

SO YOU WANT MORE  
PASSENGER RAIL...  
LOOKING AT THE FUNDING  
LANDSCAPE

12/10/2014

ERIC PAPETTI  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

# Why Rail?

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Environment

Economic  
Development

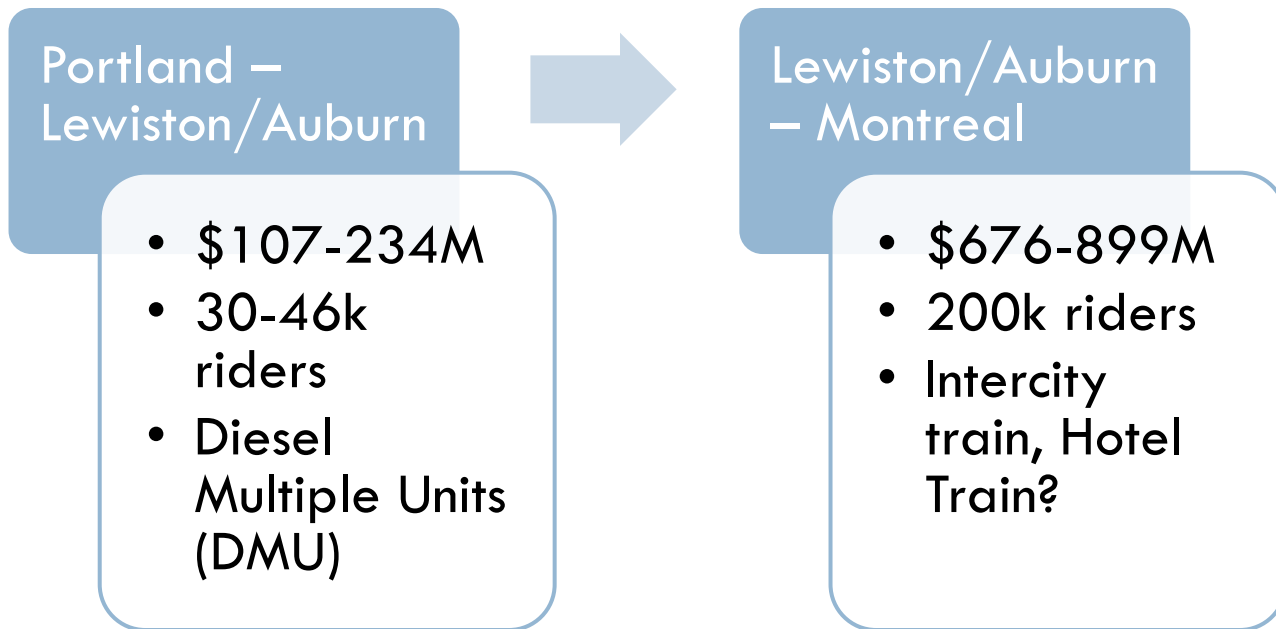
Tourism

Roadway  
Maintenance

Safety

Mainer Pride

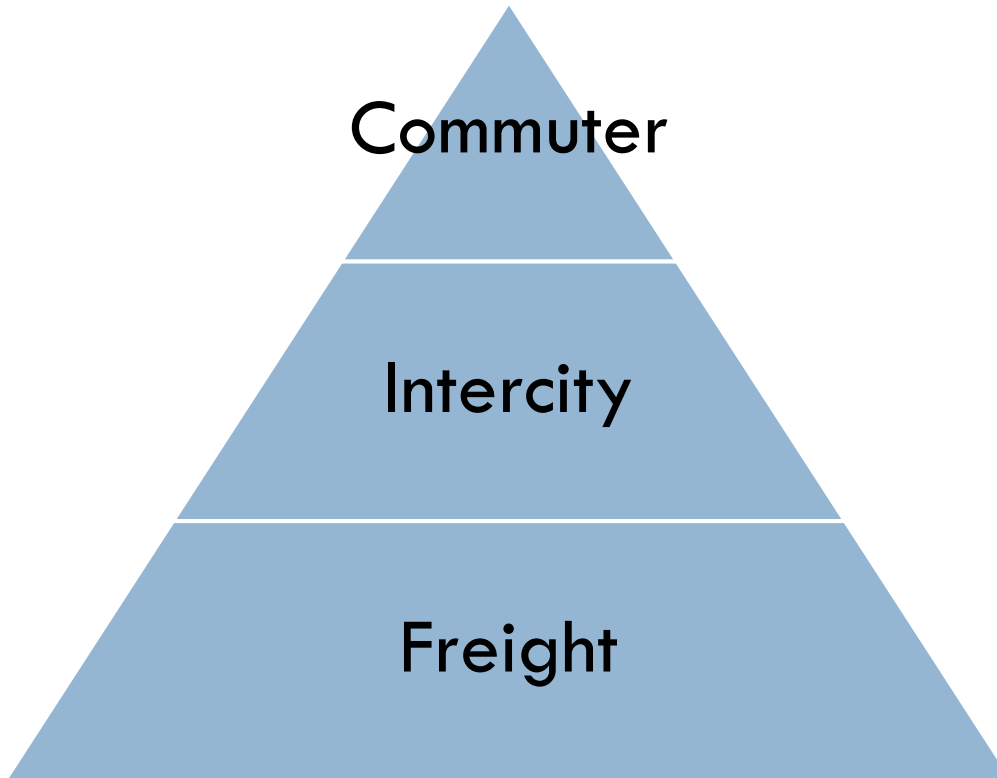
# Future Passenger Rail Interest



From "Portland to Lewiston/Auburn & Montreal Intercity Passenger Rail Feasibility Study," August, 2011

# Layers – The Reality

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# Funding Sources

## FTA Formula Funding

- 5307 Urbanized Area Funding
  - \$9.9M Portland, \$1.2M NNEPRA
- 5337 State of Good Repair
  - \$6.4M to NNEPRA (determined by track miles)

## Transfers

- Maine CMAQ (\$6.85M)
  - Mostly funds Downeaster now
- Maine STP (\$32.4M)

## DOT Discretionary

- TIGER
- New Starts
- Unscheduled Discretionary Programs (Ladders, etc.)

# FTA Funds Commuter Rail

- Current Definition
  - 50% have to ride 3 days per week.
- New Definition under consideration:
  - Systems 2012 and prior grandfathered in
  - 50% of passengers at key rail stations must make a same-day return trip
  - Does not say by which mode
  - Key Rail Stations
    - End of the Line
    - Key transfer point
    - Otherwise accounts for substantial portion of boardings
  - “Corridor Services” are not commuter rail

# “Corridor Services” vs. “Competitive Contracts”

## Corridor Services

- Amtrak branding, schedules, tickets, customer loyalty
- Amtrak priority access to Class-I Freight railroads

## Competitive Contracts

- Service Transparent to End User
- Amtrak-operated examples
  - Caltrain
  - MARC

# Discretionary Programs

## □ TIGER

- Funding is limited, no 2015 Grant more than \$25M – Sara Mildred Long project one of two largest
- Transit a larger recipient than passenger rail
- Multi-modal projects with environmental benefits good

## □ New/Small Starts Grants

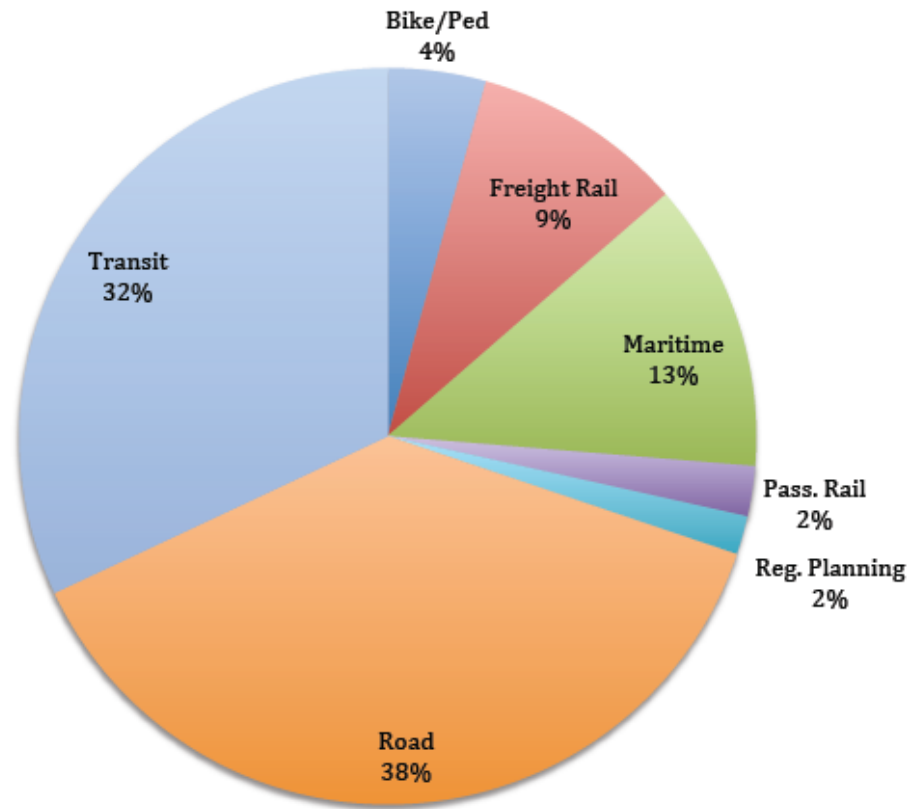
- Officially 80/20 match, but 40-60% match is more typical and realistic
- Subject to appropriation by Congress (today's bill \$100M short, for example)
- Sell the benefits
- Multi-modal projects successful



# TIGER 2014

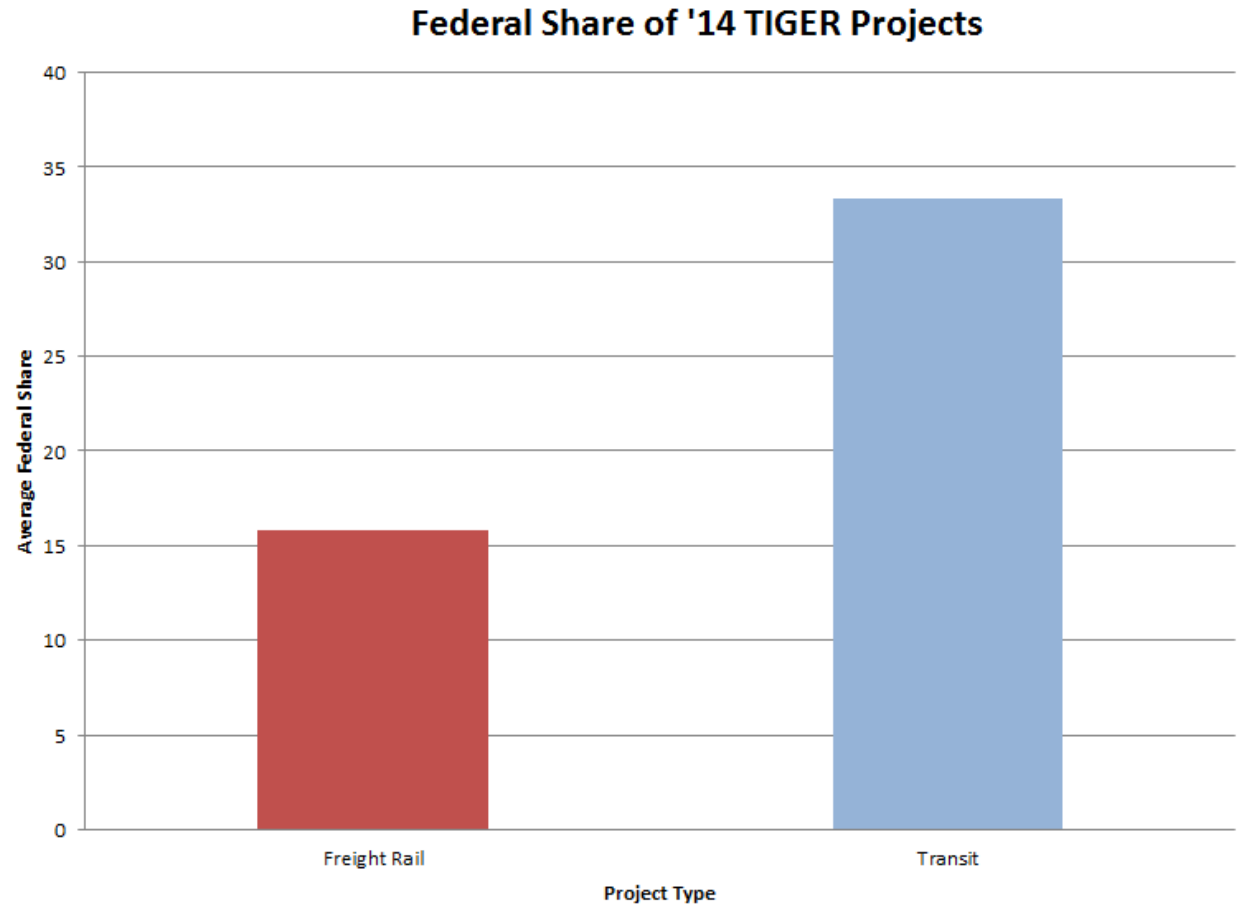
Transit received a far higher share of TIGER dollars than either Freight or Passenger Rail

### Share of FY14 Grant Awards By Mode



# 2014 TIGER AVG. FED SHARE

Average Federal Share for Transit projects over \$3 million was 33%



# Case Study – Knowledge Corridor

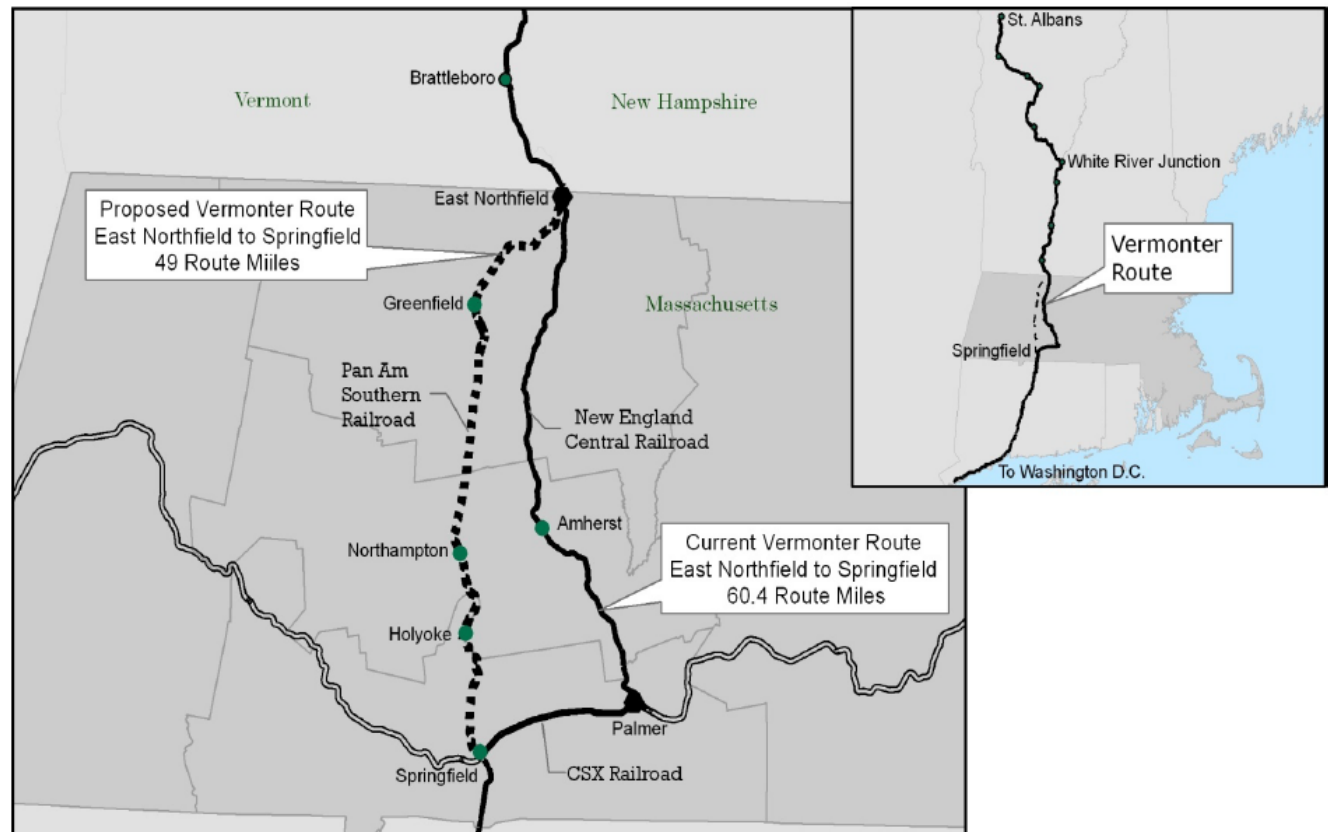
\$70M ARRA Funds  
through FRA + \$70M  
State Funds

Moved the route back  
into population centers

Freight -> Intercity ->  
Commuter

Commuter-rail cost was  
mostly the cost of  
building full-length  
platforms + additional  
train sets.

Feasibility Study  
documented the  
benefits of the project  
– reduced roadway  
maintenance, economic  
development,  
environmental benefits,  
etc.

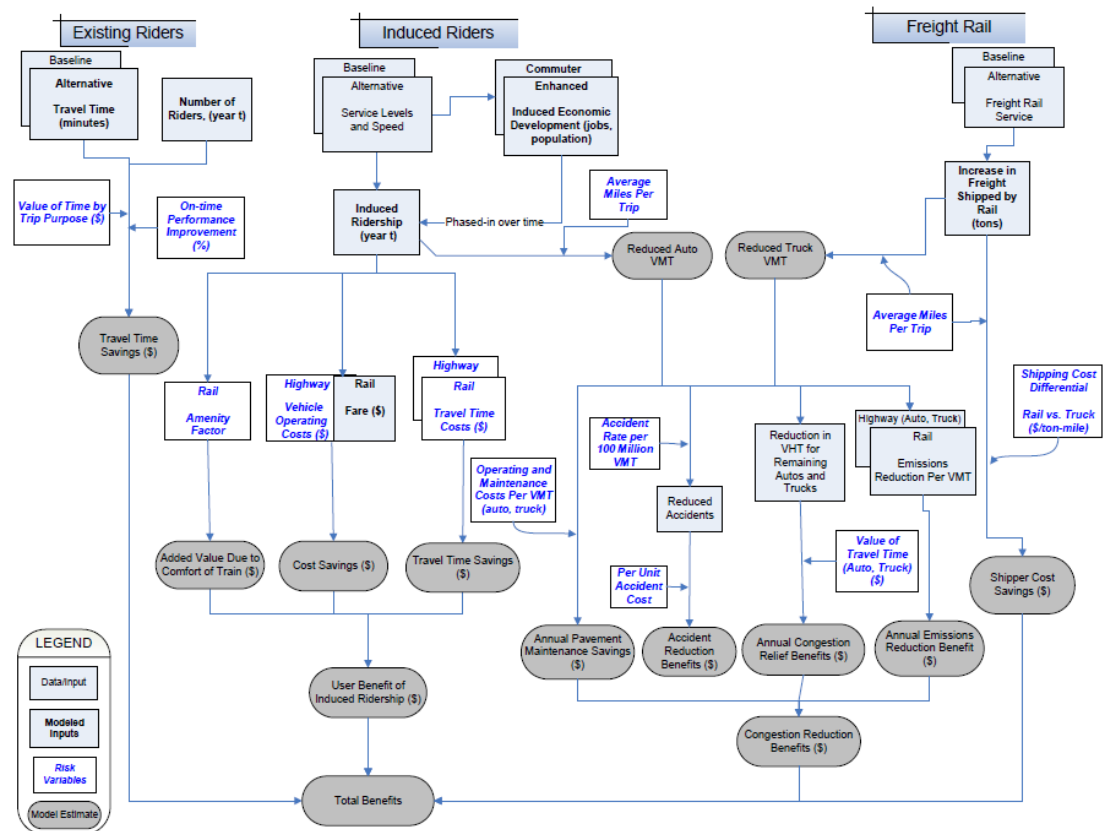


# Case Study – Knowledge Corridor

Interconnected Benefits

...but can we invent a simpler model?

Figure 5.1: Benefits of Passenger Rail Service



# Case Study – Knowledge Corridor

- Benefits for existing riders
- Time travel savings for new riders
- Cost Savings for Individuals
- Amenity/Convenience Factor
- Benefits to Freight
- Economic Development Benefits
- Road System Benefits
  - ▣ Emission Benefits
  - ▣ Pavement Maintenance
  - ▣ Accident reduction
  - ▣ Congestion Relief

# Scenario I – Build Intercity Bus First

- Demonstrates Need, affordable to try
- Infrastructure Already underway
  - Exit 75 Bus Stop
  - Great Falls Plaza Bus Stop
- But, Relative demand is dissimilar
  - Commuter rail, 46k riders
  - Intercity Bus, 7k riders

# Scenario II – DMU Conversion

- Add Lewiston/Auburn leg with DMUs, convert whole system simultaneously
- More efficient to use one vehicle type over whole Boston-Brunswick-LA Corridor
- Piggyback off MBTA Procurement
- Lower operating costs = less CMAQ used
- Fewer political complications with quieter, more efficient vehicles
- Brand NNEPRA as a Maine-centered service

# DMU Option

Budd Cars on  
the B&M  
Railroad

Old Colorado  
Railcar &  
other cars –  
see MBTAs  
procurement  
for more  
information





# Scenario III - Montreal Train First

- Hold out for future rail appropriation
- Add intercity & commuter over same tracks, marginal cost
- Very long-term solution
  - ▣ Freight Benefits?
  - ▣ Tourism benefits?

# Overall Recommendations

- Consider how freight, intercity, and commuter rail can complement each other
- Sell the benefits
- Lay groundwork (or “track”) for the future through continued planning
- Make intercity bus exceed expectations
- Other capital/operating models; inquire re: MBTA DMUs

# MORE INFORMATION:

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