

Compass Rail: Passenger Rail for the Commonwealth

Program Overview
March 1, 2025



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



What is Compass Rail?

- Intercity rail not commuter rail
 - Longer distance trains connecting cities/regions
 - Express service with fewer stops
 - Linking connecting services
- Increased service along:
 - West-East corridor from Boston-Worcester-Springfield-Pittsfield and Albany, NY.
 - North-South corridor served by the Amtrak Vermonter, Valley Flyer, and Hartford Line services.
- Established Springfield hub



Who is Compass Rail?

- Administered by MassDOT Rail & Transit Division
- Partnering with freight operator CSX and passenger operator Amtrak
- Collaborative efforts with Connecticut, New York, and Vermont
 - Joint planning for future services
 - Ongoing partnership with state-supported services
 - Close coordination with nearby services and projects



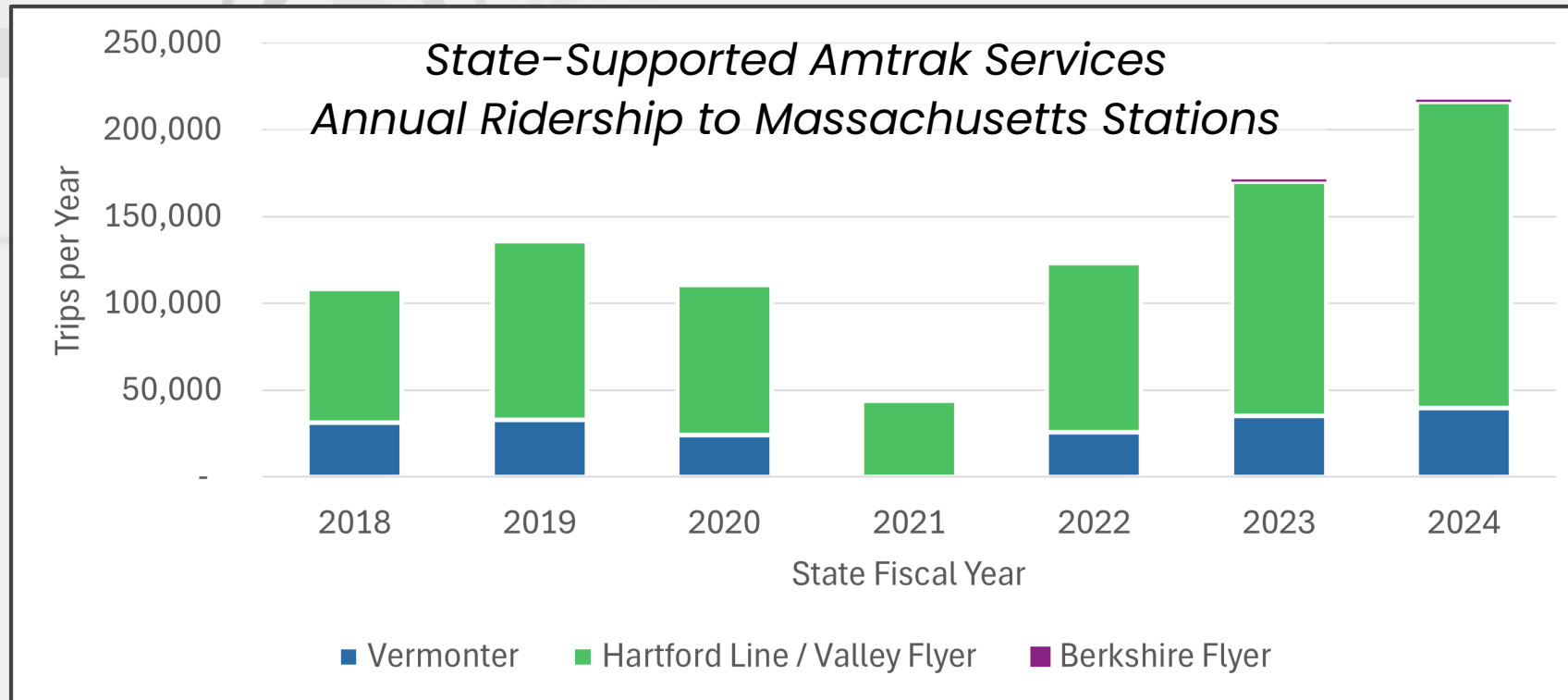
Why Compass Rail?

- Provide better transportation options across the Commonwealth
- Support economic development and improve the attractiveness of Western Massachusetts as an affordable place to live
- Reduce the number of automobile trips and amount of greenhouse gas emissions within the Commonwealth
- Strengthen the Commonwealth's freight rail network through infrastructure improvements to support a resilient transportation network



Why Compass Rail?

- Investments lead to results.
- Compass Rail ridership doubled between 2018 and 2024, demonstrating strong demand for intercity rail.

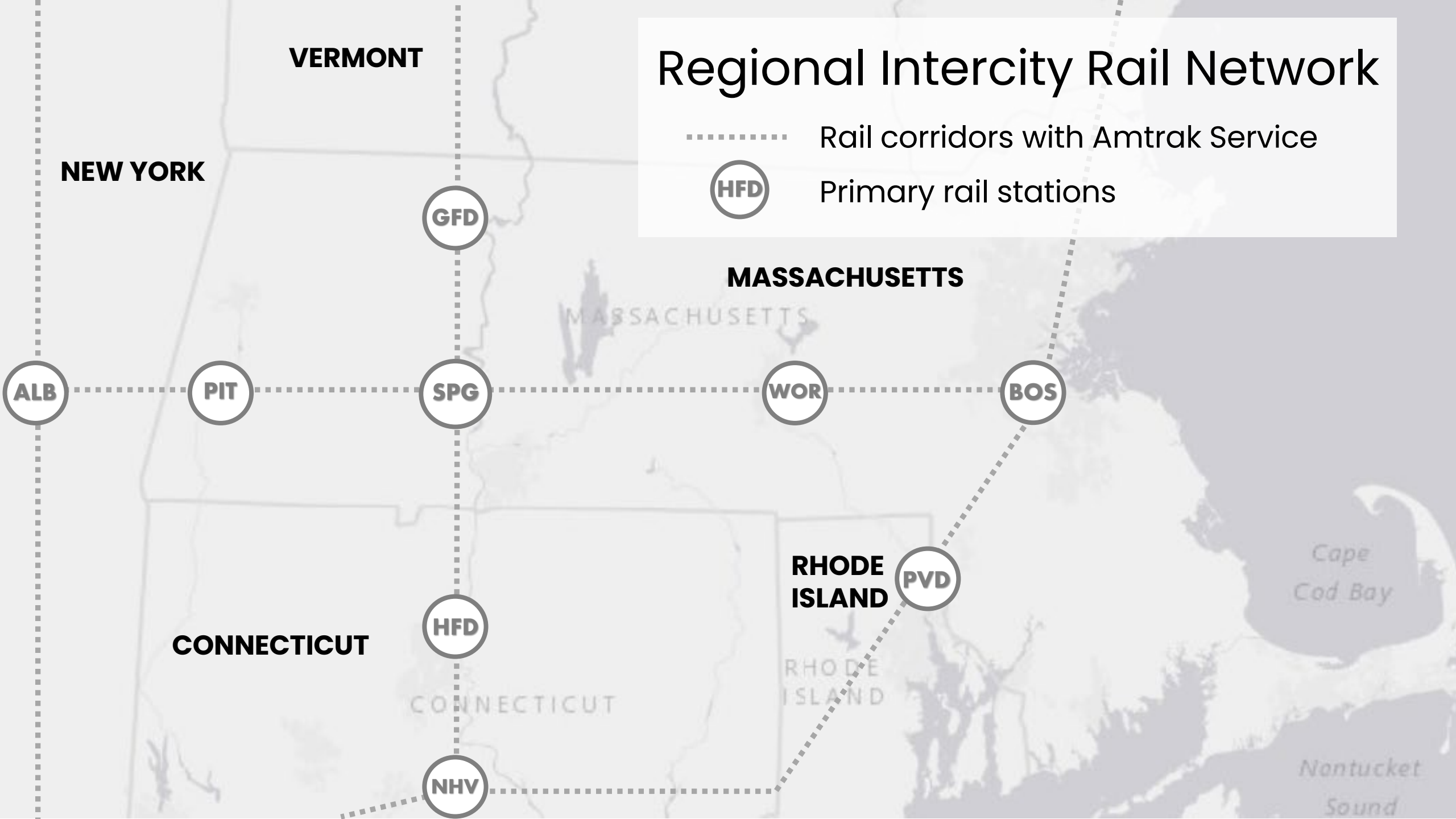


Regional Intercity Rail Network

..... Rail corridors with Amtrak Service



Primary rail stations

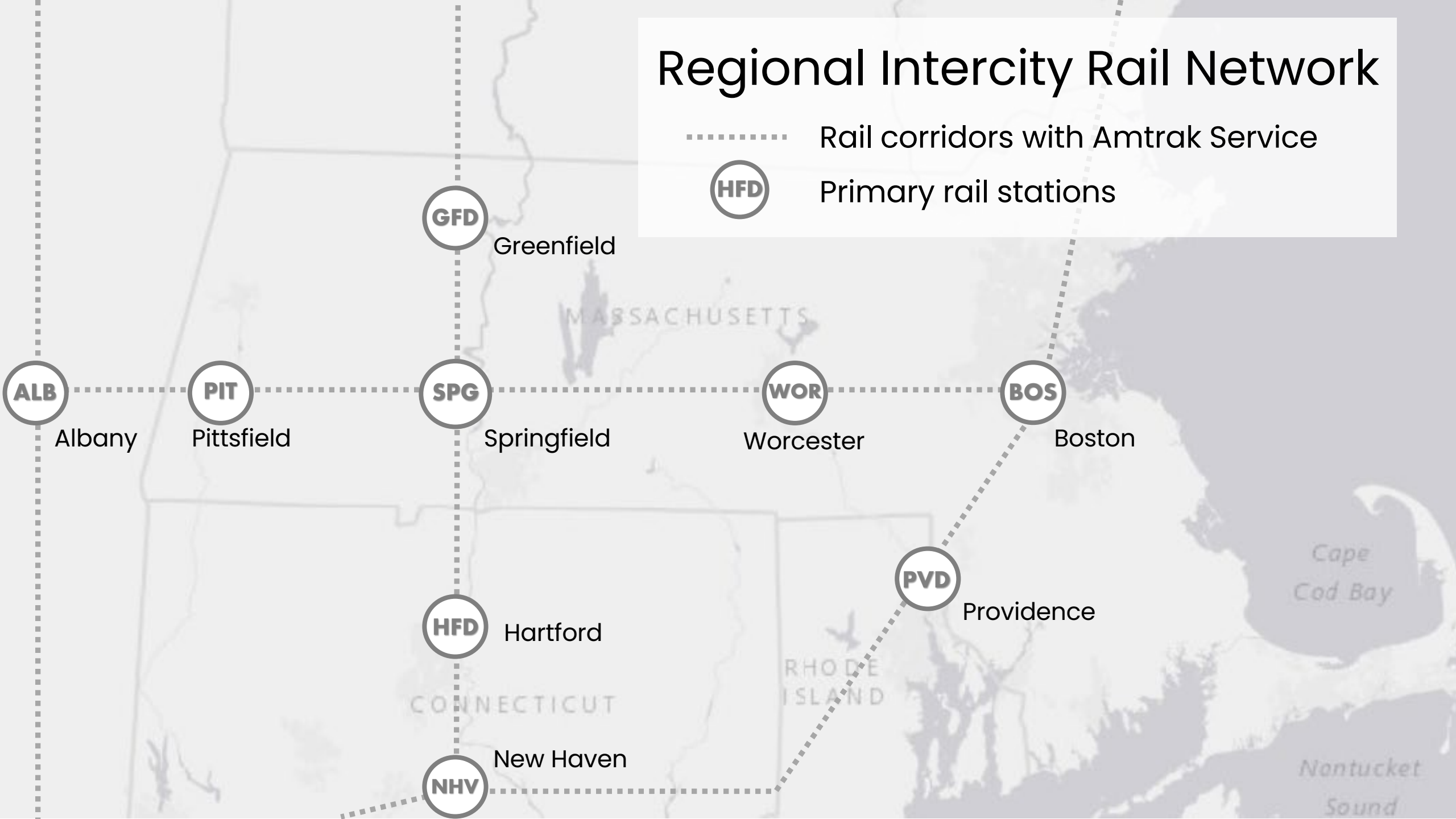


Regional Intercity Rail Network

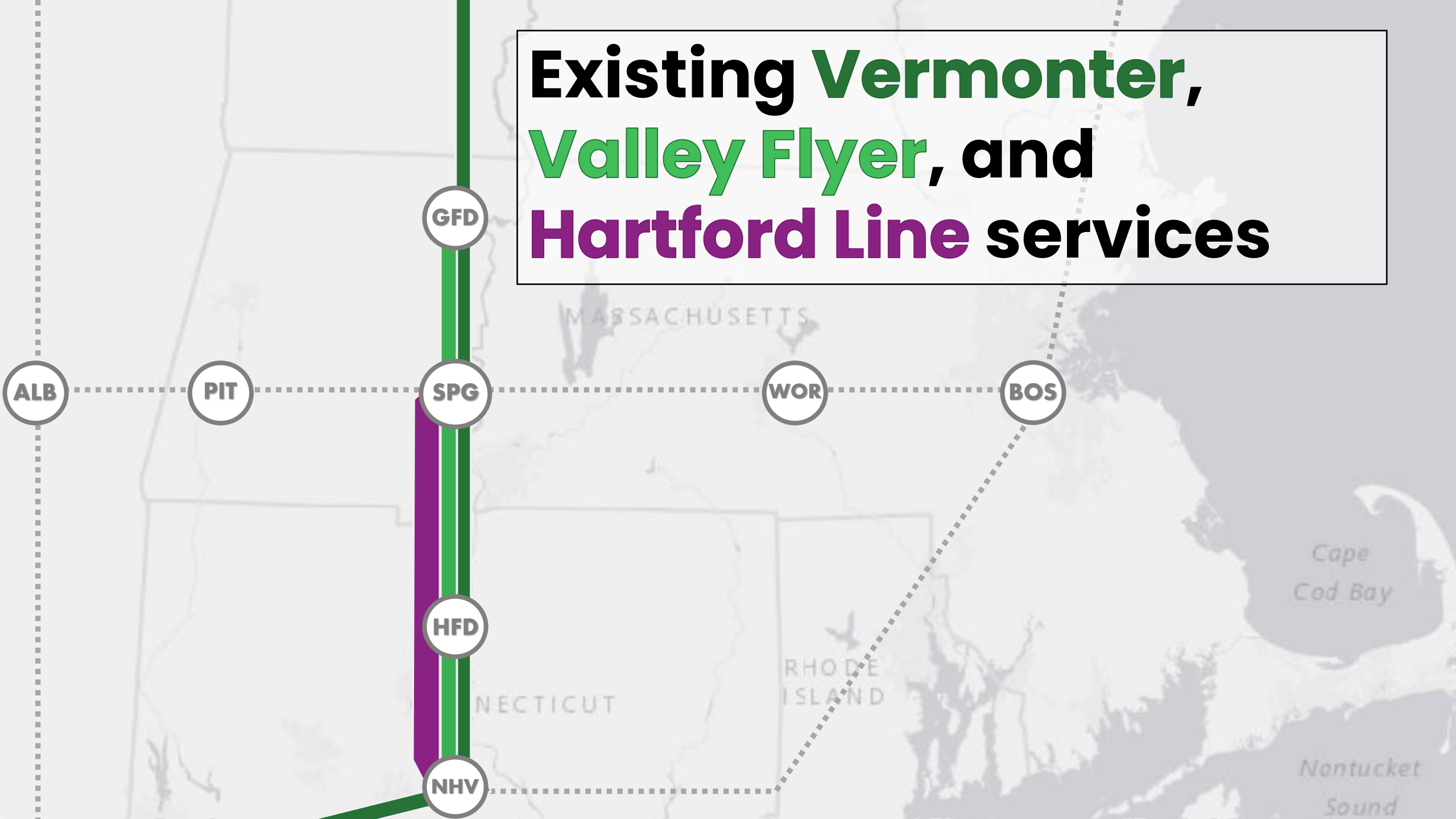
..... Rail corridors with Amtrak Service



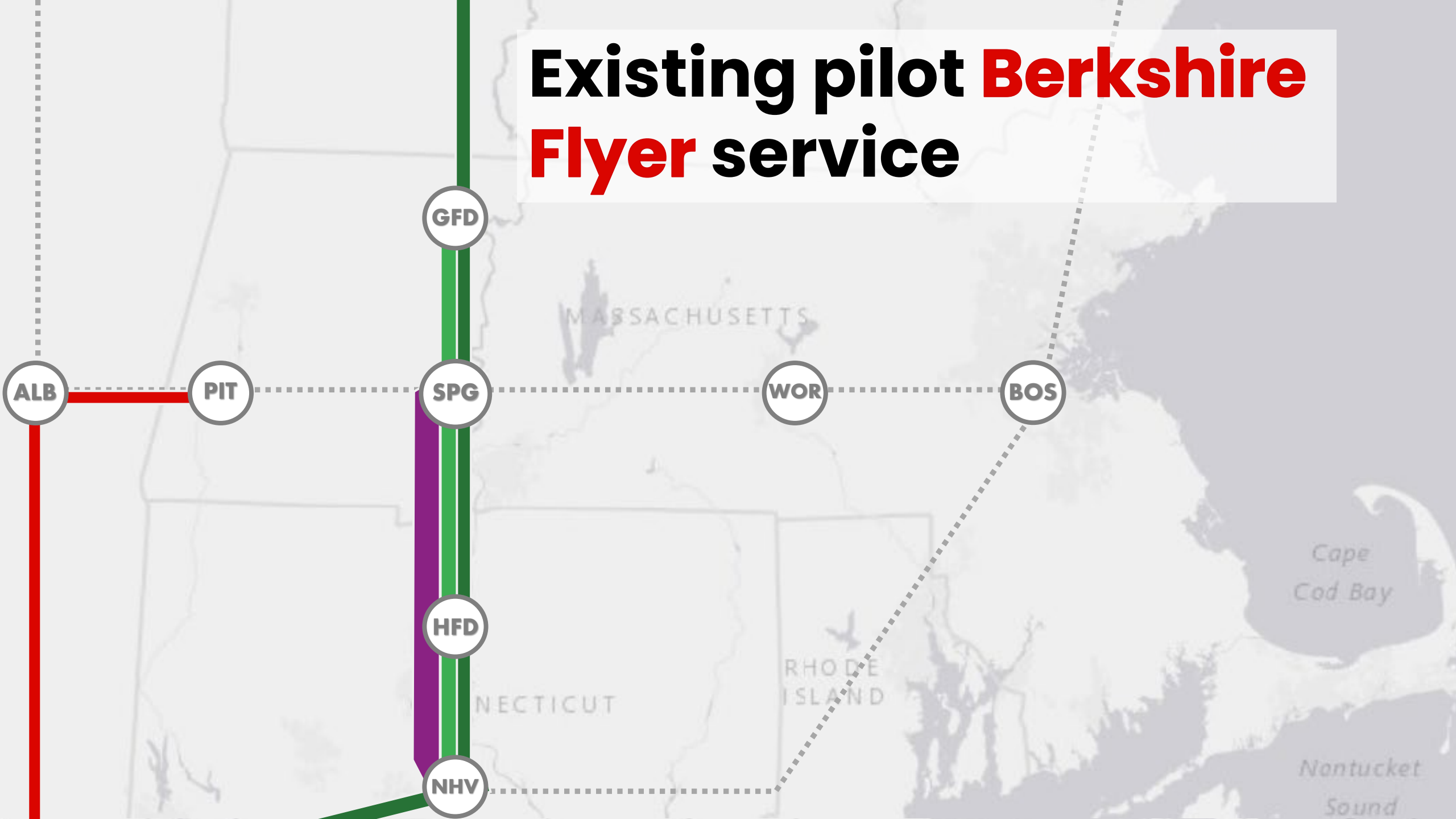
Primary rail stations



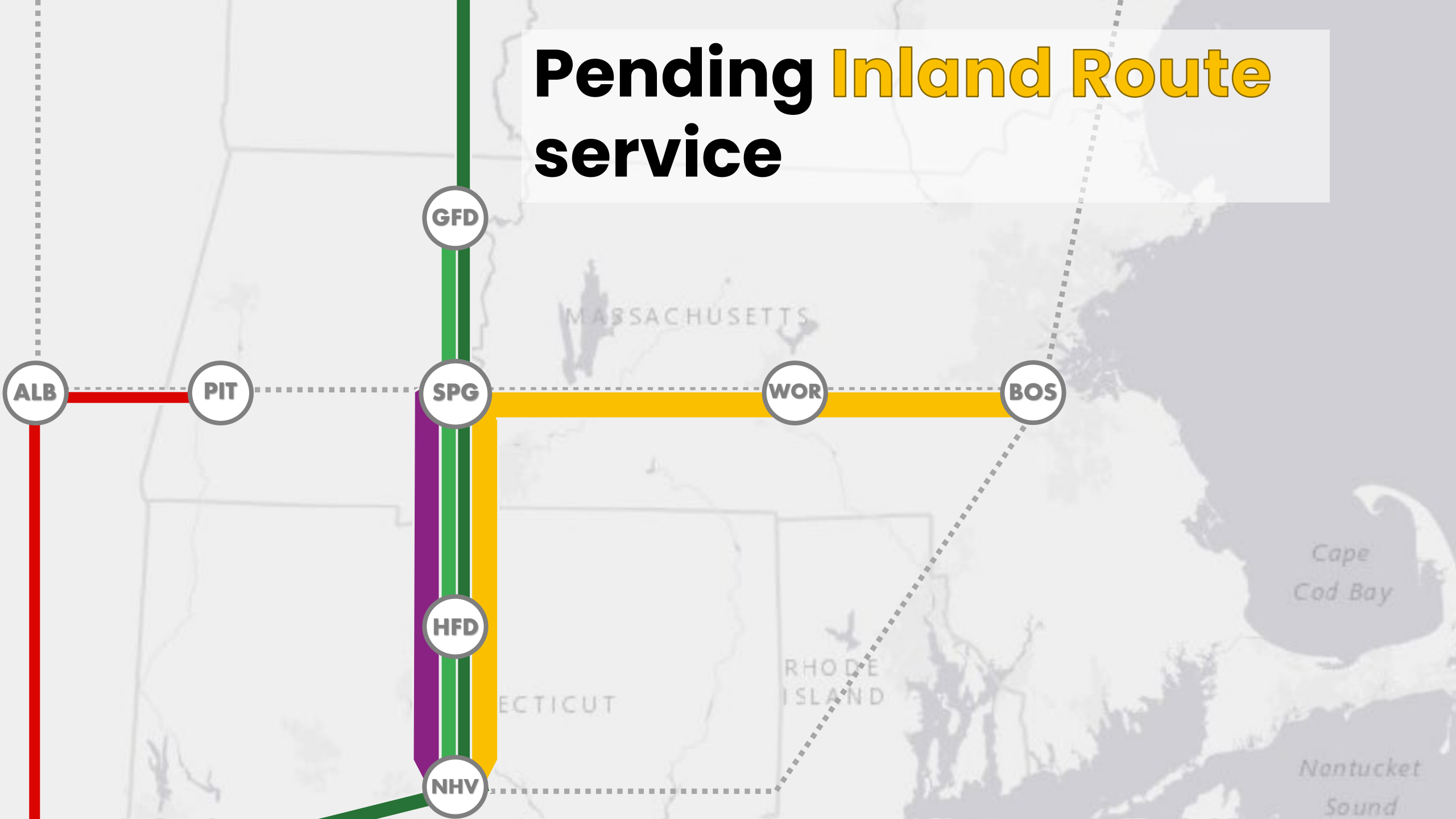
Existing **Vermont**, **Valley Flyer**, and **Hartford Line** services



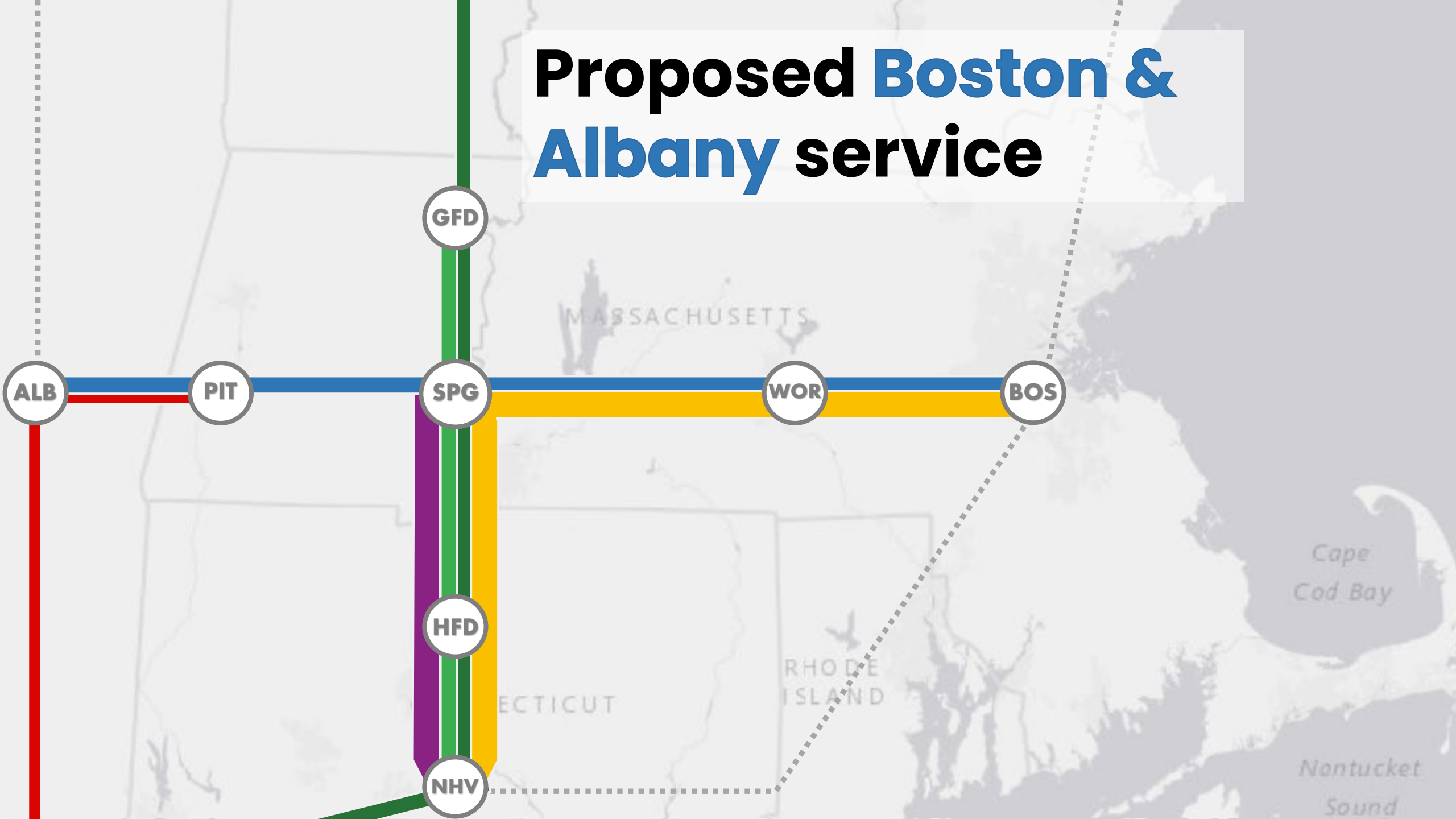
Existing pilot **Berkshire** **Flyer** service



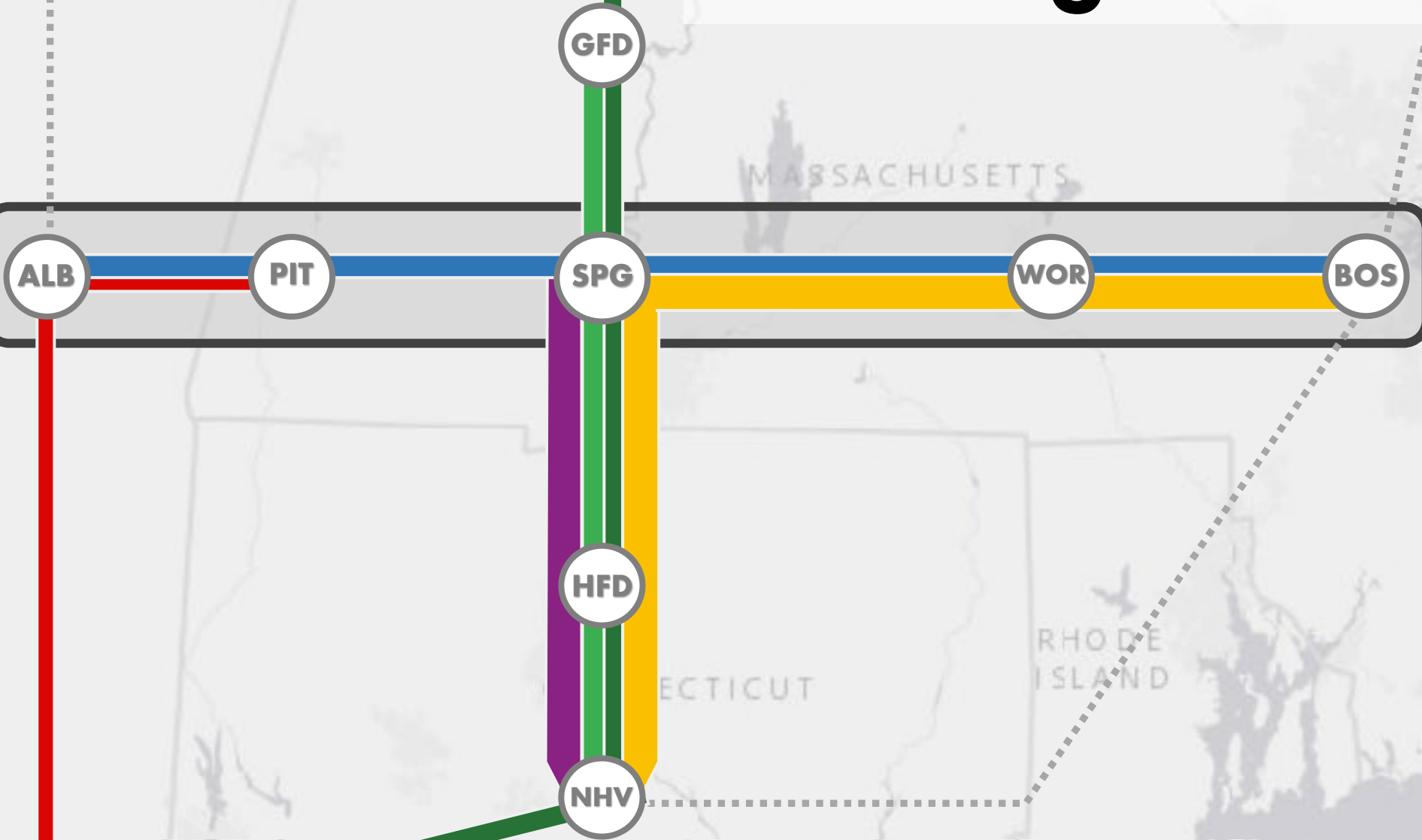
Pending **Inland Route** service



Proposed **Boston & Albany** service



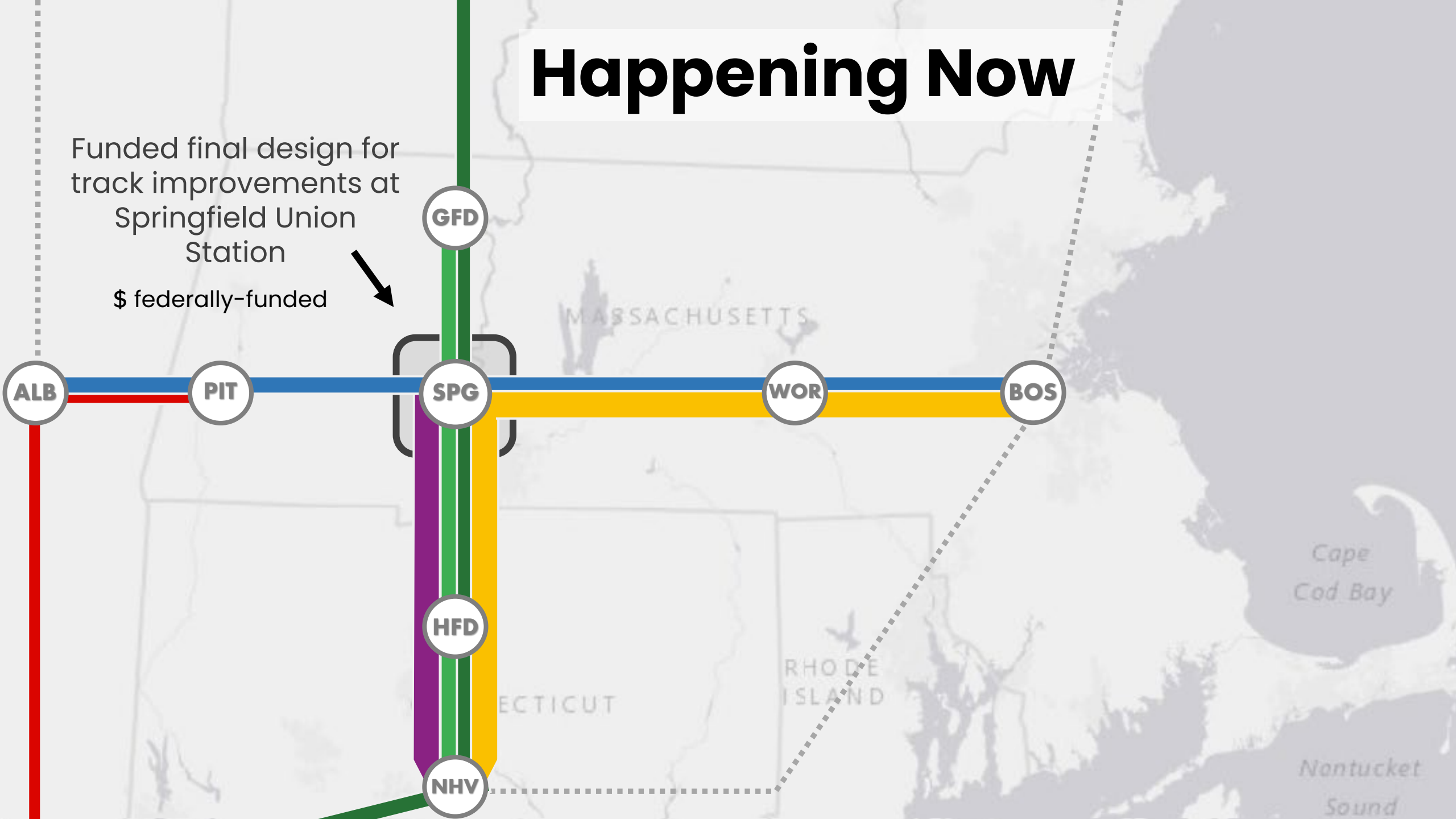
West-East Rail service goal



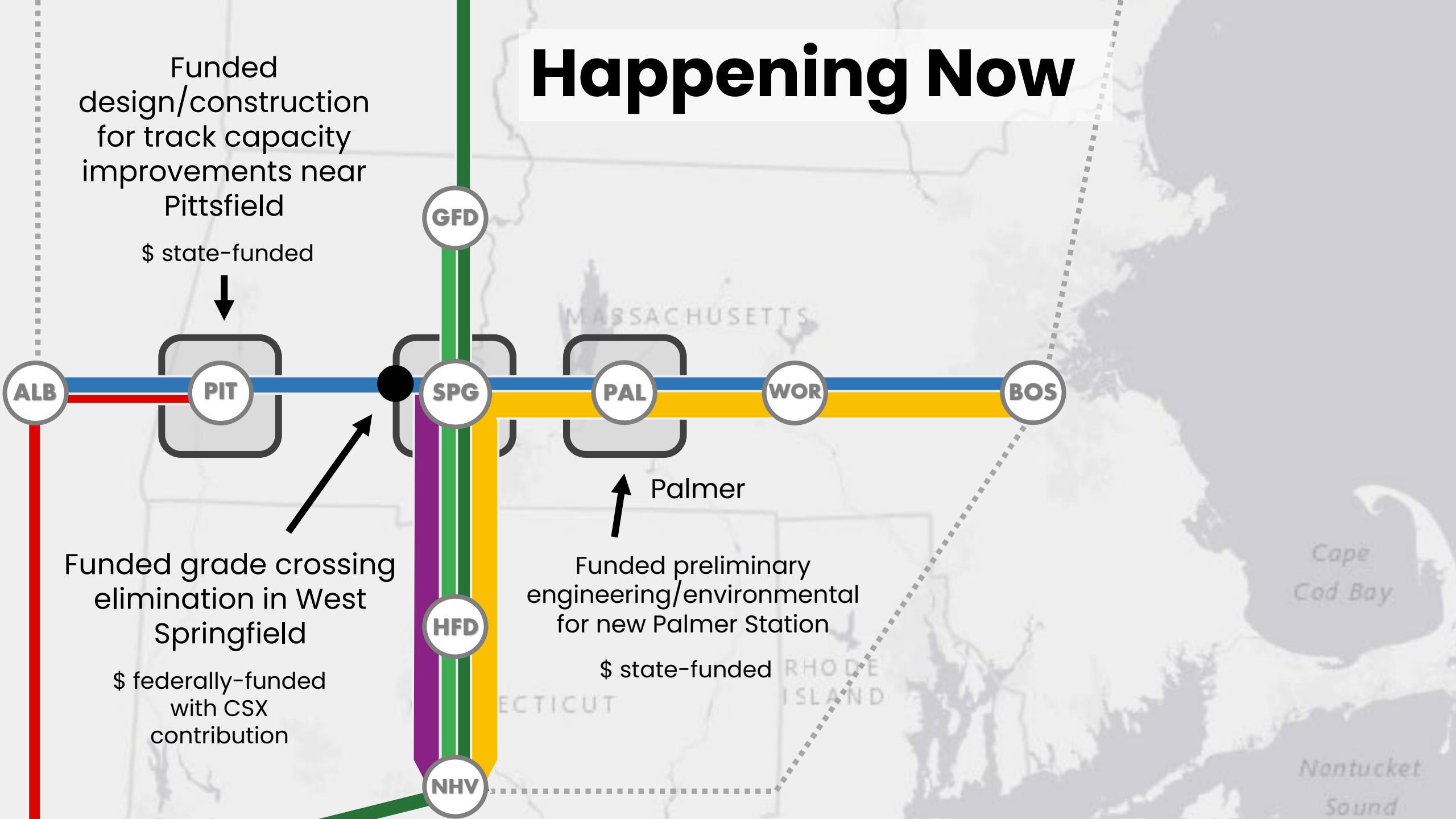
Happening Now

Funded final design for
track improvements at
Springfield Union
Station

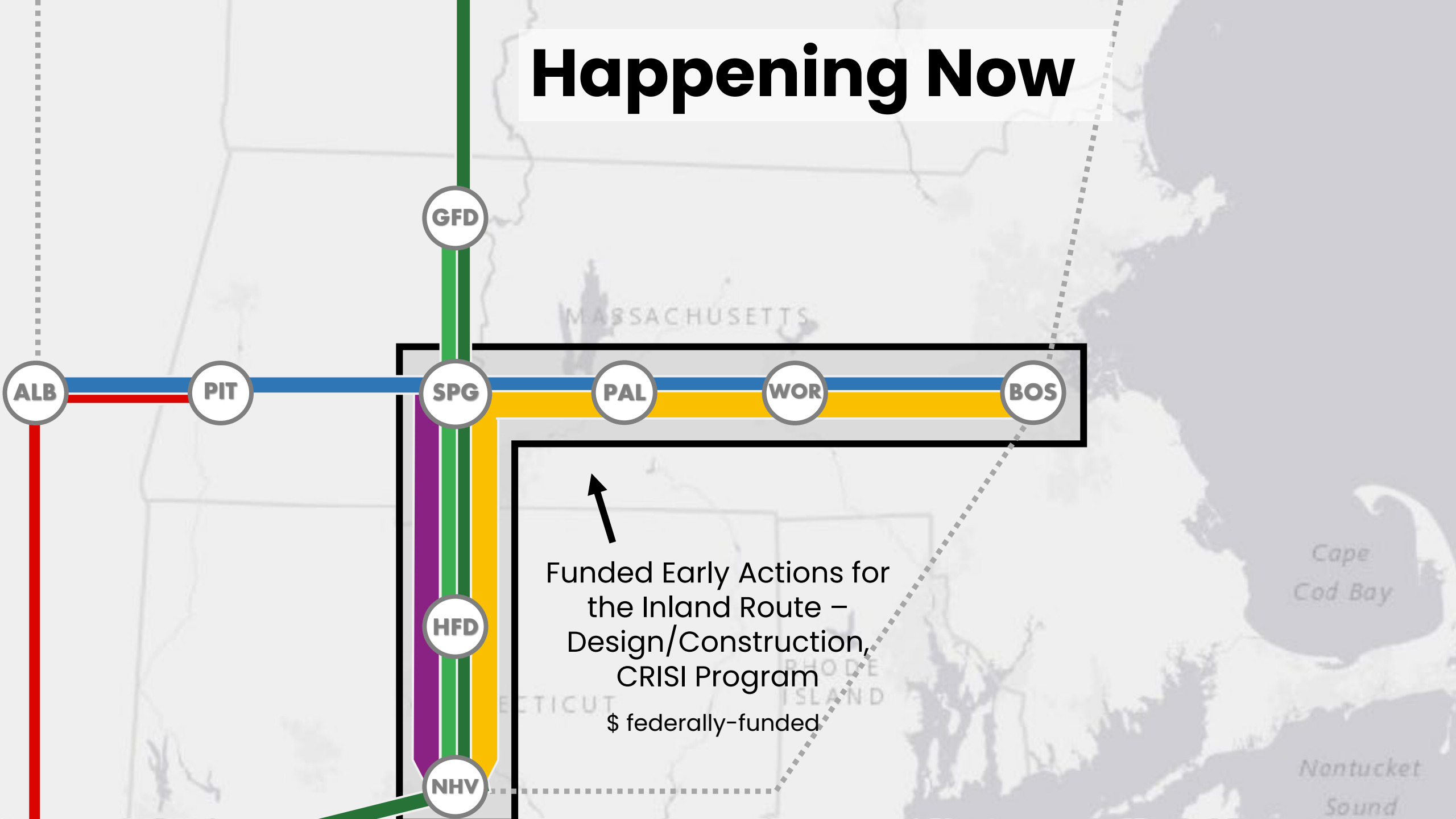
\$ federally-funded



Happening Now



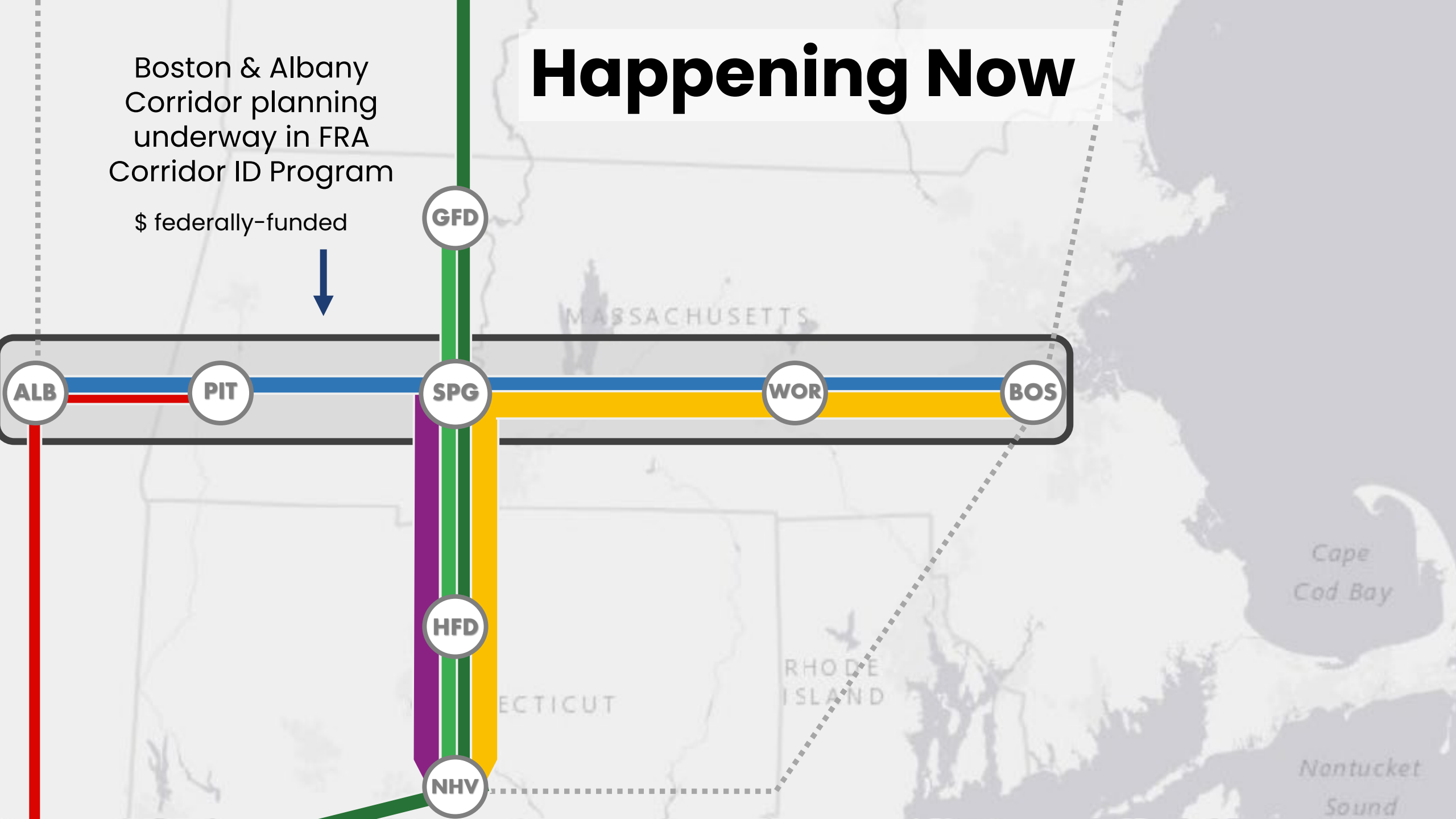
Happening Now



Happening Now

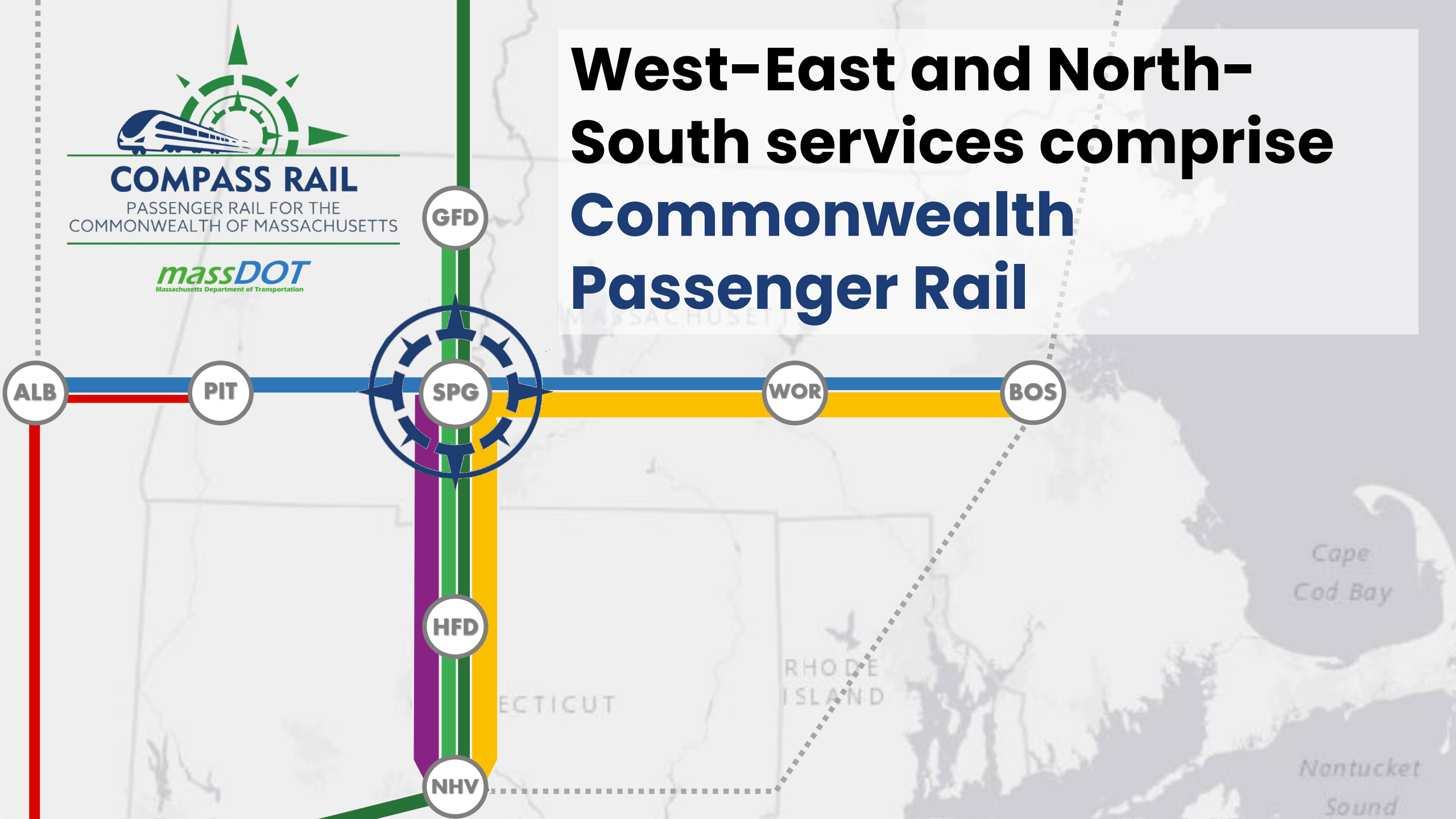
Boston & Albany
Corridor planning
underway in FRA
Corridor ID Program

\$ federally-funded

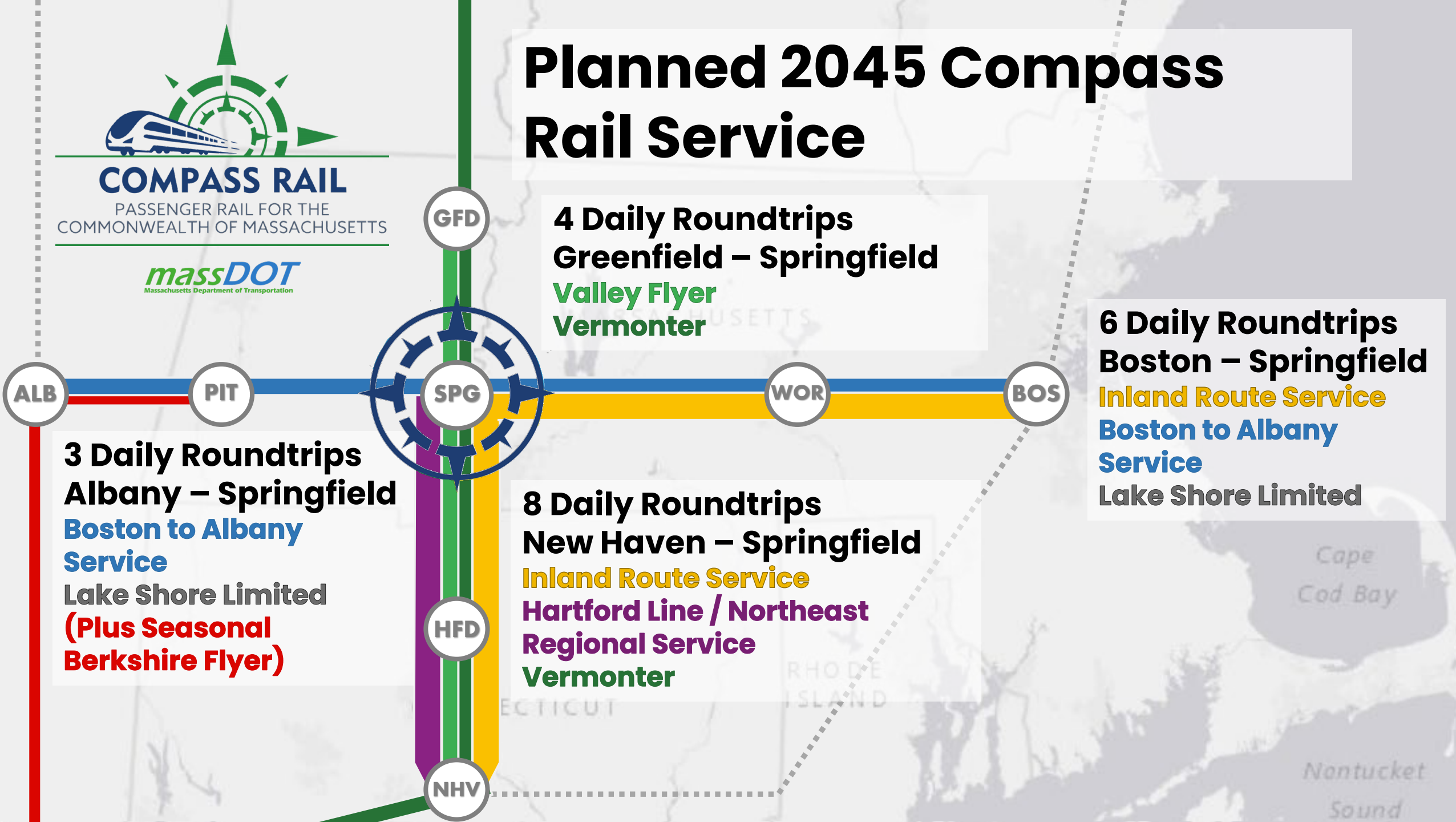




West-East and North-South services comprise Commonwealth Passenger Rail



Planned 2045 Compass Rail Service





Compass Rail... How?

- Public engagement, stakeholder partnerships, and funding
- MassDOT is aggressively pursuing federal funding opportunities. Full program is 20+ projects.
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has introduced funding opportunities for intercity rail:
 - Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program
 - Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program (FSP)
 - Corridor Identification and Development Program (CID)
- Governor has prioritized budgeting Compass Rail initiatives and included \$12M for Pittsfield and Palmer projects.



Compass Rail... How?

- Build upon previous and ongoing studies
 - Northern New England Intercity Rail Initiative (NNEIRI)
 - East-West Passenger Rail Study
 - Berkshire Flyer Feasibility Study
- Advancing projects required for 2045 service goal
 - South Station Expansion
 - Knowledge Corridor Positive Train Control
 - New intercity train sets



When is Compass Rail?

- Compass Rail projects will be completed incrementally on individual timelines.
- Current federally funded projects:
 - **Springfield Area Track Reconfiguration Project:** preliminary engineering and environmental review complete in 2025, final design to follow.
 - **Early Actions for the Inland Route:** design begins 2025, construction begins 2027, passenger service begins 2029–30.
 - **Boston & Albany Corridor ID:** service development planning 2025–26.

Thank you.

