A Growth Strategy for the Northeast Megaregion

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Rail~Volution
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Key U.S. Trends

Rapid population growth and demographic change

Climate change and energy security
Crumbling infrastructure

Rising goods movement and foreign trade
Overcrowded airports and airspace

Longer commutes
Why Megaregions?

• Challenges occur at scale greater than metropolitan region

• Compete with global integration zones

• Foster agglomeration economies at the megaregion scale
1. Invest in the nation’s transportation system including key global gateways and megaregional systems.

2. Revitalize underperforming regions and America’s older industrial cities.

3. Protect natural resources, watersheds, and mitigate climate change.
The Northeast Megaregion

- 49 million inhabitants
- 17% of U.S. population on 2% of the land area
- 20% of U.S. GDP
- Will add 19 million additional people by 2050
Challenges in the Northeast

- High land consumption
- Job growth lagging the nation
- High housing cost burdens
- Congestion & aging infrastructure

Source: RPA GIS Model, Woods & Poole County Population projections
Large Landscapes and Estuaries

Source: RPA, adapted from the Appalachian Mountain Club
Transportation Infrastructure

Image: University of Pennsylvania
Increase capacity for Economic Growth

- 20 percent of flights in the NY Metro region are 350 miles or less
- By 2010 airfields at Newark and JFK will approach capacity
- Provide alternatives to truck-congested highways
Revitalize Older Industrial Cities

- Enhanced local transit, regional rail, station area development
- Intercity rail connecting “hot and cold” cities
Meet Targets for Greenhouse Gas Reductions

- On a per passenger basis, Amtrak is:
  - 18% more energy efficient than airlines
  - 17% more efficient than autos
  (Source: Oak Ridge Nat’l Lab. Transportation Energy Data Book)

- Air travel has greater GHG impact than ground emitters.
  - \((CO_2, H_2O, NO_x\) in stratosphere.)
Density Peaks: Hubs of Face-to-face Communication
Business Alliance for Northeast Mobility


Transportation authorization 2009 and beyond

- Define a national transportation investment program
- Maintain the existing system
- Empower regional decision making
- Adjust pricing signals
- Break down modal silos
- Institute performance measures
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