

# Greenfield Pilot: Update



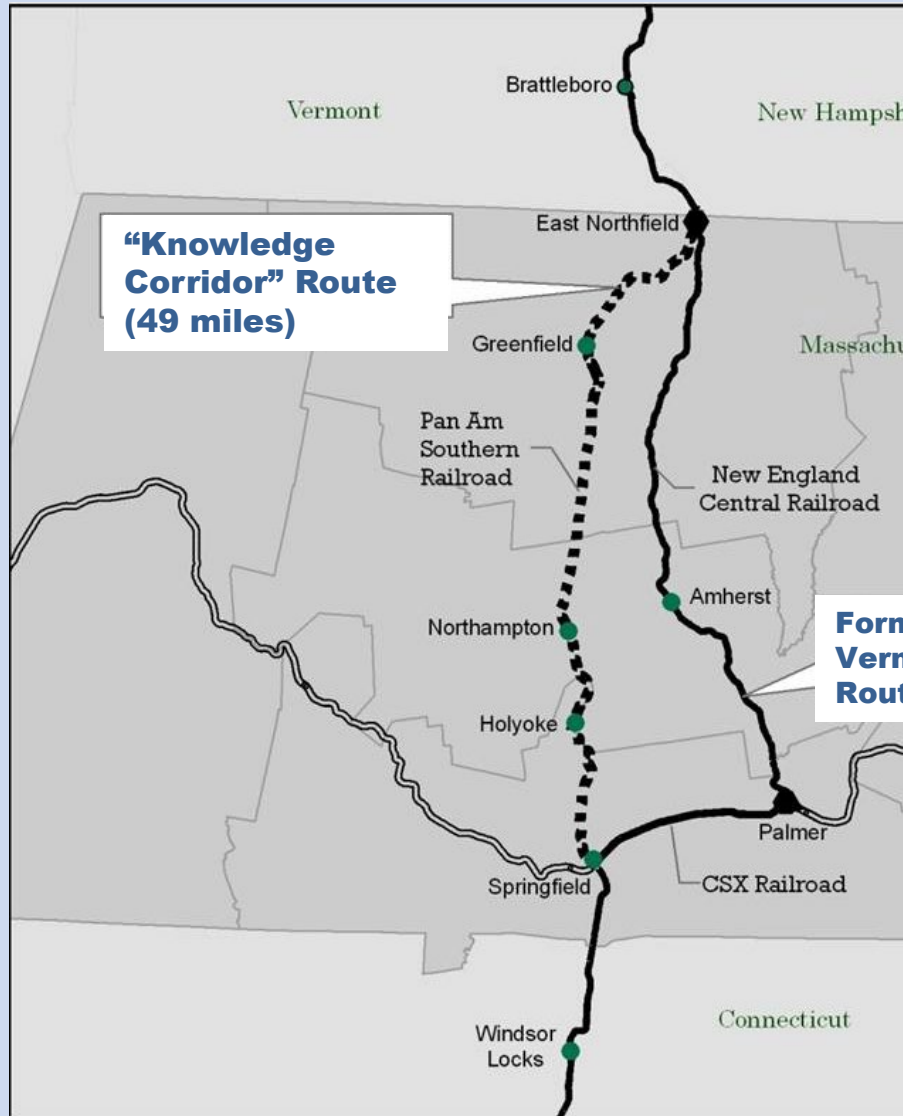
July 22, 2019

# Knowledge Corridor - Background

- To improve passenger rail service MA used a \$72.8 M Federal grant and \$37.2 M in state funds to purchase and upgrade the former PanAm Railways freight line between Springfield and East Northfield.
- The resulting “Knowledge Corridor” provides a 23 minute time savings and a more direct route than the route that Amtrak had been using via Palmer and Amherst.
- New stations have been created at Greenfield, Northampton, Holyoke and Union Station at Springfield has been renovated



# Knowledge Corridor - Background



**“Knowledge Corridor” Route (49 miles)**

**Former Vermonter Route (60 miles)**

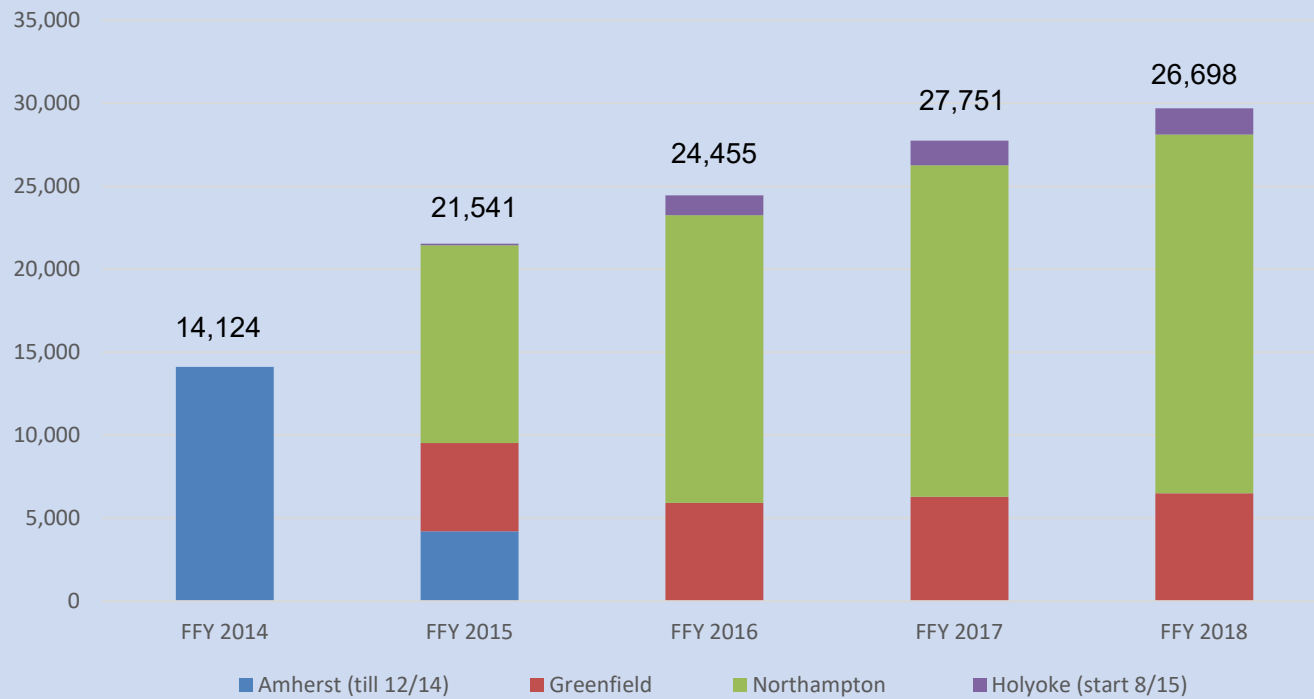
# Knowledge Corridor –Current Service

- Vermonter operates one round trip per day, 7 days a week.
- Vermonter route is St Albans, VT to Washington, DC.
- MA stops are Greenfield, Northampton, Holyoke, Springfield
  - *Northampton is largest ridership (21,500 annual trips)*



# Knowledge Corridor – Current Service

Annual Amtrak Vermonter Ridership at Knowledge Corridor Stations



# Knowledge Corridor: Opportunity

- Amtrak is now providing improved and additional service between Springfield and New Haven (the “Shuttle”) with a direct connection to NYC via the Northeast Corridor (NEC).
- MA’s 2018 Rail Plan recommended a pilot to test the viability of extending service to Greenfield
  - *Maximizes use of existing asset*
  - *Acknowledges strong request from Western MA for better passenger rail connections*
- MA has negotiated with CT and Amtrak to extend certain Amtrak trains from Springfield to Greenfield (“Greenfield Pilot”).
  - *Two round trip trains on weekdays*
  - *One round trip train on Saturday and Sunday*
  - *Intercity service with convenient connection through New Haven to NYC via Northeast Corridor*
  - *Expected net cost is approximately \$1m per year.*

# Knowledge Corridor: Opportunity

- Greenfield Pilot expected to start running August 30 and operate for 2 years.
  - *Start date dependent on expedited FRA approval following extended Amtrak deliberations on added safety features affecting freight as well as passenger operations.*
- Pilot requires
  - *Completion of work on new platform at Springfield Union Station*
  - *Acceleration of corridor work to minimize later disruptions*
  - *FRA approval of revised exemption from PTC requirement*
- Pilot will test market
  - *24,000 new riders annually projected*
  - *Intercity service timed to facilitate day trips to NYC*
- Marketing
  - *Local supporters engaged by PVPC and FRCOG*
  - *MassDOT has provided \$100,000 grant for marketing*
  - *Amtrak will assist with national platform*

# Knowledge Corridor: Opportunity

- Amtrak as provider means
  - *Seamless service and connections and ticketing to New York and DC*
  - *Desirable timeslots*
  - *Complete service package: Provides equipment, operations, ticketing, advertising, etc.*
  
- Amtrak as provider means
  - *Airline-like dynamic pricing keyed to market*
  - *Fares higher than commuter fares*
  - *State sponsor responsible for net cost of service*



# Knowledge Corridor

- Going forward
  - *evaluate market*
    - MassDOT's Office of Transportation Planning will review Amtrak reports with PVPC and FRCOG.
    - Supplemental passenger counts if appropriate.
    - Ridership is agreed upon key metric
  - *if pilot successful and if costs are reasonable, MassDOT would seek to negotiate extension with CT and Amtrak.*

Questions?