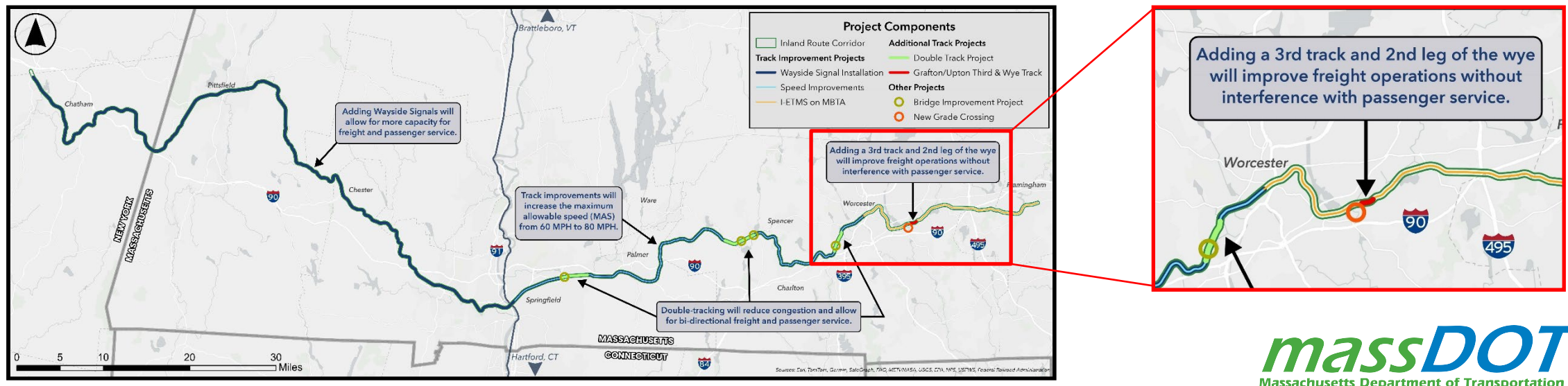
2027: begin construction

2030: begin service

Inland Route

Modeling partnership identifies capital program

- MassDOT, CSX, and Amtrak partnered to develop railroad operations simulation model for Boston & Albany Corridor.
- With passenger service goal in mind, infrastructure alternatives were tested to identify operating plan that works in concert with freight.
- Inland Route modeling effort identified range of projects: double tracking, curve modifications, new wye access to Grafton & Upton RR, positive train control (PTC) overlay, and shift to wayside signaling.
- Preferred solution enables passenger trips and improves freight operations.
- Model was modified to assess Berkshire Flyer improvements, and it will soon support Boston & Albany Service Development Plan (SDP) for extended passenger service to Albany.



Boston & Albany Corridor Service Development Plan

MassDOT corridor enters Step 2 of Federal Railroad Administration Corridor ID Program

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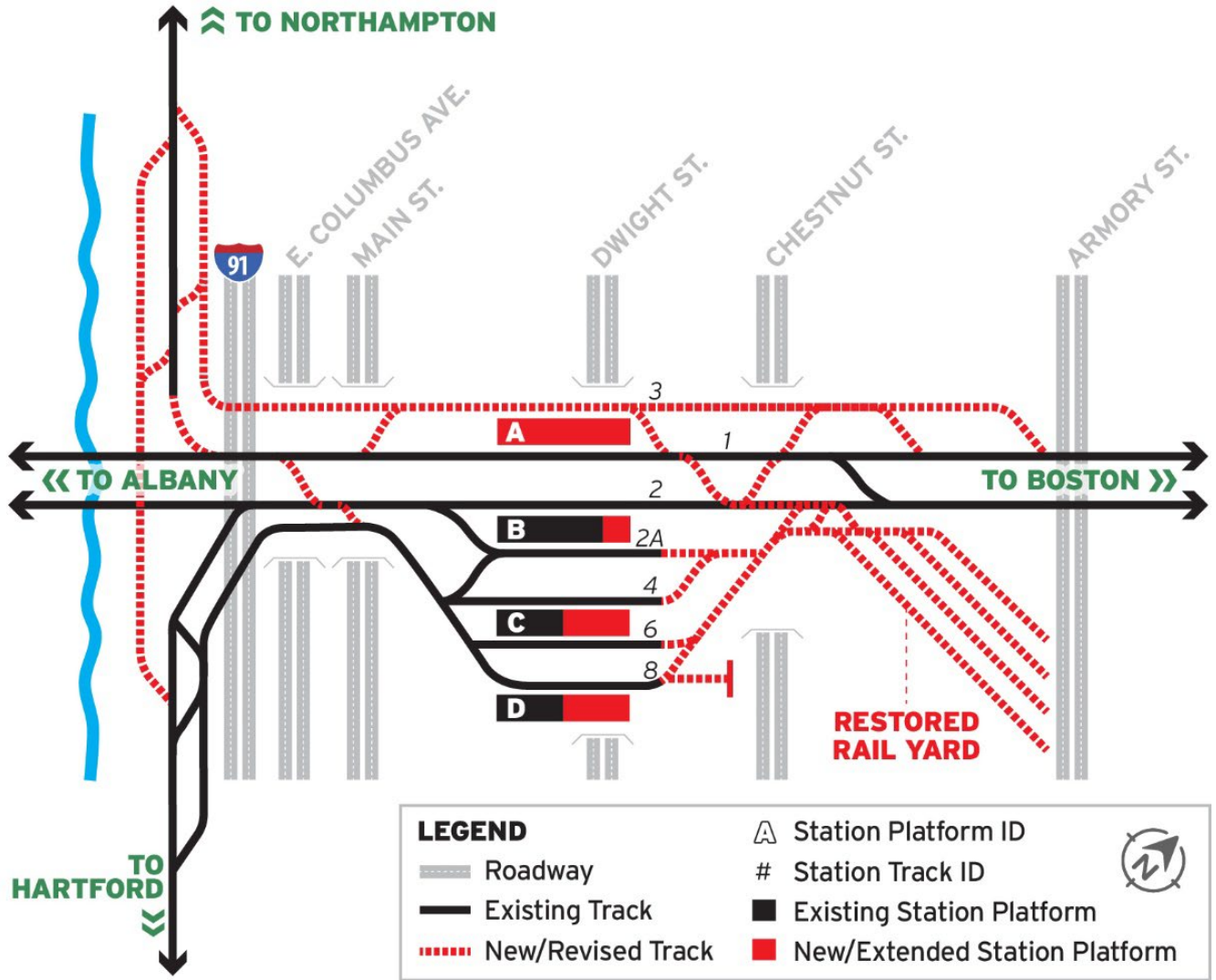


An Amtrak train at a platform at Springfield Union Station.

- The Boston & Albany Corridor was accepted into the Federal Railroad Administration's multi-step Corridor ID program in December 2023.
- Step 1, scoping an SDP, is complete.
- MassDOT recently executed a Step 2 grant of \$3.5 million to undertake the SDP to identify service levels and necessary capital projects to enable the service.
- Once complete, MassDOT anticipates a Step 3 award to conduct preliminary engineering and environmental review for needed infrastructure.
- Completion of Step 3 will enable project eligibility for specific federal funds for implementation.

Springfield Area Track Reconfiguration Project

Major investments to unlock service potential



- Completion of FRA-funded preliminary engineering and environmental review phase will occur in coming months.
- Will soon execute \$36.8 FRA award for final design.
- Project includes improvements to track alignments, switches, train signals, station platform configurations, and train layover and servicing facilities.
- Separation of passenger and freight services creates efficiencies for all.

Palmer Station Planning and Design

A potential, future West–East Rail Station

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A southwesterly view towards the preferred station site at 1199 South Main Street.

- Completed state-funded planning and design study to support a potential intercity station in Palmer.
- Project objectives included an alternatives analysis of potential sites and conceptual design.
- A preferred site was selected in January 2025, and draft designs were shared in a public forum in October.
- MassDOT has finalized conceptual design, environmental scoping, and a market analysis.
- Final documents are posted online.
- Station will be incorporated into Boston & Albany Corridor Service Development Plan.

Pittsfield Track Capacity

Multiple projects underway to improve rail corridor capacity in the Berkshires

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MassDOT is working with CSX to create rail corridor capacity in the Berkshires that will support existing Berkshire Flyer service and future West-East Rail service.

- **Berkshire Flyer Siding:** in design, a ~14,000-foot rail segment in Richmond near the Pittsfield line will facilitate more efficient operation on a long segment that is currently single track. Design complete.
- **Pittsfield Track 4 Turnout:** New turnout and siding extension near CSX Pittsfield Yard will provide dwell space for Amtrak's Berkshire Flyer trainsets. Design complete.
- **Pittsfield Second Platform:** in planning, MassDOT is undertaking an alternatives analysis to evaluate the feasibility of adding a second platform to the rail station.



The Boston & Albany corridor in Richmond near milepost 158 where a siding track is in design

West Springfield Grade Crossing Elimination

Safety Improvements at First and Front Streets

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A freight train crosses Front Street in West Springfield

- MassDOT seeks to build a vehicular bridge overpass to eliminate two at-grade crossings with CSX's Boston & Albany line.
- ~\$40 million total project with \$2 million CSX contribution.
- Design is underway and primarily led by MassDOT Highway Division.
- Improves rail operational efficiency, improves vehicle movements by eliminating frequently blocked crossings.
- Likely candidate for future FRA Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program opportunity.

Compass Rail Rolling Stock

Amtrak is procuring Airo trainsets from Siemens



- Amtrak base order will begin delivering new Airo rolling stock in 2026.
- MassDOT coordinated an NRPP application with Amtrak and other states to establish a national equipment pool.
- NRPP application was submitted February 6, 2026.

Amtrak's new Airo trainset as seen in Washington, D.C. in February 2026 destined for service in the Pacific Northwest.

South Station Expansion

Compass Rail's full build-out will require enabling projects

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- South Station platform capacity is nearing its limits.
- Compass Rail, MBTA, and Amtrak all have committed to grow frequency of their services.
- South Station Expansion is a project that has completed an Environmental Assessment and received a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) from the Federal Railroad Administration.

South Station, October 2025

Thank You

