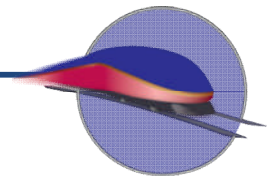


High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) Program

Multi-State Planning Proposal



Groups of states seeking FRA-led corridor planning must submit this Proposal Form and other documents as outlined in Section D of this form. Please complete this document and provide any supporting documentation electronically. Supporting documentation should be logically and descriptively labeled. For each question, enter the appropriate information in the designated gray box. If a question is not applicable to your proposal, please indicate “N/A.” If you have questions about the HSIPR program or this form, please contact FRA at HSIPR@dot.gov.

A. Point of Contact and Project Information

(1) Lead Agency: NJ TRANSIT Corporation		Lead Agency Authorized Representative Name and Title: Steven Santoro, Assistant Executive Director, Capital Planning and Programs		
Street Address / City: 1 Penn Plaza East	City: Newark	State: NJ	Zip Code: 07105	Telephone Number: 973-491-8960 Email: ssantoro@njtransit.com
Point of Contact (POC) Name and Title (If different): Richard Roberts, Chief Planner, Capital Planning		POC Telephone: 973-491-7624 POC Email: RTRoberts@njtransit.com		
(2) Name(s) of additional States that will participate in the Proposal activities: Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland				
(3) Proposal Name (Please provide a clear, concise, and descriptive name, example “Capital City to Hill Valley Corridor Service Development Plan”): Northeast Corridor (NEC) Multi-Modal High Speed Rail Improvement Plan				

(4) Describe the corridor service(s) that is (are) the subject of the Proposal, including corridor name, endpoints, major intermediate cities, and other characteristics (upload a map if applicable):

Corridor services on the Northeast Corridor –

The NEC is the largest and most complex passenger and freight rail corridor in the Western Hemisphere. Amtrak is the principal owner, but sections are owned by the State of Connecticut, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

The rail line traverses the Northeast from Massachusetts to Washington, DC, with satellite and branch lines serving most of the region. The Northeast is home to approximately 20% of the nation’s population. The focus of intercity passenger rail travel patterns is between Boston and Washington, D.C., with service to the major cities of Washington, Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, Trenton, Newark, New York, New Rochelle, Stamford, Bridgeport, New Haven, New London, Providence, and Boston and outlying areas including Richmond, Newport News and Lynchburg, VA; Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, PA.; Albany and Buffalo, NY, and Hartford, CT; Springfield, MA and destinations in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. In addition to intercity trains, commuter operations have significantly increased over the past 25 years, transporting over 200 million passenger trips per year. Amtrak transports 14 million trips per year on the NEC.

(5) Total Estimated Cost of Proposal Activity(s) (Please provide more details in question B.5): \$ 18.8M Total Estimated Cost

(6) Proposal Abstract (In 3 - 5 sentences, please describe the proposal):

This study is intended to define the specific steps necessary to plan and implement a better integrated, more efficient and higher capacity Northeast regional transportation network with improved intercity passenger rail as a core component of that system. This planning process will build on the recently completed NEC Master Plan (see The Northeast Corridor Infrastructure Master Plan in supporting documents) and other studies currently underway; result in a service development plan (SDP) for the Northeast Corridor rail network: and, flow into a Programmatic Environmental Impact statement (PEIS) for the main line of the Corridor between Boston and Washington.

(7) Which of the following planning activities are requested under this multi-state planning proposal?

- Service Development Planning
- Service NEPA
- Both Service Development Planning and Service NEPA

(8) Describe the service attributes of the Project that is the subject of the proposed planning activity (check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Additional Service Frequencies | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improved On-Time performance on Existing Route |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Service | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increased Average Speeds/Shorter Trip Times |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service Quality Improvements | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please Describe): |

(9) What are the anticipated start and end dates for this Proposal? (mm/yyyy)

Start Date: 07/2010 **End Date:** 07/2013

(10) Multi-State Planning Proposal Overview Narrative: Provide an overview of the planning activities requested under this Proposal, including a brief description of the items listed below. *Please limit response to 4,000 characters.*

- The underlying issue and objective that the planning activity will address
- The planning activities that will be performed under the Proposal
- The schedule for carrying out and completing proposed planning activities

The Northeast region has one of the most extensive multi-modal transportation systems in the world – highways, airports, intercity and commuter rail and public transit serving all major cities and many intermediate markets. However, despite significant investment over decades in all modes, the region still faces major congestion and capacity constraints. These constraints, if not addressed, have the potential to curtail future mobility, lead to slowing economic growth and place the Northeast at a competitive disadvantage to other regions of the U.S. and the world.

The goal of the study will be to produce a plan for an integrated transportation network -including next generation high speed rail as a long term option - to meet travel demand due to population and jobs growth; to support economic development; to reduce growth in carbon emissions and dependence on foreign oil; and, to contribute to improved land utilization and community reinvestment in both urban and non-urban areas of the region.

The study will define the basic building blocks of such a system, drawing on the expertise of planning officials from the Northeast states, Amtrak; commuter railroads, MPOs, as well as officials of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) would lead the study with close support from the Coalition of Northeast Governors, Amtrak and the Northeast states, including providing coordination and outreach at the state and local levels and assignment of state and rail staff to assist with the study.

It is envisioned that the project will be done in phases over a three year period. The phases are:

Phase I: Short to Medium Term Improvement Program

Focusing on the main line of the Northeast Corridor, identify high priority projects of regional significance, including projects with independent utility and no significant environmental impacts, and recommend a prioritized program of improvements over the next 5 to 10 years based on cost / benefit analysis.

Recommended cost contributions by railroads and other agencies benefiting from the improvements while acknowledging their funding capability and limitations, including discussing possible strategies to overcome these issues.

Develop operating plans in relation to the proposed improvements and undertake basic operations and simulations analysis, if necessary, to ensure proposed configurations provide the expected level of utility in a cost effective manner.

Progress planning sufficiently to permit those priority projects that have gone through an FRA environmental review process or are eligible for a categorical exclusion to become eligible for FRA funding and be allowed to advance to implementation. An analysis of the recently completed Amtrak NEC Infrastructure Master Plan will identify those projects with independent utility that are bound by existing environmental impact statements. The planning done for these priority projects will include consideration of the potential needs to be discussed in Phase III to assure that the concept or final designs of the priority improvements identified in this phase do not preclude future potentials.

(continued in C.(1))

(11) Future Project Overview Narrative: Provide an overview of the main features and characteristics and milestones of the Project that are the subject of the planning study, including a brief description of the items listed below. *Please limit response to 4,000 characters.*

- The location of the Project (upload map if applicable)
- The intercity passenger rail service proposed (if applicable)
- The types of improvements under consideration/evaluation
- Connectivity and integration with other modes
- How the Project supports the States' strategic transportation goals

The project area traverses the Northeast from Massachusetts to Washington, DC, along the current Northeast Corridor (see previous map). The study of high-speed rail express, high-speed rail regional and traditional intercity passenger rail services are to be considered in the multi-modal planning. A complete range of improvements to infrastructure and operations will be evaluated, including replacement and relocation of infrastructure and modified and new service.

This planning effort is intended to be one of the most comprehensive and inclusive transportation plans ever attempted on a broad, region-wide basis, drawing on the resources and expertise of stakeholders throughout the Northeast, at all levels of government, as well as railroads, non-profit organizations, educators and business leaders. Moreover, the project will be one of the first to take a true multi-modal view of a region-wide transportation network and recommend improvements designed to better integrate the various modes.

The participation of the 11 states and the District of Columbia in the proposed multi-state planning process will assure that the final vision supports the strategic transportation goals of the states as well as those of the corridor. The importance of this can be seen by examining how the states' strategic transportation plans and policies are integrally linked to and depend on a robust and efficient NEC rail system. The cases of New Jersey, Connecticut and Rhode Island illustrate this point.

The mobility goals and strategies in the State of New Jersey's current Long Range Plan embraces the need to maximize the use of the rail system in the state, including the Northeast Corridor, which is the single most important portion of the State's rail network. The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, the MPO for 13 counties in Northern NJ where over two thirds of the State's population reside, speaks to the importance of the rail system, including the NEC, in its Regional Transportation Plan. For example, The Tunnel Project, otherwise known as the Access to the Region's Core, is an \$8.7 billion dollar investment NJ is advancing to address future congestion, air quality and other issues that doubles the capacity of a constrained portion of the NEC from New Jersey into New York City.

The Northeast Corridor is the single most important component of Connecticut's rail infrastructure and the primary focus of the state's rail program. The Inland Route between NYC and Boston traverses the entire length of the state's coast line with 114.9 miles of track. The state owns and maintains the most intensely used 46-mile segment of the corridor. This 4-track segment serves nearly 40,000 passengers daily - including about 38,000 trips on the MetroNorth regional rail service and about 2,000 trips on Amtrak intercity service. Maintaining and enhancing these services is a critical component of Connecticut's long-term plans for meeting mobility needs in the I-95 corridor. The regional rail service is the only viable option to the heavily congested I-95 and Merritt Parkway for serving commuter and short-distance intercity trips. The Amtrak intercity and Acela service is an increasingly important alternative for travel to other east coast cities as air travel and automobile options for these 100-400 mile trips become less reliable and more affected by congestion in the air and on the Interstates.

Connecticut is also working with Amtrak & MA DOT on a long-term plan to upgrade the Inland Route corridor to provide intercity service between NYC and Boston via New Haven and Springfield to relieve capacity constraints on the 2-track segment of the Coastal Route between New Haven, Providence, and Boston. Initial phases of this bi-state effort include using HSIPR rail and state funds to provide double track the entire length between New Haven and Springfield, improve stations and platforms, and upgrade signal and communication systems.

(continued in C.(1))

B. Proposal Details

(1) Potential Transportation and Public Benefits

Please identify:

- The clarity and detail with which the States have identified the problem to be addressed by the proposed service;
- The market potential of the corridor being studied, taking into consideration such factors as population, density, economic activity, and travel patterns;
- The potential for the corridor to deliver high-speed and intercity passenger rail service benefits, including ridership, on-time performance, travel time, service frequencies, safety and other factors;
- The potential of the corridor program to promote economic development, including contributions to a sustainable U.S. manufacturing and supply base;
- The potential of the corridor program to enhance energy efficiency and environmental quality;
- The potential of the corridor program to promote interconnected livable communities, including complementing local or state efforts to concentrate higher-density, mixed-use, development in areas proximate to multi-modal transportation options (including intercity passenger rail stations); and
- The consideration of other transportation modes in the planning process.

Problem

The Northeast region has one of the most extensive multi-modal transportation systems in the world – highways, airports, intercity and commuter rail and public transit serving all major cities and many of intermediate markets. However, after significant investment over decades in all modes, the region still faces major congestion and capacity constraints. These constraints, if not addressed, have the potential to curtail future mobility, lead to slowing economic growth and place the Northeast at a competitive disadvantage to other regions of the U.S. and the world.

Market Potential for the NEC

The Northeast market for intercity rail travel is estimated to reach 200 million medium distance trips of between 100 and 400 miles across all major modes – auto, air and rail by 2025. With expected demographic growth, coupled with growing capacity constraints on the region's highways and at major airports, Amtrak preliminary estimates are that intercity passenger rail ridership in the Northeast could double by 2030 to 28 million and quadruple by 2050 to 60 million riders depending on future network configuration options. Moreover, a substantial portion of this growth is expected in small to medium-sized markets along the Main Line of the Corridor as well as those linking outlying areas of the region to the core urban markets between Boston and Washington.

The emerging passenger markets along this premier rail corridor will be a major consideration in the planning for the NEC. Among the leading ten city pairs of Amtrak's passenger volume in FY 2008, three points are intermediate cities; and one point is on a feeder corridor. They are:

- New York to Albany
- New York to Wilmington
- BWI to New York; and
- New York to Providence

Based on existing total trip tables for trips greater than 100 miles between the Northeast States, about 100,000 daily trips are made using all modes. These trip tables are based on 1995 travel survey data. The age of this data points to one of the major challenges of this planning effort which is to get up-to-date trip tables for all the possible origin-destination pairs impacted by the current and proposed improved and expanded intercity and HSR services. While the air travel market based on 2007 data, appears to be over 9,000,000 annual trips for the airport system serving the Northeast, the auto traveler market is much more difficult to document because more highway data is collected on a link or smaller regional basis. The evidence presented shows the NEC and its tributaries have an enormous potential to attract a much larger ridership in the future, especially given the reality that the capacity of the highways and airports in the Northeast can not be expanded as it was two or three generations ago. (see A Regional Context for Intercity Passenger Rail Improvements in the Northeast in supporting documents)

Potential to promote economic growth and development

Amtrak's Northeast Corridor is the central spine of the urbanized Atlantic Seaboard. Though comprising only 2 percent of the nation's landmass, the Northeast megaregion contains about 20 percent of the nation's population – 62 million people – and 20 percent of our Gross Domestic Product.

The interconnected small and large metropolitan regions from Maine to Virginia are ten times more productive than the average square mile of the country in generating GDP. This efficiency is a creature of proximity; the ability of people to interact with one another, innovate, and produce; and, is facilitated by walkable downtowns linked to one another with fast and reliable transportation.

Congestion and volatile fuel prices have reduced the speed and reliability of automobile and air travel between cities along this corridor; higher speed intercity passenger rail is the only option to bring these cities temporally closer to one another. As research from Britain, mainland Europe, and Japan has demonstrated, the ability of high speed rail to bring satellite cities within reasonable distance of larger economic hubs dramatically increases the vitality of those locations. Improved commuter rail connections between Stamford and New York and between Providence and Boston have clearly demonstrated this potential. Comparable benefits can be achieved in Hartford, Baltimore and other second tier cities as they are linked more closely to dominant economic nodes such as New York and Washington, DC.

Linking the larger cities to one another with high speed rail will enable the megaregion to function as a more integrated economic unit, competing globally with comparable geographies in Europe and Asia. It also has the potential to free up airport capacity cost effectively and enable better connectivity between this megaregion, the rest of the nation and the globe.

Enhanced intercity rail will enable the Northeast megaregion to function even more successful as a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts on a national and global stage.

Potential to enhance energy efficiency and environmental quality

When ridership levels are high, rail is the most energy efficient means of passenger transportation. Trips between metropolitan regions are the fastest growing trip type in the Northeast and so hold some of the greatest opportunities to shift future riders from less efficient modes to rail. Electrified, high speed rail has the potential to improve these efficiencies further by pairing intercity rail with locally generated and renewable electricity along the

corridor to meet the system's energy needs.

The northeast boasts significant solar, wind, tidal and geothermal resources coupled with our expertise in hydrogen fuel cell technology and proximity to vast hydropower resources just north of the Canadian border. Rail transit is the only transportation option that can take significant advantage of these electricity opportunities in the near term.

Additionally, rail investments catalyze compact growth patterns in conjunction with national, state and local policies targeted at smart growth whereas highways and airports encourage sprawling development. More compact, rail-oriented nodes of jobs and population reduce trip numbers and trip length beyond the intercity rail trip. From a national perspective, it is imperative that existing urban and built up areas in the Northeast, which already have a supporting infrastructure, remain vibrant and grow as contrasted with building on large vacant tracts of land in areas requiring greater use of natural and manmade resources to support growth. Improvements to the Northeast Corridor will greatly help reinforce existing, compact activity centers and, in addition to improving air quality and reducing emissions for intercity trips along the corridor, will reduce local automobile trips at each station location thereby improving local air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. (Support for all these statements can be found in the full report prepared for the I-95 Corridor Coalition, titled, "A 2040 Vision for the I-95 Coalition Region", dated December 2008, see attachment.)

Potential to promote interconnected livable communities

The NEC presents the greatest opportunity to link together a string of livable downtowns and neighborhoods in the nation. Unlike any other intercity passenger rail line in the country, most station locations already boast a vibrant mixture of land uses in compact and walkable nodes of activity that will be reinforced by any enhanced service.

The Northeast Corridor currently links two major airports (BWI and Newark), fourteen significant downtowns (Washington, Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, Trenton, Newark, New York, New Rochelle, Stamford, Bridgeport, New Haven, New London, Providence, and Boston), and three station areas with tremendous opportunity for intensification and redevelopment (New Carrollton, Newark Penn Station, and Route 128).

More than any other single investment, enhancements to intercity rail will reinforce these downtowns as economic, residential, and cultural hubs of their respective regions and will lay the foundation for continued private sector investment in livable neighborhoods in their cores and while spurring mixed-use development at the opportune station locations. This investment will necessarily be supported by local transit, walkability and bike improvements, and pedestrian- and transit-oriented development, but high speed intercity rail will also be the supportive investment to spur continued public and private implementation necessary to solidify these downtowns as livable communities with transportation and housing options for their region and the northeast as a whole.

Consideration of other modes in planning process

The need for a true multi-modal approach to planning in the various corridors existing in the Northeast is grounded in three fundamental facts:

1. The Northeast's transportation network has many links and facilities that are either functionally inadequate or congested because of the growth of travel. This has led to delays and reliability problems for air, rail and highway modes.

2. The travel needs of the 62 million people living in the Northeast is expected to grow beyond the basic capacity of many of the existing links and facilities, e.g. there are five major commercial airports in the Northeast listed by the FAA as having this issue. Major links of the interstate highway system already experience significant congestion today. The main stem of the Northeast Corridor is also challenged within certain segments in its ability to handle the existing commuter and intercity rail services. In their 2008 report, “A 2040 Vision for the I-95 Coalition Region”, the I-95 Corridor Coalition shows that without an appropriate multimodal approach, virtually 100% of the urban segments of the corridor will be under heavy congestion. This document speaks to the need for an eightfold increase in passenger rail travel by 2040 as part of a series of multimodal actions. They document the limits of the highway system to accommodate future demand and that it is imperative to increase the use of public transit and passenger rail, meaning intercity and HSR services on the NEC and its tributaries. For each of these modes, the future projected volumes will cause more intense congestion and reliability problems.

3. Both because of the limits of public funding and the need to address a series of environmental, energy and quality of life concerns it is imperative that we acknowledge across these modes what percentage of current problems they can address and how much future demand they can reasonably accommodate. There is also a need to examine the competitive attributes of these modes and their relative attractiveness given what travelers are seeking in terms that reflect future conditions and societal goals.

In practical terms the data and methods required to undertake a true multi-modal planning effort do not yet exist. (see ACRP Report 31, Innovative Approaches to Addressing Aviation Capacity Issues in Coastal Mega-regions for more on the existing planning hurdles) However, because this is a multistate effort able to draw on a wide array of resources and agencies, it is possible to assemble information to make the case for the importance in investing in intercity and high speed rail in the context of these other modes. By engaging not just the State DOTs but the public transit agencies, MPOs, roadway authorities, airport authorities, coalitions, and many others, it is possible to develop a more complete picture of the need and challenges that will be faced. This discussion has begun with recent meetings involving MPOs in the NY-NJ-Conn region.

There is added value in undertaking this multi-modal approach because to make intercity and high speed rail services accessible to a much larger potential market, complementary investments are necessary. Some of the intercity and high speed rail service planning to date has not taken into full consideration the constraints at stations, the parking requirements, the street access needs, or highway networks connected to these streets. These additional constraints need to be understood so it is possible to know what other complementary investments are necessary.

This also applies to public transit services which could feed stations where people can access intercity and high speed services. High speed rail services above 150 mph will likely require that trains limit the number of stops they make, and there will be issues with the market needs and frequency of service. With the approach outlined in this proposal, planning coordination among the various modes will be needed to evolve a true “systems” approach that will satisfy both customers and rail operators. At some point this extends beyond simply coordinated schedules and enlightened physical design to ticketing, marketing, information, and many other aspects of traveling.

(2) Future Program Viability and Sustainability.

Please identify:

- The likelihood that the final deliverables (Service Development Plan, Environmental Document, or State Rail Plan) will be ready and capable of being implemented;
- The demonstrated commitment of the State and other stakeholders to quickly execute the program once planning is complete;

- The degree to which the planning process meaningfully incorporates input from affected communities, local governments, regional councils and planning organizations, neighboring States, railroads, transportation modal partners, environmental interests, the public and other stakeholders – early and throughout the process;
- The likelihood that the corridor programs being studied can yield measurable service and public benefits in a reasonable period of time;
- The demonstrated ability of the States to support the future capital and operating needs of the corridor being studied;
- The thoroughness of the proposed deliverables; and
- The quality of proposed methodology and assumptions.

Future Program Viability and Sustainability

The program is considered viable and sustainable in part because it fundamentally represents an extension of a proven and high successfully three-year process of region-wide collaboration of planning and program development begun under the NEC Master Plan with participation by the 11 Northeast states, Virginia, the District of Columbia, the FRA, Amtrak, eight commuter and three freight railroads operating on the NEC (see also discussion of Project Management Proposal in the following section).

Likelihood that final deliverables will be ready and capable of being implemented:

Inclusion of the railroads in the planning process is intended to help ensure the recommended program of improvements is realistic and implementable. Many of the railroads and state agencies expected to participate in the process operate railroads directly or under contract; others have extensive railroad engineering expertise; virtually all bring a track record of accomplishment in developing and implementing rail plans.

Execution of Plan:

We have delivered through the Amtrak Master Plan a major piece of the analysis required for future NEC planning and analysis activities and have demonstrated the capability to work and coordinate regionally and across state boundaries to accomplish this work. The process is specifically designed to reach consensus on project definitions, phasing, cost estimates and cost sharing. The likelihood that the plans and environmental assessments will be delivered and will be ready and capable of being implemented is excellent because all of the stakeholders involved have vested and continuing interest in seeing the NEC as a core component of the region's transportation system. An agreed upon configuration of the NEC by the States is necessary because the capacity of the existing highway and aviation systems is not projected to meet future demand and makes the NEC the only realistic option to provide the facility for increased capacity.

Input from Affected Parties: (See discussion of Project Management Proposal below)

Realization of Benefits in a Reasonable Period of Time:

One of the challenges of the current planning effort will be to define a phased program designed to improve services in the short to medium term while simultaneously laying the groundwork for a major program of improvements to meet long-term goals. As an example, major bridge and tunnel replacements, which are expected to have useful lives of 50 to 100 years, will be designed in such a way as improve

service in the short term while providing a foundation for long-term growth.

Demonstrated Ability of States to Support Future Capital and Operating Needs of the Corridor Being Studied:

The NEC Main Line today generates sufficient ticket and ancillary revenue to substantially cover its operating costs and an allocated share of ongoing capital investment at current levels of investment. In the longer term, prior estimates prepared by the FRA (see High Speed Rail in America in supporting documents) are that next generation high-speed rail will generate sufficient revenues to fully cover operating costs and continuing investment as well as more than 40% of initial capital costs. Interim and revised financial estimates will be prepared as part of the proposed plan.

Thoroughness of Proposed Deliverable:

The final product is intended to be comprehensive, from defining a vision and goals for the corridor; estimating market demand, developing detailed operating schedules and capital project plans, including project priorities, phasing and implementation schedules. The plan will use stringline analysis and advanced simulation tools, where necessary, to ensure proposed capital projects are able to deliver forecasted service levels in a cost effective manner. The plan will estimate total operating and capital costs of alternative programs; define cost shares and estimate the costs and benefits of the alternative investment programs. Finally, the plan will recommend a preferred alternative; involve other appropriate Federal, state and local agencies, including MPOs, solicit public input and comment; and develop plans to minimize fossil fuel consumption and carbon emissions as well as adverse impacts from construction and ongoing operations on land, air and water resources.

Quality of Proposed Methodology and Assumptions:

Building off the success of the NEC Master Plan process, this planning efforts is intended to be one of the most comprehensive and inclusive transportation plans ever attempted on a broad, region- wide basis, drawing on the resources and expertise of stakeholders throughout the Northeast, at all levels of government, as well as railroads, non-profit organizations, educators and business leaders.. Moreover, the project will be one of the first to take a true multi-modal view of a region-wide transportation network and recommend improvements designed to better integrate the various modes. Finally, the plan has an intentionally long time frame (40-year planning horizon) designed to accommodate short to medium term growth while enhancing the quality of life and the environment through the middle of the century and positioning the Northeast to continue as one of the world's most productive economic regions.

- (3) Project Management Proposal:** Describe the proposed method for managing the project, including a description of the shared responsibilities between the FRA and the States, and the relationships and means of coordination among the participating States, service operators, and host railroads. This section should detail the mechanism by which States will coordinate their views during the project.

The project management approach for the NEC Multi-Modal High Speed Rail Improvement Plan builds off the successful project management structure of the NEC Master Plan. The structure includes a policy group, or steering committee, and a working group of state and rail planning officials with responsibility for preparing the plan. This structure was specifically designed to provide policy level guidance on vision, goals and objectives, while simultaneously leveraging a broad base of planning and programming resources region-wide to execute the

plan. The policy group includes executive-level representatives of all the Northeast states, the Coalition of Northeastern Governors Policy Research Center and Amtrak. The working group consists of rail planning, program and /or project management staff reporting to steering committee representatives within their respective organizations. This structure has been successful in enabling participating organizations to address localized concerns, but to do so within a broader regional context, based on collaborative discussions at the policy and working group levels.

The proposed planning model envisioned by the Northeast states would substantially replicate this process, with a steering group consisting of members of the NEC Infrastructure and Operations Advisory Commission, or a subcommittee thereof, and the Northeastern Governors Policy Research Center. Working group members would be named by members of the commission, or a designated subcommittee, and include at least one representative from each of the Northeast states, Amtrak, the FRA, FTA, FHWA and FAA, and representatives of commuter and freight railroads at the invitation of the policy group or subcommittee.

The Northeast states envision a 5-member project management team to coordinate with the steering committee, and guide the working group, with one member each representing the FRA, the Northeast states, Amtrak, and commuter and freight railroads operating on the corridor. An FRA-appointed representative would be designated as the project manager; lead the project management team and have ultimate responsibility for managing consultant services with support as needed (e.g., meeting notes, project status reports, procurement of consulting services) from other members of the team upon request. The project management approach will include a process to determine progress against goals, schedules, milestones and costs.

Members of the project management team would be expected to serve substantially full-time; other members of the working group would be expected to devote a substantial portion of their time to the project on the order of 25%. The salaries of the project management team and all working group members would be paid in full by the sponsoring agency, and, to the extent such salaries are eligible, considered to be "in kind" contributions for the purpose of calculating project costs and local match requirements.

The project manager would have the authority to designate "liaisons" to federal agencies, such as FTA, FAA and FHWA, and metropolitan planning organizations (MPO's) and other interested parties, including regional planning agencies, and environmental and community development organizations throughout the Northeast region. Liaisons, typically drawn from representatives of the steering committee or working group, would have the responsibility for periodically seeking input from these agencies; updating these organizations on the status of the multi-state planning effort and inviting review and comment as the study progresses.

- (4) Justification Statement:** Identify the rationale for Federal leadership on the planning project, such as specific institutional barriers or operational complexities. Conditions that may call for a Federal leadership role include multi-state and multi-jurisdictional complexity and/or operational complexity involving multiple operating entities and/or divided property ownership and rights. Additionally, please address how the proposal could serve as a demonstration project and national model for future FRA-managed, multi-state planning projects.

The NEC and its passenger rail feeder lines link eleven Northeast states and the District of Columbia from Maine to the District of Columbia. The NEC is a terminus for the Northern New England, Empire and Keystone designated High Speed Rail Corridors. This spine and rib configuration (versus hub and spoke) is the basis for the Northeast network of High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) corridors. This Northeast network of corridors, with the NEC as the spine, is a centerpiece of the region's transportation infrastructure supporting over 62 million people and a \$2 trillion economy.

The NEC itself is overseen by the FRA and operated and managed by Amtrak and is primarily a Federal asset. It is owned by five separate entities, with the largest owner being the Federal government, and hosts operations of nine passenger and seven freight railroads. Historically, the capital planning for the NEC was done by Amtrak and FRA and capital funding was provided by the Congress. This paradigm changed with the passage of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA).

PRIIA established a new role for the NEC states. The NEC states must now compete for Federal funds for NEC capital and capacity improvements desired by the states and the states play a major role in the planning of the NEC. In addition, the NEC Infrastructure and Operations Advisory Commission, which is being established by the US Department of Transportation in 2010, is charged with leading regional planning efforts, establishing guidelines for improving coordination among operators, and agreeing to equitable financing mechanisms and cost sharing formulas. The NEC planning activities will all need to be integrated with each State's Rail Plan, Amtrak's capital planning, State Transportation Plans and the National Rail Plan.

The NEC is a national asset and its planning is complicated because of:

- ownership/use rights (5 owners),
- operational complexity involving multiple operating entities (9 passenger and 8 freight railroads)
- the number of entities (Federal agencies – including the modal agencies of the USDOT, state agencies, freight and commuter railroads, and other institutional stakeholders) needed to “substantiate” a NEC service plan that is part of an integrated transportation plan,
- the coordinated financial planning between Amtrak, the states, the Federal government and the private railroads needed for capital improvements, and
- the need for the corridor to continue to function and operate as improvements are made.

The complexity of the NEC is unmatched by any other region of the country. The challenge is for all states, agencies and railroads to act collectively to support state and local development and the broader needs (land use, environmental quality, energy use) of the region in a very complex political, financial and operating environment.

The eleven northeast states and the District of Columbia have worked cooperatively and collaboratively with Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to develop and review the Amtrak Northeast Corridor Railroad Infrastructure Master Plan. Started in 2007 and refined over three years, the Master Plan is a first. It is the first passenger rail infrastructure plan to incorporate a regional, corridor-wide perspective of the NEC Main Line and all its feeder lines. It is the first planning process to involve all the northeast states and the District of Columbia with Amtrak. It is the first to consider the plans and infrastructure needs of all the NEC users – intercity, commuter and freight. This foundational document identifies an initial baseline of infrastructure improvements needed to maintain the current NEC system in a state of good repair; integrate intercity, commuter and freight service plans; and move the NEC forward over the next 20 years through 2030 to meet the expanded service, reliability, frequency, and trip time improvements that are envisioned by the northeast states and the District.

At the same time, additional planning work is needed to define long term travel demand; the impact such demand will have on rail ridership, and the potential for rail to integrate and improve the efficiency of the overall transportation network. The additional planning will address how rail can help meet future demand as air and highway capacity become increasingly constrained, and the tremendous potential rail holds to help stimulate economic growth and long-term jobs creation and improve the quality of life and the environment for residents of the Northeast.

A number of these issues were addressed in the FRA's landmark 1997 study, "High Speed Rail in America." Since 1997, Acela high-speed service has been introduced in the Northeast, rail ridership has grown at a robust rate, and the extent of highway and air capacity constraints are better documented and understood.

Federal leadership is again needed, in part to revisit a number of the issues addressed in the 1997 study based on more current information. This work should be undertaken in close coordination, not just with the Northeast states, Amtrak and other rail operators, but with other federal agencies such as FAA, FTA and FHWA. Close Federal coordination, under FRA leadership, is essential to ensure a multi-modal systems approach in which transportation systems of the future are specifically designed to function efficiently as part of a larger network and facilitate inter and multi modal transfers.

The Master Plan is just the first in a series of planning activities that must be undertaken if an expanded NEC, potentially including a substantially improved high-speed rail services – as part of an integrated, intermodal regional transportation system to support future economic growth and environmental and energy goals. Many of the service and financial assumptions, data and analyses that underpin the Master Plan report precede the recent actions by the Congress and the Administration to revitalize the nation's intercity passenger rail program.

The NEC is an existing HSIPR corridor that we will continue to operate and improve while we analyze a longer range view and start to plan now for service improvements in the 2025 to 2050 timeframe. If a longer term vision includes a next generation high speed express service (potential top speeds of greater than 200 mph on grade-separated, dedicated rights-of-way) Federal leadership will be needed to define rolling stock and infrastructure specifications and how such a system might be phased in with existing intercity, commuter and freight operations to ensure a smooth, safe and efficient transition.

The tremendous amount of inter-agency coordination at multiple levels of government, complexity of issues and enhanced planning activities necessary to develop such a "future informed" service development plan and the subsequent environmental analyses can not be done without strong Federal leadership. Doing so, without Federal leadership, on a corridor that is primarily a Federal asset would be presumptive and ill conceived.

These planning activities will also be needed by the NEC Advisory Commission to frame the regional coordination, planning and financing issues that the Commission will need to address.

The process and the lessons learned by undertaking the service development planning and environmental analysis for the NEC will be readily transferable to other multi-state planning efforts. The inclusion in the process of the many stakeholders on the NEC will require innovative and creative means to gather and incorporate inputs and to come to consensus. Innovative modeling and methods for gathering ridership, economic, environmental and social data will be needed and tested during the process. These tools will be transferable for use in future FRA-managed, multi-state planning projects.

(5) Estimated Cost: Provide an estimate of the total cost for the planning activities being proposed, along with an estimate of how much the State(s) will be contributing to the cost, either in the form of cash, or with FRA approval, in-kind contributions of services, supplies, equipment, or real estate. Note: FRA's expectation is that State(s) will provide a comparable match to the FY 2010 Planning Program, which requires at least a 20% non-Federal match. Please outline how you plan to cover this match amount.

Cost Estimates for Phases I – IV

Phase I – Short to Medium term Improvement Program

Total \$4.8M (\$3.84M Fed & \$.96M Other = \$110k per large state & \$50k per small state)

- a) Market Demand Analysis - \$750k
- b) Rail Ops Plan & Testing - \$1.39m
- c) Physical Infrastructure Refinement - \$1.0m
- d) Cost/Benefit Analysis - \$500k
- e) Phasing schedule & Investment Plan - \$200k

This is a synopsis of what would be a more extensive scope of work if funding were provided. Tasks a), b) and c) are interrelated tasks which create an iterative process. The market demand depends on an ongoing operating plan to start the analysis. The ongoing operating plan then gets adjusted to reflect the market demand analysis results. Upon achieving a comfortable fit between the market demand and operating plan, the operating plan is tested against the proposed physical infrastructure. Changes and refinements to the proposed physical infrastructure may be needed. Once a comfort level is achieved between the refined proposed operating plan and the refined proposed physical infrastructure, an end product is produced for each of these areas. The cost/benefit analysis will require inputs from the rail operations plan (in terms of numbers of locomotives and passenger equipment plus supporting needs that are costed out) and the cost estimates associated with the refined proposed physical infrastructure. The phasing schedule and investment plan would highlight the priority improvements that are needed and a proposed funding plan. A special focus would be on those improvements which are relatively ready to go because they have sufficiently advanced through a multi-step planning, environmental review, and design process. The goal is through this work to enable FRA to allow those projects which have either gone through an FRA environmental process or are eligible for an FRA categorical exclusion to advance and be eligible for FRA and other federal funding.

Phase II – Total \$2M (\$1.6M Fed & \$.4M Other)

Phase III – Total \$4M (\$3.2M Fed & \$.8M Other)

Phase IV – Total \$8 million (\$6.4M Fed & \$1.6M Other)

Total Required Other Match = \$3.76m (approx. \$430k per large state and \$200k per small state)

A combination of local funds and in-kind staff time from the States will be used to provide the needed non-Federal match. The salaries of the project management team and all working group members would be paid in full by the sponsoring agency and considered to be “in kind” contributions for the propose of calculating project costs and local match requirements. It is estimated that this contribution will exceed 20%. Specifics on the combination will be determined for each phase depending on specific timing of that phase, work scope and total funds needed to complete it. But the states, DC and Amtrak will insure that this combination is at least 20% of the total cost of the phase being progressed. A process to account for non-Federal personnel time will be established by the project manager.

C. Additional Information

- (1) Please provide any additional information, comments, or clarifications and indicate the section and question number that you are addressing** (e.g., Section B, Question 3). *This section is optional.*

Section A. (10)

Consider the impact of institutional barriers that exist between various passenger and freight rail operators along the Northeast Corridor and provide recommendations to alleviate and/or minimize the impact that these barriers impose on the overall efficiency of the corridor.

Phase II: Multi-Modal Systems Analysis

Prepare high-level unconstrained intra-regional intercity travel demand estimates for the Northeast region from Maine to Virginia (to encompass services converging on Washington, DC from the south) from 2020 through 2050 based on estimated population and jobs growth. We will produce several scenarios to cover the out years beyond 2030/2035 upon which to make estimates because of future population and economic uncertainties.

Based on existing reports and interviews with appropriate officials, describe basic system enhancement options in each of the major modes – highway, air and intercity rail to meet demand through 2050; the capacity of each enhancement option, its capital costs in total, and on a per passenger mile basis. This review will also identify those enhancements to other infrastructure, such as parking facilities or station improvements, which will improve access to intercity rail.

Compare unconstrained demand estimates with the capacity of basic enhancement options and document a preliminary program of multi-modal system improvements to meet demand for intercity travel from 2010 through 2050 to maximize the benefits of investment and minimize environmental impacts.

Phase III: Preferred Rail Configuration

Develop a phased program of rail improvements from 2020 through 2050 for the main line of the Northeast Corridor to gradually increase capacity and meet other system requirements, such as reliability and access to rail services, as described in the multi-modal systems analysis undertaken in Phase II. Identify key infrastructure and equipment performance requirements and barriers that need to be addressed to achieve capacity, frequency and speed goals. Identify the role for a full or partially dedicated new high speed right-of-way to support the preferred high speed rail vision for the NEC. Define order of magnitude capital costs, including infrastructure and equipment; operating costs and debt service costs and coverage.

Describe and estimate internal and external benefits of investment and estimate the cost / benefit ratio of such a program of improvements.

Undertake such operations and simulations analysis as necessary to define preferred infrastructure configurations.

Evaluate the potential impact that the phased program of rail improvement will generate for the existing intercity rail, commuter rail and freight operations on the Northeast Corridor. Consider the indirect benefit that these improvements will have on the entirety of the Northeast Corridor network.

Phase IV: Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

- Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

Portions of the work needed as input into this Phase can begin in parallel with the prior phases using the Amtrak’s NEC Infrastructure Master Plan as a guide; basic information can be assembled, for example:

- . demographic information for the existing population and employment, population and employment projections for future years from MPOs, and a variety of information on current Amtrak and public transit ridership relevant to the NEC rail services;
- . available information from other environmental analyses conducted for projects on the NEC or adjacent to it covering more recent years;
- . cataloguing other basic environmental information to determine where gaps exist requiring new data collection efforts; and,
- . documenting environmentally sensitive areas along the NEC which require special attention if any plans require disturbing or impacting these areas.

For those proposed physical improvements which are sufficiently defined and are eligible for a categorical exclusion, work can begin in parallel with prior phases to prepare documents to submit to FRA to seek that exclusion.

Other physical infrastructure improvements would be covered by the main body of this effort conforming to FRA requirements for PEISs. It may be feasible to initiate portions of this work when Phase II is completed or at some point into Phase III.

- Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

This work would potentially follow the sequence of work noted for the DPEIS.

However, it will be necessary to have a further discussion with FRA about how to progress such a PEIS for some of the improvements which are in the out years beyond

2030. It will obviously get much harder to speak with certainty about some impacts that are many years into the future.

In addition to the technical work of the four Phases, a “lessons-learned” process will be imbedded in the work plan of the project. This process will document those activities - including effective institutional/stakeholder engagement activities, effective modeling, simulation and analysis tools/techniques, and effective technical assistance methods – which will be transferable to other multi-state planning efforts.

Section A. (11)

Utilizing the capacity of rail and other transit corridors to move people and goods is essential to the future of Rhode Island’s transportation network. The Northeast Corridor is a critical asset to the state’s mobility within the Northeast megalopolis. Rhode Island has and will continue to invest in the Northeast Corridor infrastructure and develop multi-modal connections, such as: Commuter rail extensions South of Providence; air-to-rail connection at TF Green Airport; freight rail capacity to Quonset; and Kingston high speed rail improvements are examples of Rhode Islands investment strategy.

(2) Optional Supporting Documents (If you have submitted documents to the HSIPR@dot.gov email address, please provide document title, filename, and description here):

D. Checklist of Proposal Materials

Required Documents	Description	Format
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposal Form	This document to be submitted by email to HSIPR@dot.gov	Form
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Letter(s) signed by participating states	This document to be submitted by email to HSIPR@dot.gov	None
Optional Supporting Documents	Description	Format
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Map of proposal area	This document to be submitted by email to HSIPR@dot.gov	None
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other supporting documents as identified by applicant	This document to be submitted by email to HSIPR@dot.gov	None

PRA Public Protection Statement: Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to average 32 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, a federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **2130-0583**.