

Rail and Transit Report

Administrator Meredith Slesinger

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Table of Contents

- 3 Transit Grants Update
- 4 Industrial Rail Access Program (IRAP)
- 5 Pittsfield Track Capacity
- 6 Ten Years of the Knowledge Corridor
- 7 Amtrak NextGen Acela Launch

Transit Grants Updates

MassDOT will be launching new grant opportunities throughout September

3

Recent Grant Awards

- MassDOT has awarded \$3 million in funding to 19 projects through the **Transportation Management Association (TMA) grant program** to reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel, reduce emissions, encourage mode shift, and expand mobility.

Fall Grant Schedule

- September 5: New **Microtransit and Last Mile Transit Grant**, is open to regional transit authorities (RTAs), municipalities, TMAs, and nonprofits.
- September 5: **Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP)** *operating & mobility management cycle* is open to transit authorities, municipalities, nonprofits, and private operators of public transit.
- September 25: **Community Transit Grant Program (CTGP)** *vehicle cycle*, which awards fully accessible vans & minivans, is open to transit authorities, municipalities, nonprofits, and private operators of public transit.



*Clients engaged in travel training through Greater Lynn Senior Services, a program funded by MassDOT's CTGP.
Credit: National Aging and Disability Transportation Center*

Pittsfield Track Capacity

Multiple projects underway to improve rail corridor capacity in the Berkshires

5

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.
- **Pittsfield Track 4 Turnout:** in design, a new turnout and siding extension near CSX Pittsfield Yard will provide layover space for Amtrak's Berkshire Flyer trainsets.
- **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

Ten Years of the Knowledge Corridor

MassDOT celebrates ten years of investment in passenger rail on the Knowledge Corridor

6



Construction of Greenfield Station, 2014



Valley Flyer in Holyoke, 2025

- In 2015, after completing a major rehabilitation project, MassDOT purchased the Connecticut River Main Line, or Knowledge Corridor, to support passenger rail service between Springfield and Vermont.
- The project enabled the Vermonter to return to the corridor which improved travel time and brought service closer to higher density populations.
- Through Compass Rail, MassDOT has expanded passenger rail on the corridor, and ridership grew nearly 100% between 2018 to 2024 to ~220,000 annual trips.
- Service is continuously improved, and it will highly benefit from the impending implementation of West-East Rail services.

Amtrak NextGen Acela Launch

Amtrak's Acela service will be operated by new modern, American-made trainsets

7

- On 8/27, Amtrak held its inaugural trip from Washington to Boston with its new Acela fleet named NextGen.
- Rail & Transit Administrator Meredith Slesinger accompanied Amtrak, the US Department of Transportation, and other state partners for the celebratory launch.
- Passenger revenue service began 8/28.
- The new electric trains are faster (up to 160 mph), quieter, and more comfortable.
- The fleet will be phased in through now and 2027. To find NextGen Acela departures look for the below icon under the train number.



Rail & Transit Administrator Meredith Slesinger rides the inaugural NextGen trainset on August 27, 2025, pictured at Providence Station.

Thank You

