

# Frequently Asked Questions: Need for Four Tracks

**Q** Why is a four-track B&P Tunnel needed in the future?

- A**
- The Northeast Corridor (NEC) faces serious challenges to meet current and projected travel demand. Responding to these pressing issues, the Federal Railroad Administration initiated the NEC FUTURE Environmental Impact Statement as a comprehensive planning process for future investment in the corridor. NEC FUTURE includes an analysis of market conditions in the corridor, development of program alternatives, an evaluation of the environmental impacts of those alternatives, and a recommended approach that balances the needs of various users of the corridor.
  - The existing B&P Tunnel creates a bottleneck in the NEC. The NEC has three or four tracks elsewhere but only two tracks through the existing B&P Tunnel.
  - To address this bottleneck, NEC FUTURE includes a new two-track tunnel west of Baltimore Penn Station in addition to a rehabilitated B&P Tunnel. However, because rehabilitation of the existing tunnel was later determined to be infeasible, all of the new tunnel alternatives include four tracks.

**Q** What demand projection supports this?

**A** The technical analysis completed for the NEC FUTURE Environmental Impact Statement includes a ridership forecast for Amtrak and MARC. The B&P Tunnel Project used the same forecast.

**Q** Will the additional tracks result in more freight trains operating through the tunnel?

**A** The low probability of new freight customers south of Baltimore and the cost of interconnecting freight lines with the NEC makes additional freight use of the B&P Tunnel unlikely in the foreseeable future.