

To: CRCOG Policy Board
From: Lyle Wray, Executive Director
C: Jennifer Carrier, Director of Transportation
Cara Radzins, Principal Transit Planner
Date: January 17, 2017
Subject: NEC Future – Final Environmental Impact Statement

NEC Future is a comprehensive planning effort to define, evaluate, and prioritize future investments in the Northeast Corridor (NEC), from Washington, D.C., to Boston. On December 16, 2016, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) released the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the NEC Future project. The Final EIS recommends a Preferred Alternative and responds to comments received on the preliminary alternatives shown in the Draft EIS. The attached document includes a summary of the highlights of the Final EIS. Some notable changes include the addition of enhanced service between New Haven and Springfield and the identification of Hartford as a hub. The Preferred Alternative does, however, still include a bypass through Old Lyme, which has not been well received by neighboring regions.

FRA is holding a waiting period through January 31, 2017. People are invited to submit feedback during this time, but unlike a formal comment period, FRA will not be responding to individual comments. Following the waiting period, a Record of Decision will identify a Selected Alternative, which may or may not be the same as the Preferred Alternative identified in the Final EIS. FRA will then develop a Service Development Plan for the Selected Alternative.

A public open house on the Final EIS has been scheduled in Springfield, MA as follows:

January 25, 2017
4:00-7:00 p.m.
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
60 Congress Street / Springfield, MA

In addition, two virtual meetings (webinars) will be held on February 13 and February 16. More information is available on the project website at http://necfuture.com/get_involved.