



Empire State Passengers Association

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# ESPA EXPRESS

*News From The  
Empire State Passengers Association*



Wikipedia

**New York  
State  
Governor  
Kathy  
Hochul**

**From May 12, 2022 Press Release  
On Livingston Avenue Bridge Project**  
*"Replacing this relic of the 19th  
Century will...improve  
passenger and freight rail  
service throughout New York"*

## Livingston Avenue Bridge Replacement Moves Forward

- Benjamin Turon

The public process for the replacement of the Livingston Avenue Bridge (LAB) – the 120-year-old movable swing bridge that carries Amtrak trains across the Hudson River between Rensselaer and Albany – has begun.



Livingston Avenue Bridge with Shared Use Path Eastern Shore  
\*Shown with future Rensselaer Riverfront Trail

Artist Rendering of New Bridge - Governor's Office

Governor Kathy Hochul made the announcement at the opening of the Albany Skyway, a new waterfront elevated park utilizing an underutilized ramp of the I-787 just south of the railroad bridge. The New York Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) will lead the public process for the bridge replacement. An online meeting was held on May 31st, followed by a formal in-person public hearing on June 1st in downtown Albany. (Continued on Page 3 - LAB Bridge)

*In This Issue...*

Hudson River Bridge Replacement

Berkshire Flyer Service To Start

Biden Nominates Amtrak Board Members

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2022 Edition New York By Rail Magazine

Ethan Allen To Burlington, VT In July

*And Much More...*

## Berkshire Flyer Service Starts July 8th

The Berkshire Flyer, a trial passenger rail service, sponsored by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, will begin operations July 8th as a seasonal weekend service through the summer months of this year and returning on summer weekends in 2023 under an agreement reached by MassDOT with the host freight railroad CSX and Amtrak.

The train is an extension of an Empire Service frequency departing from New York Penn Station at 3:15pm on Fridays – making all the intermediate station stops to Albany – and arriving at the Amtrak station (Joseph Scelsi Intermodal Transportation Center) in Pittsfield at 7:12pm. (Continued On Page 2 -Flyer)

**Flyer** (Continued From Page 1)

The Sunday return trip will depart Pittsfield at 3:00pm, arriving in New York City at 7:05pm.

The Berkshire Flyer project has been in the works for some time, with various community groups and elected officials from the Berkshires – inspired by the success of the Boston-Cape Cod seasonal CapeFLYER – promoting bringing tourists from New York City for a weekend in the mountains of Western Massachusetts.

Massachusetts Lt. Governor Karyn Polito stated to the press that the Berkshire Flyer would allow travelers to easily “take advantage of opportunities to visit museums, attend concerts, shop, enjoy hiking and bicycling, and enjoy all that Massachusetts has to offer.”

Amtrak President and CEO Stephen Gardner stated: “We’re appreciative of the support and cooperation of CSX for the Berkshire Flyer service, which will offer a more comfortable and convenient transportation option that’s also more environmentally friendly, for people traveling between New York City and Berkshire County, along with easy access to musical performances at Tanglewood.”

The trains will offer both reserved Coach & Business Class seating, but Café Car service will not be available. Fares start at \$45.00 one way from New York to Pittsfield. Reservations are currently available through Labor Day Weekend.

The trainsets will return (without passengers) to the Rensselaer Maintenance Facility on Friday evenings and then go back to Pittsfield on Sunday afternoons to prepare for the southbound revenue train. A second locomotive will be added/removed at Rensselaer to enable bidirectional operation - at Rensselaer the trains will reverse direction.

In addition, to this service addition, the extension of the Ethan Allen Express from Rutland to Burlington, VT is expected to start in late July. There will be full coverage in the next ESPA Express!

**Executive Director’s Report:** Steve Strauss

I am happy to report that there is a lot happening on the passenger rail front in New York & nationally and ESPA is engaged in many of these positive developments. Here is a rundown of some of the projects on which we are working.

In January, Governor Hochul announced that replacing the Livingston Avenue rail bridge would be one of her infrastructure priorities and on May 2nd she announced that NYS DOT would reveal the new design and hold public hearings on the project within a month (An on-line public meeting was held May 31st and the in-person public session occurred June 1st in Albany – ESPA was represented at both). Replacing the c.1902 bridge has been a major priority of rail advocates. ESPA raises the topic with nearly every elected official with whom we speak. Last August, at ESPA’s request, three Albany area legislators wrote to Commissioner Dominguez about the status of the Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Engineering Design. The public comment period remains open through June 15th and we urge all interested persons to submit comments in support of accelerating work on this key project for more reliable service.

Also in January, ESPA spoke with the staff of Massachusetts State Senator Adam Hines to discuss his efforts on behalf of weekend service from NYC to the Berkshires and MassDOT’s 2021 East-West rail service study. In late April, Congressman Richard Neal from western Massachusetts met with Governor Baker and the two announced the Governor’s newfound support for a Western Massachusetts Rail Authority and additional trains between Boston and Pittsfield. ESPA has been pointing out that the only logical western terminus would be Albany-Rensselaer which already has a rail yard, a maintenance facility, a crew base and even a (closed) commissary. (See East-West Rail Service article in this issue.)

During the late winter and spring, your Executive Director, often joined by ESPA officers, has met with Amtrak’s Northeast Government Relations Officer Jane Brophy & her superior Rob Eaton; Assembly Member Daniel O’Donnell (D-69) who Chairs the Assembly’s Tourism and Parks Committee; FRA planning staff; Democratic members of the PA House Transportation Committee (regarding the Lakeshore Rail Alliance); State Senator Michelle Hinchey (D-46) and former Congressman and now Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado. ESPA Board Member Tom Martinelli and I also attended the NYS Tourism Industry Association Spring Conference held in White Plains, where we connected with tourism agencies along the Empire Corridor.

These meetings are all part of the important education and advocacy role that ESPA is playing to help advance rail improvements. Your financial support and volunteer work help make this happen. Thanks!

**LAB Bridge** (continued from page 1)

The aging bridge is a critical link for passengers traveling beyond Albany-Rensselaer, used daily by approximately 14 Amtrak passenger trains and 6 freight trains. These include: Empire Service to Niagara Falls, Maple Leaf to Toronto, Lake Shore Limited to Chicago, Ethan Allen to Vermont, and Adirondack to Montreal.

The swing span, which opens about 400 times per year for maritime traffic on the Hudson estuary, is unreliable, leading to unpredictable and significant delays to both rail and marine traffic. Trains today must cross the span one at a time at 15mph due to a restrictive train weight limit; vertical and horizontal clearances are also below current rail standards.

The bridge is eligible for listing on the National Register and State Register of Historic Places, having played a central role in Cornelius Vanderbilt's epic corporate battle to take over the New York Central. Its stone piers date from 1866 and the steel superstructure from 1902.

The bridge came under control of Amtrak with the 2012 lease from CSX of its Hudson Line from Poughkeepsie to Hoffmans west of Schenectady, where the line joins the CSX mainline to Buffalo and Cleveland.

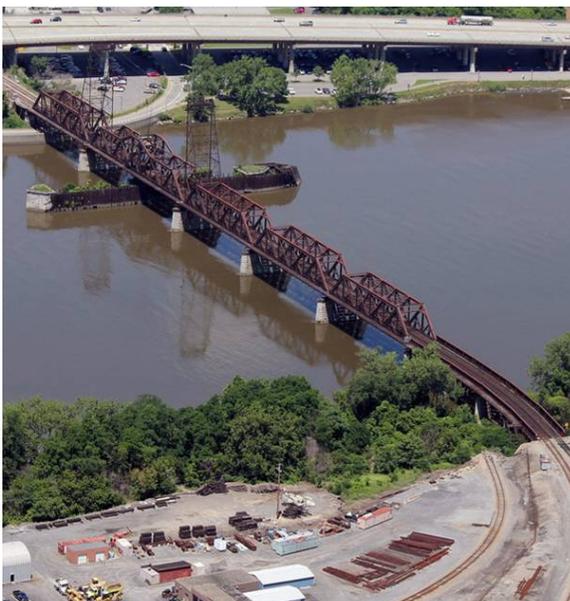
NYS DOT, in its proposed \$32.8 billion capital plan, includes up to \$400 million to replace the existing bridge with a new, modern structure, capable of supporting higher-speed passenger rail, freight rail, maritime transport, and bicycle-pedestrian access. Federal funding for the bridge project could come from the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

In the preferred alternative, a new double-track lift-type bridge would be built immediately south of the current swing bridge on a roughly parallel alignment. The replacement span will be built to modern standards for height, width, and speeds for passenger and freight trains, allowing two trains to cross simultaneously at 30 mph. Project construction is slated to start in 2023, with completion in 2026.

The approach track work includes improvements to the triangular junction of rail tracks on the Rensselaer side and the reconfiguration and rebuilding of the rail bridges over Water and Centre Streets on the Albany side.

To accommodate marine navigation on the Hudson River, the central movable-lift span will have a 190-foot-wide horizontal opening and 60-foot-high vertical clearance in the open position, being similar to the immediately adjacent upstream and downstream highway bridges. The 25-foot vertical clearance above high water of the existing fixed spans would be maintained.

Finally, the new railroad bridge will also include a separated shared-use public pathway connecting to the new Albany Skyway and Empire State Trail with the City of Rensselaer. This has been a major goal of local officials and community groups, with US Majority Senate Leader Charles Schumer voicing his support at a December 2021 press conference.



**Current Bridge**



**Center Lift Span Of New Bridge**

Wikipedia

Governors Office

## New York State Ridership Stats

Route	Apr 22	Apr 21	Apr 20	Apr 19	May 22	May 21	May 20	May 19	Jun 21	Jun 20	Jun 19	May 22 OTP
<b>Empire Service</b>	89,100 <small>91% of 2019 #</small>	44,700	3,100	97,600	91,700 <small>88% of 2019 #</small>	60,400	6,700	104,700	76,000	14,800	104,700	89.3%
<b>Maple Leaf</b>	33,100 <small>109% of 2019 #</small>	17,600	2,400	30,300	34,300 <small>106% of 2019 #</small>	21,300	5,300	32,500	25,400	8,900	32,500	77.4%
<b>Adirondack</b>	0	0	0	8,100	0	0	0	10,100	0	0	10,100	n/a
<b>Ethan Allen Exp.</b>	4,300 <small>116% of 2019 #</small>	0	0	3,700	4,300 <small>100% of 2019 #</small>	0	0	4,300	0	0	4,300	74.9%
<b>Lake Shore Lim.</b>	18,000 <small>62% of 2019 #</small>	11,300	2,900	29,000	23,100 <small>73% of 2019 #</small>	13,900	5,900	31,500	27,700	10,800	31,500	52.7%

Customer OTP

Date Source - Amtrak Monthly Performance Reports



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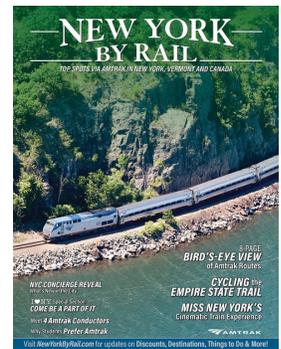
**Reminder...**The popular 'I Love New York' 15% Discount continues to be offered for travel to/from all New York State destinations on Empire Corridor trains & the Ethan Allen Express. The current promotional offer is valid through May 2023. Reservations must be made at least 5 days in advance of travel; black-out dates and other restrictions apply. The 15% discount is not available for travel on the Lake Shore Limited.

Visit [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com); click on 'Deals' at the top, then click on 'Deals & Promotions' and scroll down to the 'See NY & Save 15%' option to take advantage of this great offer.

## 2022/2023 'New York By Rail' Magazine Released

The 2022/2023 edition of New York By Rail was recently published by Content Studio/Martinelli Custom Publishing. New York By Rail, an official Amtrak publication for the past 18 years is the only remaining Amtrak magazine since The National ceased publication in 2020.

The cover photo of the current issue features a spectacular Daniel Spitzer aerial photo of an Adirondack train, under the Port Henry Cliffs along Lake Champlain, taken from his plane.



The 92-page magazine highlights the following articles and special content:

- 8-page pictorial of Daniel Spitzer aerial photos of Amtrak trains within picturesque scenic routes in New York & Vermont.
- 6-page "Cycling the Empire State Trail" section segmented by top trails within The Hudson Valley Greenway, The Champlain Valley, and The Erie Canalway Trails.
- Exclusive interview with Miss New York's Sydney Park chronicling her Amtrak journey from Moynihan Train Hall to Buffalo Exchange-Street.
- 8 Page "Come Be A Part Of It" I Love New York sponsored section.
- New York By Rail Amtrak Route Map of Amtrak's Adirondack, Empire Service, Ethan Allen Express and Maple Leaf routes, Amtrak Thruway Bus Service, and station services
- Interviews with 4 Amtrak conductors and 2 college students riding Amtrak
- Introduction to 9 Travel Destinations throughout New York, Vermont, and Canada & A Listing of 52 Signature Events near Amtrak stops.

100,000 copies of New York By Rail will be distributed through Amtrak-owned and other train stations; New York State Thruway Rest Areas; visitor centers, mailings to travel agents and consumer requested copies; consumer shows, lodging facilities and other outlets. New York By Rail, a mainstay on New York State Amtrak trains since 2005 is temporarily not being distributed onboard Amtrak trains due to COVID-19 safety measures enacted by Amtrak.

New York By Rail magazine is an APEX award-winning publication of excellence for 13 consecutive years running in a national competition sponsored by Communication Concepts, in Alexandria, Virginia. APEX Awards are based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence.

The New York By Rail magazine e-edition is also available at [NewYorkByRail.com](http://NewYorkByRail.com), an online travel resource providing timely getaway ideas, events, discounts, travel packages, itineraries, and other useful information to plan an Amtrak getaway. For more details about the 2022/2023 edition of New York By Rail Magazine contact Tom Martinelli at: 845-462-1209 or [publisher@newyorkbyrail.com](mailto:publisher@newyorkbyrail.com).

## East-West Massachusetts Rail Picking Up Steam - Benjamin Turon

Charlie Baker— long seen as a red signal for the Massachusetts East-West Rail initiative – recently voiced his support for the proposed Boston-Springfield-Pittsfield intercity corridor service in a press conference. The Governor and US Representative Richard Neal (a leading rail proponent) were at the Springfield Union Station on Tuesday April 26th and called for a Western Massachusetts Passenger Rail Authority that would apply for federal funds and then administer the East-West Rail corridor service. Amtrak, which has been vocal about its plans to expand in the Northeast, would run the trains, Baker said at the press conference.

The route of East-West Rail is currently served by the once daily Boston-Albany-Chicago Lake Shore Limited, with Springfield Union Station seeing frequent north-south service from Amtrak intercity and Amtrak operated CTrail regional trains that connect with Vermont, the Pioneer Valley, and the Northeast Corridor. A press session followed the rail-focused meeting that Messrs. Baker and Neal held with US Rep. James McGovern of Worcester and most of the Western Massachusetts state legislative delegation.

The Baker Administration has been criticized for allegedly not embracing East-West Rail, with MassDOT and their consultants being accused of low-balling projected ridership numbers while overestimating costs in a study released in January 2021 (the study is available on the MassDOT website). The study presented three final alternatives: (1) double-tracking and upgrading the signaling of the formerly double track Boston & Albany (CSX) mainline; (2) adding a dedicated passenger track between Springfield and Worcester, and (3) a “hybrid option” with the dedicated track using segments of major realignment to increase speed and cut travel times on the serpentine mainline.

Governor Baker described his attitude as one of cautious skepticism. “That somehow got turned around to me being in opposition,” he said; “I had questions.” Now onboard Governor Baker said he'd like to see the state legislature take up the formation of an authority by the end of its session later this summer. Having served two terms, the popular moderate Republican governor has announced that he will not seek reelection in 2022.

Another elected leader voicing support for East-West Rail was Mayor Michelle Wu of Boston.

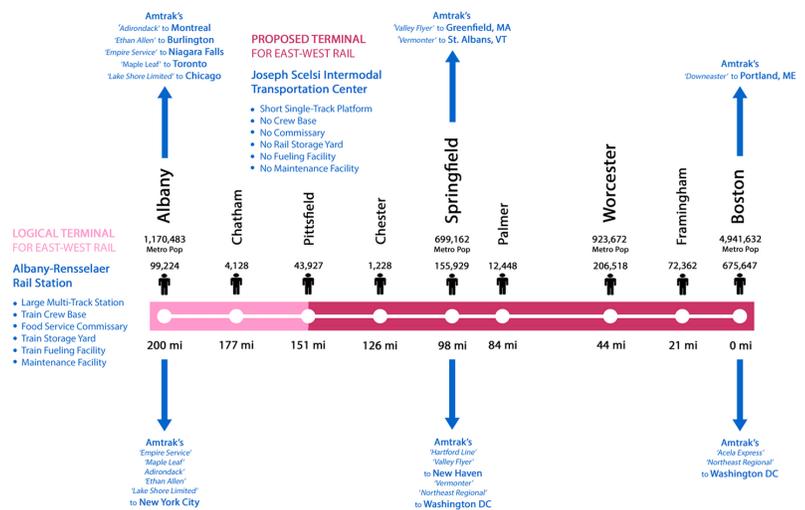
Wu declared her enthusiastic support for high-speed rail that would connect the state's capital with Western Massachusetts in a speech accepting the ‘Democrat of the Year’ award from the Longmeadow Democratic Town Committee. Mayor Wu, in her acceptance speech touched upon various issues including climate change.

Proponents of East-West Rail said that combining housing and job opportunities from the two regions [Boston and Western Massachusetts] by passenger rail opens possibilities for everyone in the Commonwealth.

The prospects of East-West Rail have been recently boosted by Amtrak and CSX announcing an agreement for additional passenger rail service on CSX right-of-way in advance of the Surface Transportation Board's decision on regional Pan Am Railways' purchase by the Class I freight carrier. Amtrak has also been voicing its ambition to expand regional intercity services nationally as detailed in their Connect US proposal with Boston-Albany highlighted as a potential new intercity rail corridor. Federal money is now available for developing new passenger rail corridors from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill passed last year by Congress. The federal law, which Mr. Neal championed in his role as chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means, includes \$66 billion for Amtrak nationwide and \$2.5 billion for public transit in Massachusetts. The 2021 Infrastructure Bill also includes \$50 million annually to the Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) grant program, which can help subsidize the overall cost a state or locality may need to pay in order to cover the costs of operating new passenger rail routes for up to six years.

ESPA executive director Steve Strauss has written on ESPA's support for East-West Rail, with the caveat that to be truly successful it needs to be a Boston-Albany corridor, not a service ending at the state line. Mr. Strauss stated that two primary decisions by MassDOT in their East-West Rail study resulted in seemingly high capital costs and low ridership numbers, that lead to low cost-benefit estimates for improved passenger rail service, using Pittsfield – a city of 44,000 people – as the western terminus, as opposed to Albany, a major city and state capital that sits at the center of a region with over a million people. Albany-Rensselaer has the ninth busiest Amtrak station in the country, with Amtrak service connecting New York City, Upstate NY, Vermont, Canada, and the Midwest. (Continued On Page 8 - East/West)

### The Need for East-West Rail to Extend to Albany



**Five Nominated to Amtrak Board** -Anthony Rudmann

President Joseph Biden has nominated five individuals to serve five-year terms as members of the Amtrak Board of Directors. These nominees, that require Senate confirmation are: David Capozzi (Maryland), Anthony Coscia (New Jersey), Christopher Koos (Illinois), Samuel Lathem (Delaware) and Robin Wiessmann (Pennsylvania). This was Mr. Coscia’s third nomination having been previously confirmed in 2010 and 2015 serving as holdover Amtrak Board Chairman.

When confirmed, the nominees will be the first Amtrak Board organized under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) of 2021 which mandates the Board have two members from the Northeast Corridor, two members from Long Distance Routes and two members from State-supported corridors. It was not announced which appointees represented which business lines as four of the five are in the Middle Atlantic region along the Northeast Corridor. There are three remaining seats on the Amtrak Board that are still awaiting nominations. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and Amtrak President Stephen Gardner are statutory Board members.

The White House press release on the nominations does not indicate railroad operating experience among the nominees albeit Mr. Koos serves on the Advisory Board of Transportation for America and is Vice Chair for Passenger Rail with the US Conference for Mayors. The new appointees appear to bring Amtrak the voice of the disability community (Capozzi), organized labor (Lathem), as well as financial management experience (Wiessmann).

While appointment of new Amtrak Board nominees 15 months into the new Administration is welcome, some are raising concerns. The Rail Passengers Association (RPA) called for better geographic representation on the Board. According to RPA President Jim Mathews: “In our view, the White House missed an opportunity to appoint an Amtrak Board that would speak for communities served beyond those in the ... Mid-Atlantic region. Amtrak’s trains run throughout the US Southeast, the Southwest, our northern border with Canada and the Pacific Coast. Where are the nominees who will serve as the voice of the passengers from these regions, which includes some of the fastest growing communities in the nation?”

Trains magazine columnist Bob Johnston opined the appointments lacked qualifications demanded by Congress. Disappointed with the renomination of Cosica, Johnson said: “As Chairman, he engineered the selection of 4 Amtrak chief executives in the last five years that presided over the national network onboard and marketing downgrade, management and employee buyouts and equipment disinvestment decisions that weakened trains’ ability to generate revenue.” His view is that the appointments “most glaring weakness: there are no railroaders here!”

**Reminder...You can now renew your membership; join the Association or donate to ESPA (all with a credit/debit card) on-line, in addition to updating your membership information (mailing address; e-mail, phone number, etc.) anytime!**

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**ESPA Meetings**

**ESPA members and ALL other interested persons are welcome & encouraged to participate in ESPA Meetings!**

Check 'Events' at [www.esparail.org](http://www.esparail.org) for the most current meeting information! Advance registration is required!

**Upcoming 2022  
ESPA Working Group Meetings**

**August 13 - 12:00n to 4:00pm - In-Person  
Utica - Location TBA**

*Dates, times & locations are subject to change!*

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## Future Intercity Trainset Details - Benjamin Turon

Amtrak’s “Service & Asset Line Plans for FY22-27” provides more details on the new Siemens Intercity Trainsets (ICTs) that will, as part of a \$7.3 billion program, replace Amfleet and Talgo equipment currently utilized for Northeastern and Cascades corridor services.

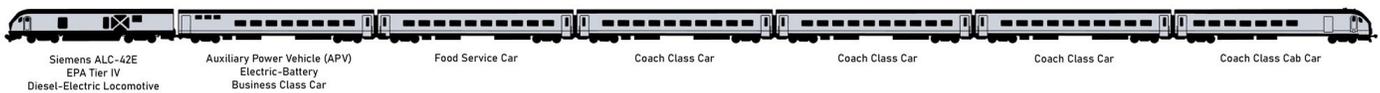
In July 2021, Amtrak signed a contract with Siemens Mobility for new multi-powered ICTs to replace aging equipment and provide a platform to equip future growth on corridor routes. The first ICTs are forecast to enter service on the Cascades route in 2025, with all trainsets (including on the Empire Corridor) to be in service by the end of 2030. The base order is for 73 trainsets (each including a locomotive and six or eight passenger cars), with options for Amtrak to expand the order as part of potential new ConnectUS corridor services. Siemens will provide technical support and spare parts under a 23-year contract, along with a refit or construction of maintenance facilities for high-quality trainset maintenance.

The bidirectional, 125-mph, trainsets will be built in four configurations, with sets including a Charger diesel-electric locomotive at one end and a cab control passenger car at the opposite end. Cabs at both train ends will significantly reduce turnaround time for NEC & Empire Service trains that currently need to be looped or wyed at terminals, thus reducing dwell time & increasing intensity of use in revenue service.

Northeast Regional, Downeaster, Vermonter, Pennsylvanian, Palmetto, Carolinian, and Keystone services will utilize a fleet of 50 dual-mode diesel-electric trainsets consisting of an ALC-42E locomotive and six or eight passenger cars, including an Auxiliary Power Vehicle (APV) adjacent to the locomotive that will have a pantograph to supply power from overhead catenary on electrified sections to the traction motors in the locomotive and to an additional powered truck of the APV coach. The 8 trainsets for the Cascades will include a SC-44 Charger locomotive and 6 passenger cars.

The Empire Service, Maple Leaf, Ethan Allen, and Adirondack will utilize a fleet of 15 hybrid diesel-electric trainsets (with options for acquiring 2 more) consisting of an ALC-42E locomotive and 6 cars, including a APV adjacent to the locomotive containing a battery pack to supply electrical power when operating in Penn Station (and potentially Grand Central), eliminating the current use of third rail power.

### Hybrid-Power Battery-Electric Trainset / Six Cars



When operating in diesel mode, the new trainsets will meet EPA Tier IV emissions standards. Trainsets will have modern interiors, including onboard electronic signage, vestibules, lighting, and restrooms. Amtrak’s trainset project team is currently working with Siemens on the final design elements including livery and interior furnishings. The ICTs will meet or exceed all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for new-build equipment, replacing legacy equipment built prior to ADA’s passage.

The dual-mode ICT trainsets for the Northeast Regional services will render a large portion of the existing City Sprinter ACS-64 electric locomotive fleet redundant before 2030. Amtrak plans on making them available for resale or lease to commuter agencies. This plan has been criticized as the oldest ACS-64s will not have reached 20 years of age, while their EMD AEM-7 predecessors served over thirty years. Also, for the majority of Northeast Regional and Keystone frequencies that may never travel beyond the existing electrification routes, hauling the additional deadweight of diesel prime mover & fuel tanks at 125-mph will reduce energy efficiency.

Perhaps, as an environmentally friendly alternative, consideration should be given to extending electrification to Springfield, Massachusetts and on the state-owned dedicated passenger tracks that Virginia will build parallel to the existing CSX Washington-Richmond mainline. Thus, many Northeast Regional trains could continue to be hauled by the ACS-64s.



Chris Dong/The Points Guy

### Interior Views Of The New Siemens Venture Cars Now Entering Service In The Midwest.

The Coaches For The New Amtrak Trainsets Are Expected To Be Similar In Design, With Large Windows & Wide Aisles.



Chris Dong/The Points Guy



The inaugural Berkshire Flyer arriving Pittsfield, MA on Friday, July 8, 2022.

On the first trip over 60 passengers enjoyed the one-seat ride from New York City and other Hudson Valley locations to the conveniently-located downtown Pittsfield rail station!



RailPictures.net - Image Copyright © Paul Duda

The Maple Leaf, trains #63 & #64 resumed cross-border service from New York City to Toronto on June 27, 2022.

The jointly-operated Amtrak & VIA Rail Canada train was suspended during the pandemic.

This cross-border restoration is the first for Amtrak's three international trains; Seattle - Vancouver service is planned to resume in September 2022 and date for the return of the New York to Montreal is still unclear.

**East - West** (continued from page 5) Extending East-West service an additional 49 miles from Pittsfield to Albany-Rensselaer would provide a greatly enhanced network connectivity and a much larger terminal ridership market for trip origins and destinations. Albany-Rensselaer Rail Station has train storage, maintenance facilities, crew quarters and a commissary that could be readily utilized for expanded service rather than building entirely new facilities in either Springfield or Pittsfield.

MassDOT's East-West Rail study presented the several billion-dollar full build-out costs of each alternative, without acknowledging that most states take a much more incremental approach to improving intrastate and interstate passenger rail service.

The very successfully state-lead expansions of passenger rail in North Carolina and Virginia have incrementally grown service over an extended period of time, building up new corridor services from existing routes and stations of Amtrak's long-distance services. With steady investment in infrastructure over the past two decades, these two states have continually added new frequencies and extended service to new destinations.

Accordingly, ESPA recommends that MassDOT in the short-term start East-West Rail by adding a second daily Boston-Albany round trip to the existing Lake Shore frequency to be operated by Amtrak and funded by the Commonwealth as a PRIIA Section 209 state supported train. It is critical that New York State DOT's Rail Division be brought into this effort. ESPA urges its members residing in the Capital District to contact their state and federal elected representatives and urge them to voice support for an East-West Rail service that would connect Albany with Boston.



On May 31st, Governor Kathy Hochul announced that the new 700,000-square-foot Long Island Rail Road terminal nearing completion below Grand Central Terminal will be named 'Grand Central Madison'.

The terminal is expected to open later this year and will allow for an overall increase of LIRR service to/from Manhattan by 58%.

Draft LIRR schedules for Grand Central service are now available at: <https://new.mta.info/agency/long-island-rail-road/lirr-to-grand-central/schedules>