

Nashua-Manchester (Capitol Corridor) Project Development Phase

Project Status Update to Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

April 27, 2021



Agenda

- Introductions
- Project Objectives
- Background
- Scope
 - Update existing/future conditions
 - Confirm Locally Preferred Alternative
 - Environmental review, i.e. NEPA EA
 - Engineering and Financial Plan
- Schedule
- Next Steps

Project Objectives

- Provide alternative to congestion on I-93/Rt3
- Improve bi-directional access to jobs & housing
- Environmental Assessment
- 30% design for 30-mile extension of Lowell Line
 - Four new stations and one layover facility
- Detailed and sustainable Financial Plan

Background:

Alternatives Analysis

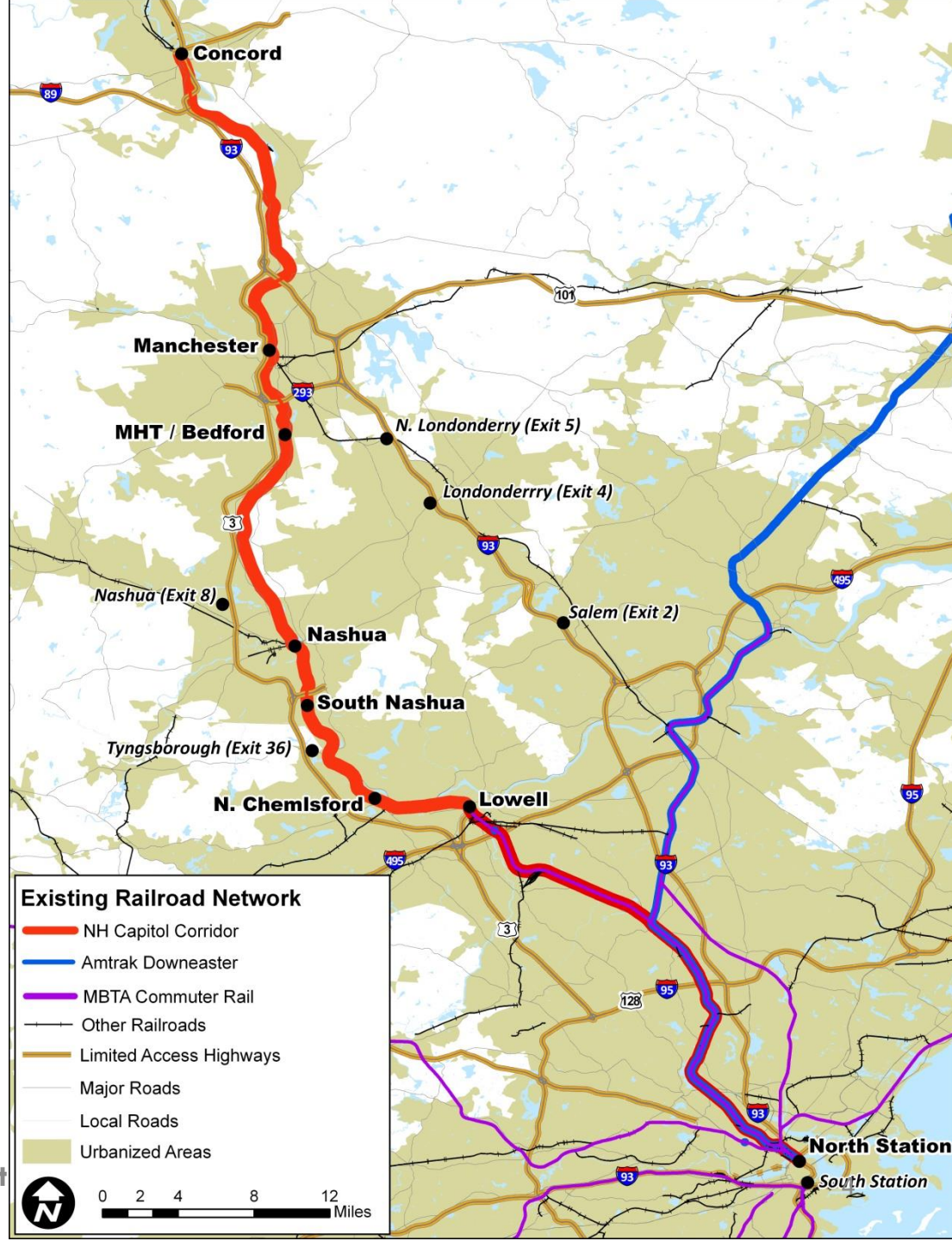
2014

- 6 MBTA Options
- 3 Amtrak Options
- 3 Express Bus Options

MBTA Manchester Regional Rail Preferred Option

- 16 Manchester Trains
- 34 Nashua Trains

Nashua-Manchester (Capitol Corridor) Project



Background: Service Options 2014

Assumptions / Framework

- Extend existing MBTA service into New Hampshire
- Generally transparent to existing MBTA customers
- No impacts on existing Amtrak services
- No upgrades to infrastructure south of Lowell
- Eliminate 6 weekday MBTA deadheads
- Upgrades to rail infrastructure north of Lowell including
 - Upgrades to existing track to FRA Class 4 providing for maximum passenger train speeds up to 75 mph.
- Coordinated local bus service for some options

Background: Preferred Service Option

Manchester Regional Rail

- Extends Lowell Service to Nashua (34 trains/day) and Manchester (16 trains/day)
- Highest ridership and economic benefits
- Builds on 40 years of MBTA network extensions
- Interstate precedent is Pilgrim Partnership with RI



Background: Conceptual Stations 2014

Station	Miles to Boston	Max Time to Boston	Min Time to Boston	Forecast Opening Weekday Boardings
Manchester	55.5	1:32	1:25	270
MHT / Bedford	50.1	1:24	1:17	280
Nashua	38.8	1:14	1:02	420
South Nashua	35.5	1:08	0:54	590
				1,560

Boardings forecasts reported in "New Hampshire Capitol Corridor Rail & Transit Alternatives Analysis (Parts A & B) Detailed Evaluation of Alternatives" – September 2014 Page 40 Table 2.13

Pandemic Impacts on Service and Ridership

- Commuter rail was most adversely impacted
- Slowest of the MBTA services to recover
- April 2021 schedule restored nearly all trains but spreads them more evenly over the day
- Nashua –Manchester service planning is considering range of travel demand scenarios

2014 vs 2021 Base Timetable

MBTA Lowell Line

Schedule	Revenue Lowell Trains	Deadhead Lowell Trains	Wildcats	Anderson Turn Trains	MBTA Train Miles	AM Train Sets	PM Train Sets
2013-2014 MBTA Timetable	44	6	6	8	1,452	4	5
April 2021 MBTA Timetable*	43	3	0	0	1,173	3	3
Change	-1	-3	-6	-8	-279	-1	-2

*Schedule reflects MBTA *Forging Ahead* shift toward Regional Rail operating concept with service spread more evenly throughout the day, which reduces non-revenue “deadhead” train movements and requires fewer trainsets.

Update of Existing and Future Conditions

- Infrastructure
 - Rail, roadways, bridges
 - Soils and foundations (geotechnical)
- Demographics
 - Population and employment
 - Travel markets
- Land Use
- Environmental

Confirm / Update Preferred Alternative

- Manchester Regional Commuter Rail
- Stations
 - South Nashua (*Pheasant Lane Mall or Spit Brook Rd*)
 - Crown Street Nashua
 - Bedford/Manchester Airport
 - Manchester (*Depot Street or Valley Street**)
- Layover (*3 potential locations in Manchester*)
- Need to confirm location of stations and layover

* Valley Street location consistent with City of Manchester TOD Plan, September 2020

FTA Environmental Assessment (EA)

- Coordination with FTA underway
- NEPA Class of Action expected to be an EA
- Coordination with MEPA for portion in MA
- Resource inventories
- Impact assessments
- Mitigation
- Outline of permitting requirements

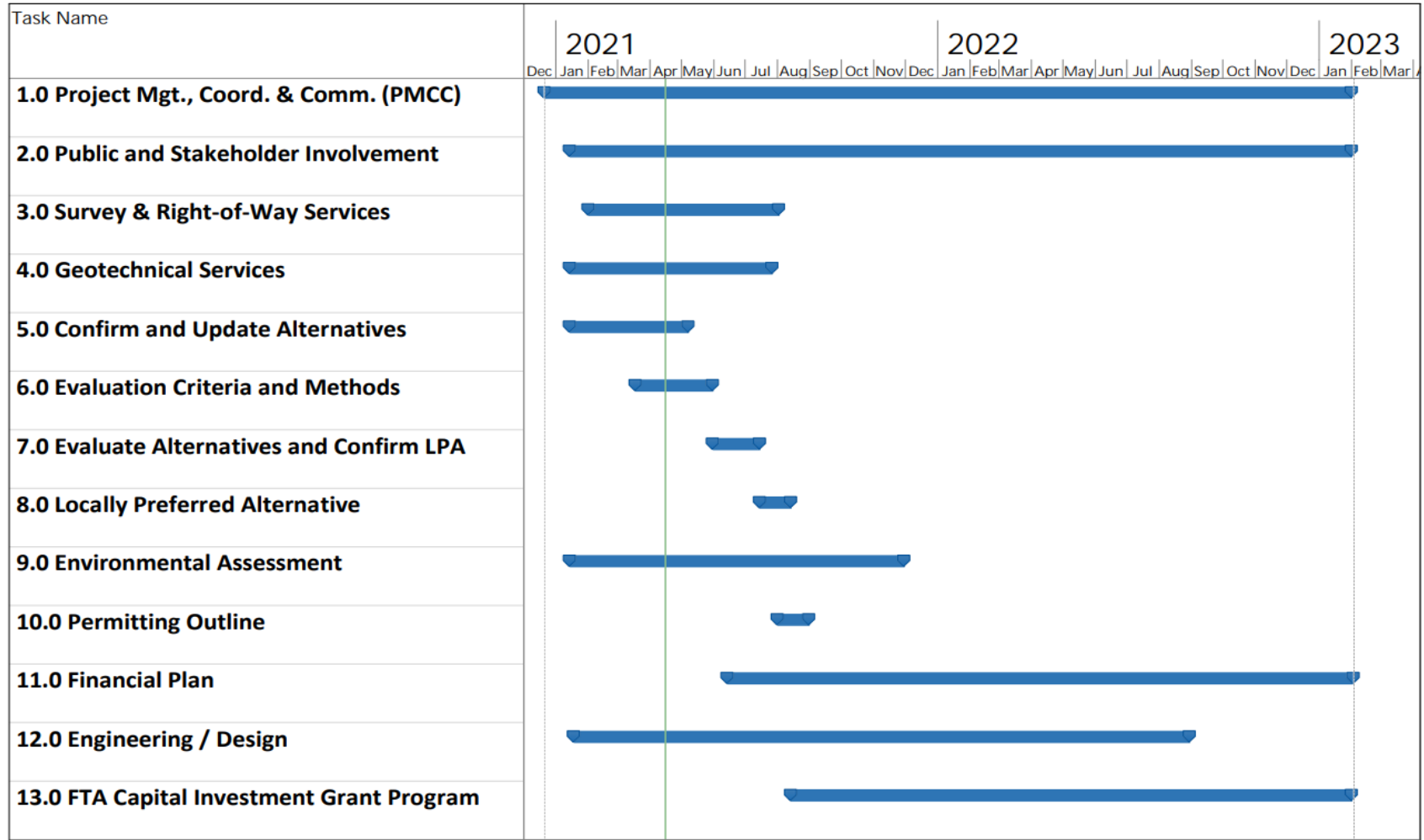
Engineering

- Infrastructure/Systems engineering standards
 - Service plan drives infrastructure needs
 - Applicable elements of MBTA, PanAm, and possibly CSX
- Develop 30% level of design for Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)
 - Track and bridge rehabilitation
 - Signal system and grade crossing upgrades
 - 4 stations and 1 layover facility
- Cost estimates and Value Engineering

Financial Plan

- Key to project success
- Capital Construction
 - Non-federal share of potential federal grant
 - Value of in-kind contributions, e.g. MBTA trackage rights, rights-of-way/station property
- Operations and Maintenance
 - Potential public/private partnerships
- Service and governance agreement
- Revenue and cost sharing agreement
- Support for FTA Capital Investment Grant (CIG)

Schedule



Stakeholder and Public Meeting Schedule

- Stakeholder meetings
 - Small groups / hybrid of in-person and virtual
 - April through July 2021
- Fact sheet – May 2021
- General Public Meeting
 - Format based on public health directives in effect
 - Target by November 2021
 - Notification via postcard mailer and website
- Website

Next Steps

- Select preferred station location for South Nashua and Manchester
- Select layover facility location in Manchester
- Coordinate with key stakeholders
 - Municipal TOD plans
 - First mile/last mile station access
- Continue coordination with MBTA/MassDOT, FTA Region 1, and regulatory agencies
- Establish communication channel(s) for project information