

How Trains Link East Coast Megalopolis

By David Aloff, SUNY at Buffalo

Over nearly two centuries, the tracks linked rival port cities to create the Northeast Corridor. It's a bond that will only strengthen with federal investments in passenger service.

The Northeast Corridor is America's busiest rail line. Each day, its trains deliver 800,000 passengers to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and points in between.

The Northeast Corridor is also a name for the place those trains serve: the coastal plain stretching from Virginia to Massachusetts, where over seventeen percent of the country's population lives on less than two percent of its land. Northeasterners ride the corridor and live there too.

Like "Rust Belt," "Deep South," "Silicon Valley," and "Appalachia," "Corridor" has become shorthand for what many people think of as the Northeast's defining features: its brisk pace of life, high median incomes, and liberal politics. In 1961, Republican Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona wished that someone had "sawed off the

Eastern Seaboard and let it float out to sea." In 2016, conservative F. H. Buckley disparaged "lawyers, academics, trust-fund babies, and high-tech workers, clustered in the Acela Corridor."

As a scholar of language and literature, I'm interested in what words can teach us about places. My new book, *The Northeast Corridor*, shows how America's most important rail line has shaped the Northeast's cultural identity and national reputation for almost two hundred years. In my view, this bond between transit and territory will only strengthen as federal investments in passenger service draw more Northeasterners aboard trains.

Forming a Great Chain

The first American railroads were stubs—strap iron curiosities that hauled marble, granite, and coal in winter months when canals froze. It was not until 1830 that the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad opened the nation's first public passenger line.

Railway mania ensued. Within a few years, trains were crisscrossing the Eastern Seaboard. A



new periodical, *The Railroad Journal*, predicted that tracks would one day form a "great chain" which, in our day to stretch along the Atlantic coast, and bring its chief capitals into rapid, constant, and mutually beneficial relation."

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IS SOLICITING COST PROPOSALS FROM NEW YORK STATE DBE SUBCONTRACTORS AND VENDORS

Design-Build Services for LIRR West Side Yard Flood Mitigation Measures

MTA Construction and Development Contract No. 6401

Bid Date: August 22, 2025

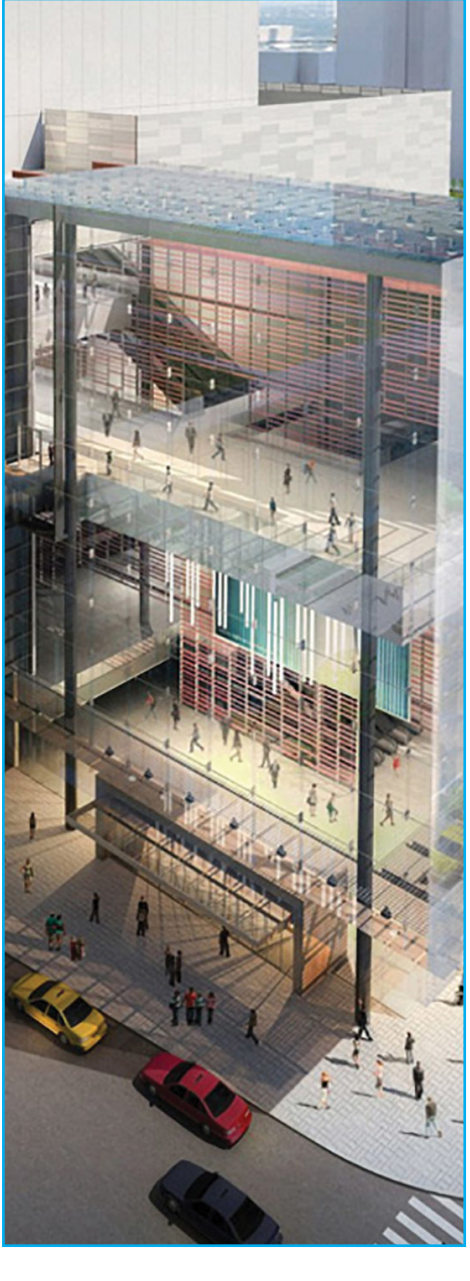
Description of project:

Design, furnish, construct, and install concrete perimeter flood walls, seepage cut-off barriers below the concrete flood walls, flood gates, deployable flood barriers, sump pumps, a tide gate chamber, drainage system improvements, workable aisles and a diesel generator, an automatic transfer switch, ancillary electrical equipment, and required communications.

This project will develop flood protection solutions for the West Side Yard in order to prevent and mitigate flooding of the LIRR Tunnels. The flood protection along the WSY perimeter will be accomplished via a combination of permanent flood walls and deployable flood barriers.

Many bidding opportunities are available: deep foundations, minipiles, jetgrout, sheeting, rebar installation, concrete supply, site work, electrical work, painting, paving, curb and sidewalk, site utilities.

If you are interested in bidding on this project, please contact Skanska's Diversity and Outreach Coordinator: Aislinn.Speranza@skanska.com • EOE/M/F/Vet/Disabled



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2025

Federal Contracting: Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) Certification Program Webinar

Tuesday, August 19, 2025, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm Online

Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration

Contact: Patrice Dozier, patrice.dozier@sba.gov

Fee: Free; registration required

SBA is creating a space for Woman-Owned Small Businesses, via WOSB certification! Are you a woman owner of a small business? The federal government's goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to woman-owned small businesses each year. Join us for training on how to register for SBA's Woman-Owned Small Business (WOSB) program, which helps eligible small businesses to qualify for federal contracting opportunities. The monthly sessions include an overview of the self-certification process, and a discussion of the NAICS codes that qualify as WOSB or EDWOSB. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/woman-owned-small-business-wosb-certification-program-tickets-1123667883889>

8(a) Orientation and SAM Registration Webinar

Wednesday, August 20, 2025, 10:30 am–12:00 pm Online

Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration

Contact: SBA Illinois District Office, 312-353-4528, illinois.do@sba.gov

Fee: Free; registration required

Join the Small Business Administration (SBA)

Selling to the Federal Government Webinar

Thursday, August 28, 2025, 1:00 pm–4:00 pm Online

Main Sponsor(s): US Small Business Administration

Contact: George Tapia, 610-382-3086, george.tapia@sba.gov

Fee: Free; registration required

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