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Notes from editor (not for publication):

“A covered waiting area will offer benches for eight people and an area for standing, along with generous roof eaves and benches.” — did you mean something other than “benches” for the second “benches”?

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

They built it. Now, will they come?

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

With new Amtrak station in Brattleboro comes increased
hopes for additional train service to Boston and New York City

####END SUBHED####

TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

Hundreds of well-wishers got to see what \$10 million
can buy when they came out on June 24 for the grand opening of
Brattleboro’s new Amtrak station on Depot Street.

Vermont Gov. Phil Scott led a group of state and federal
dignitaries for the ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the
culmination of a two-year construction project of what David

11 Handera, Amtrak's chief accessibility officer, called "a better,
12 more accessible, and more inviting station for Amtrak travelers."

13 "No more boarding off of an asphalt platform, standing
14 out in the open weather," said Handera. "Whether it's raining,
15 snowing, hot, or cold, you have a safe, fully accessible station
16 and platform."

17 The station itself is simple in its design and complies with
18 the accessibility standards enforced by the Americans with
19 Disabilities Act (ADA). Its waiting room has 36 fixed seats,
20 drinking fountains, and a new accessible single-occupant
21 restroom.

22 Outside, Vermont's first level-boarding station will offer a
23 345-foot-long concrete platform so passengers will not have to
24 use stairs to enter or exit the train. Two ramps and two sets of
25 stairs lead from the parking level up to the new platform.

26 A covered waiting area will offer benches for eight
27 people and an area for standing, along with generous roof eaves.

28 Parking lot improvements around the new building
29 include two ADA-compliant parking spaces and a new bike
30 shelter.

31 It's a definite improvement over the old baggage area of
32 the former Union Station, now the home of the Brattleboro
33 Museum & Art Center, which Amtrak passengers have used since
34 1972.

35 State Rep. Mollie Burke, D-Brattleboro, who recently
36 announced she will not be seeking re-election, said she always
37 hoped that the project would be completed while she was still a
38 state representative. In her remarks at the ceremony, she talked
39 about Amtrak officials coming to town in 2017 to discuss plans to
40 make the old station ADA compliant.

41 In 2019, "news came that it would be too expensive to
42 make the necessary accommodations at the existing site, and
43 Amtrak proposed building an entirely new station on the other
44 side of the tracks," Burke said. "And after many delays and
45 complications, we are here today,"

More trains?

Brattleboro, which is served by Amtrak's Vermonter, is Vermont's third-busiest stop for the national railroad company, serving approximately 17,000 passengers per year.

The train, which runs between St. Albans and Washington, D.C., takes nearly 14 hours to get between the two cities. With financial support for operating the train provided by the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont, it is the only passenger train serving the town.

That could change in the next few years.

A Massachusetts initiative, Compass Rail, seeks to create new daily passenger rail service between Boston and the Berkshire County cities of Pittsfield and North Adams.

As outlined in the latest [Vermont Rail Plan](#) issued in December 2025 by the state Agency of Transportation, the West-East Route is an ongoing initiative to provide eight daily round trips between Boston, Massachusetts, and Albany, New York, by way of Springfield (Massachusetts) Union Station. Construction of the first stage from Boston to Springfield is expected to begin in 2027.

The [Northern Tier Passenger Rail Study](#) examined potential passenger rail service along the Massachusetts Route 2 corridor between Boston, Greenfield, and North Adams. The study concluded in late 2024 and implementation is a major priority for the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the Berkshire County Planning Commission, and the Berkshire/Franklin County state legislative delegation.

"These service expansions would provide passenger rail connections between the Connecticut River Valley and the Greater Boston Metropolitan area, currently a gap in the overall passenger rail network in New England," according to the Vermont Rail Plan.

The second initiative, the Boston & Albany corridor via Pittsfield, is currently being evaluated as part of a corridor

80 identification and development effort managed by the
81 Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT).

82 Also included in the latest Vermont Rail Plan is a
83 recommendation to extend MassDOT's current Valley Flyer
84 service between Greenfield and New Haven, Connecticut,
85 northward to Brattleboro, Bellows Falls, and White River
86 Junction.

87 Currently, two southbound trains leave Greenfield — one
88 at 6:05 a.m. and the other at 6:05 p.m. — and they arrive in New
89 Haven at 9:02 a.m. and 9 p.m., respectively. Both Valley Flyers
90 connect with Metro North trains to New York City. Northbound
91 weekday Valley Flyers leave New Haven at 2:50 p.m. and 7:45
92 p.m. and arrive in Greenfield at 5:30 p.m. and 10:33 p.m.,
93 respectively.

94 The possibility of expanded Valley Flyer service will
95 likely depend on Amtrak scheduling and equipment availability,
96 funding from both Vermont and Massachusetts, and public
97 demand.

98 Vermont rail officials say that this expanded service,
99 combined with Compass Rail's West-East route plans, would give
100 passengers from the state improved access to Boston and New
101 York City and increase overall ridership.

102 As for the long-awaited restoration of rail service from
103 Vermont to Montreal, Vermont rail officials say it is still a work in
104 progress.

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BIO/COATTAIL:

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