



Empire State Passengers Association

**Working For A Balanced Public
Transportation Network**

For All New Yorkers

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ESPA EXPRESS

*News From The
Empire State Passengers Association*



**Take Amtrak Directly To The
State Fair In Syracuse
August 20 to September 1
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**2025 - 26 New York By Rail
Now Available
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Paid Parking Starts At Rhinecliff - Station Improvements Remain 'Sidetracked' - Gary Prophet

Starting in early June, Amtrak began charging for parking at the Rhinecliff Station, in an attempt to better control the often-unsafe parking conditions which have plagued the lot there for many years. There are currently roughly 180 spots available, which have been free up to this point.

Amtrak has partnered with Metropolis, a parking management company which already handles parking at several Amtrak stations, including at Philadelphia's 30th Street Station. The payment system is virtual and operates with an internet application; there are no machines or attendants on site. Would be parkers must scan the QR code found on a sign at the parking area and enter in their name, license plate, payment card, and then select the number of hours that you wish to park, based on the options provided.



The cost is \$5.99 for up to 16 hours, \$10.99 for 24 hours and \$ 21.00 for up to 48 hours. Starting on July 1, a \$63.00 monthly option was made available. The fees apply 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Prior to the pay system being implemented, the parking lot would typically be at (or over) capacity from at least 9am to 6pm on weekdays, but less than half full on most weekends. Since paid parking began, the parking lot has not been full.

(Continued On Page 5 - Rhinecliff)

State Rail Plan To Be Updated - Bruce Becker

The New York State Rail Plan, which outlines the state's plan for future passenger & freight rail improvements is slated to be updated by mid-2027. The current rail plan was issued in 2009! Federal Railroad Administration guidelines call for states to update their rail plans every five years, so the announced update is good news!

In a request for proposals issued July 18, 2025, NYSDOT stated 'The updated Plan will provide a strategic and comprehensive framework for the immediate and long-range planning activities and investments of the State with respect to freight, intercity passenger, commuter and tourist rail...' The RFP outlined the required perimeters for the update, which will include opportunities for stakeholder and public input.

Executive Director's Report: Steve Strauss

The big news this past spring was the Amtrak service reductions in the lower Hudson Valley that accompanied the start of reconstruction of the East River tunnels primarily serving Amtrak and NJ Transit trains operating between Sunnyside Yard in Queens and Moynihan Train Hall/Penn Station on Manhattan.

Dialogue on the effects of cutting 23 percent of Amtrak trips began in late Fall when ESPA alerted the media and affected officials of these still unannounced service reductions. Pressure from constituents and elected officials, particularly from Assemblymembers and State Senators in the Capital region, resulted in the Governor pressing Amtrak to postpone the service changes until early in 2025. While one roundtrip was dropped in November, the additional trip reductions, and the forced layovers affecting the Adirondack northbound and Maple Leaf southbound, were not continuously in effect until the end of this past April.

Amtrak's discovery of significant structural deterioration on their Horizon car equipment fleet (and their subsequent removal from service) has prevented Amtrak from keeping their promise to add a coach to the Maple Leaf and to at least one Albany-NYC Hudson Valley roundtrip. ESPA continues its call for further capacity mitigation actions as quickly as possible.

The adopted 2025-26 State budget contains the same old, same old. The Legislature approved the same approximately \$40 million for Amtrak service in New York State (to support train operations, equipment leases and maintenance & dispatching of the Hudson Line) with some additional money made available to help fund other capital projects for which NYSDOT may seek federal assistance. Governor Hochul did propose, and the Legislature did approve, \$25 million in state funds to begin planning and designing new capital projects in the lower Hudson Valley that would improve reliability and reduce travel time for both Metro-North and Amtrak customers. ESPA will closely follow this new program.

News is (*perhaps unexpectedly*) better from Washington, where the Trump Administration's FY 2026 budget request makes no net reduction in Amtrak's appropriation and asks for significant additional funds for the CRISI capital program (focused on safety and state-of-good-repair projects for both freight and passenger rail). Some operating funds would be shifted from the NEC to the National Network, but most believe this would not be a problem for Amtrak in FY '26. Given the current political environment in Washington, it is unclear whether Congress will be able to pass funding appropriations bills prior to the October 1st start of the new budget year. If not, rail funding would continue via continuing resolutions at the FY '24 levels, as no final transportation-related funding bills were approved for FY '25!

At our June bi-monthly meeting, ESPA's Board approved hiring a team of graphics and messaging consultants who have done work for All Aboard Ohio and other rail groups. Look for revised ESPA Fact Sheets, social media templates, and other material to start rolling out in the coming months.

Steve

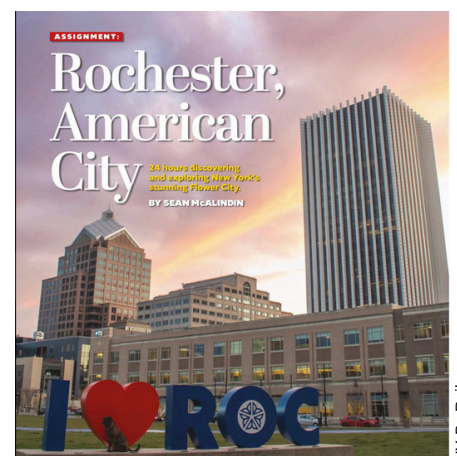


2025-26 'New York By Rail' Now Available!

Published by Content Studio New York, the 2025/2026 edition of the award-winning **New York By Rail**, can take you places you've never imagined. With its vintage-inspired, illustrated cover, this year's guide is the ultimate playbook to traveling by Amtrak in New York, complete with hot destinations, maps, a calendar of events, overnight itineraries, Amtrak special offers and even the best places to eat after you've pulled into the station.

"Once again, we are proud to partner with Amtrak to publish this beautiful guide that has all the bells and whistles—everything you need to know in order to plan an Amtrak getaway," says Tom Martinelli, publisher of New York By Rail. "At a time when flying is a bit stressful, we hope it inspires more folks to think about the train, hop aboard Amtrak and explore all the reachable destinations throughout New York, Vermont and Canada."

This year's edition takes you on a delectable, culinary journey through New York, a treat for the foodies in your life and explores the best places to land everything from diners and donuts to hot dogs and hot wings. It also asks the burning question...What would you do if you had just 24 hours to spend in Rochester? Don't ponder anymore. This issue has it covered. For all the latest information available from New York By Rail or to request a hard copy of the guide, visit NewYorkByRail.com.



NY By Rail

Empire State Passengers Foundation Receives Large Gift – Steve Strauss

Last year, ESPA's Board of Directors endorsed the creation of a separate tax-exempt 501(c)3 foundation to help increase funding to promote education on the benefits of passenger rail service in New York State and the region. Having this tax-exempt foundation provides an opportunity for support from individuals, and from other foundations, who would not usually contribute to non-deductible organizations (ESPA is a 501(c)4 entity), and from businesses who may find foundation gifts as a more appropriate way to support the improvement of passenger rail in the region.



Our newly created Empire State Passengers Foundation (ESPF) received an anonymous gift of \$10,000 this spring from a long-time New York passenger rail supporter. Foundation President Bruce Becker said, "we are extremely pleased to have received this very generous donation which puts us in a good position for launching a larger educational campaign about the benefits of better train service across upstate New York. We want to work with mayors, community organizations and business groups and talk about what better rail service could mean to their communities."

The Foundation held its second Board meeting in April and elected the following Officers and Directors for the current term: Bruce Becker (President), Andrew Cabal (Treasurer), Steven Strauss (Secretary), Louis Venech (Director) and Thomas Martinelli (Director). The Board also spent some time discussing initial priorities and ways that could best document the advantages of faster, more reliable and more frequent train service in New York and its neighboring states and provinces.

Early Foundation activities have focused on logistical matters including accounting processes, opening a bank account, establishing a brokerage house relationship, interfacing with the IRS and NYS Department of Taxation, preliminary webpage design, and creating an electronic donation option (contributions by credit/debit card can be made by scanning this QR code). An independent ESPF website will be available soon!



Scan To Donate

Contributions made to the Foundation may be considered as tax-deductible donations. Of particular interest, seniors (aged 73 or older) may make qualified charitable contributions (QCDs) from their retirement accounts by designating a portion of their required minimum distributions (RMDs) as a direct contribution to the Foundation.

The Foundation is prepared to accept donations via ACH electronic funds transfer and can also accept the donation of stocks, bonds & other equities. Contributions by check should be made payable to 'Empire State Passengers Foundation' and mailed to ESPF, PO Box 434, Syracuse, NY 13209. Contact Foundation President Bruce Becker or Treasurer Andrew Cabal via esparailinfo@gmail.com for more information on making a donation. As always, you should consult your tax/financial advisor regarding your specific tax-related circumstances.

**This Issue Of The ESPA Express Is
Is Underwritten By The Empire State Passengers Foundation!**

New York State Ridership Stats

FY' YTD October - June

Route	Jun '25	Jun '24	Jun '19	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	June '25 Customer OTP
Empire Service	114,900 <small>110% of 2019 #</small>	117,700	104,700	1,022,600 <small>114% of 2019 #</small>	1,001,500	906,900	731,600	369,100	570,000	899,800	74.3%
Maple Leaf	38,000 <small>117% of 2019 #</small>	40,500	32,500	339,900 <small>123% of 2019 #</small>	361,600	314,900	275,000	149,900	190,900	277,500	62.4%
Adirondack	7,000 <small>69% of 2019 #</small>	1,500	10,100	59,000 <small>74% of 2019 #</small>	57,200	15,900	0	0	44,200	79,300	51.0%
Ethan Allen Exp.	7,200 <small>167% of 2019 #</small>	7,500	4,300	61,500 <small>176% of 2019 #</small>	64,400	62,700	35,700	0	23,300	34,900	57.1%
Lake Shore Lim.	33,000 <small>105% of 2019 #</small>	35,000	31,500	285,700 <small>112% of 2019 #</small>	295,700	250,700	213,000	106,500	175,900	255,000	64.8%

Data Source - Amtrak Monthly Performance Reports

NYS Route Definitions

Empire Service - New York To Albany-Rensselaer Trains Only **Maple Leaf** - New York - Albany - Syracuse- Buffalo - Niagara Falls - Toronto Trains
Adirondack - New York - Albany - Saratoga - Montreal Train **Ethan Allen Express** - New York - Albany - Saratoga - Rutland - Burlington Train
Lake Shore Limited - New York/Boston - Albany - Buffalo - Cleveland - Chicago Train

Making Penn Station Great Again - Benjamin Turon

The first half of 2025 has been full of some twists and turns in the long and ongoing journey to reconstruct and expand Penn Station, brought on by the election of President Donald Trump.

In March, the Grand Penn Community Alliance unveiled a neo-classical-style reconstruction proposal aimed at appealing to the incoming Trump administration, which included moving Madison Square Garden (MSG) across Seventh Avenue in a development deal. This plan was the latest of several unsolicited proposals to rebuild the station complex.



Grand Penn Community Alliance

In April, Trump Administration Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy announced that Amtrak would take over reconstruction from the MTA, resulting in Governor Kathy Hochul seemingly washing her hands of the station (with an implied sarcastic 'good luck with that' thrown in) by withdrawing the billion dollars that the state had previously programmed for the project.

Then in May, the Trump Administration announced that former New York City Transit Authority President Andy "Train Daddy" Byford—now VP of High-Speed Rail at Amtrak—had been chosen to lead the reconstruction effort. This resulted in broad approval, with Governor Hochul placing the state's billion dollars for Penn Station back on the table.

While all these recent events may appear as just more seasonal drama in the long running soap opera of Penn Station Redevelopment; as proposals and plans come and go, perhaps taken together there is an actually viable pathway to an ambitious yet pragmatic master plan to finally rebuild the existing station complex, while expanding its capacity. What leads to this conclusion is the overlap between the new MSG site proposed by Grand Penn—the block bordered by Thirty-third and Thirty-fourth Streets and Sixth and Seventh avenues—and one of the alternatives (Northern Expansion) being examined by Amtrak to expand the station with new tracks and platforms.



City & State - Ralph R. Ortega

While Amtrak has seemed wedded to its highly controversial Penn South expansion (for NJT commuter trains) proposal for a decade, it has also quietly explored other alternatives, laid out in documents presented in January at a meeting of the New York Penn Station Working Advisory Group, of which ESPA President Gary Prophet is a member.

One alternative, called 'Northern Expansion', proposes to build the stub-end terminal tracks and platforms of Penn South to the north of the existing station, under the One Penn Plaza office tower (owned by Vornado Realty) and the block (partially owned by Vornado) located immediately to the east, which is now occupied by low-rise retail and three mid-size office buildings. (Continued On Page 5 - Penn Station)

Penn Station (Continued From Page 4)

Acquiring by eminent domain and then razing this block would seem politically more acceptable with its fewer residents, fewer landowners, and overall commercial usage, than the block targeted by Penn South, with its many residential buildings and a historic church. NJT commuters also would be closer from Midtown destinations and subway stations.

Furthermore, once the new subterranean station is constructed, a supertall skyscraper could be built on the eastern half facing Herald Square while a new MSG would be built on the western half of the block, combined with the former site of the Hotel Pennsylvania on the block to the south. The Herald Square supertall skyscraper would replace the one planned by Vornado Realty for the Hotel Pennsylvania site, whose construction has been delayed.

With "Penn North" expansion built and MSG relocated, it would allow as proposed by Grand Penn the reconstruction of the existing station into a unified single-level two-story tall concourse, with a new train hall headhouse built midblock adjacent the Penn2 office tower (owned by Vornado) and a large urban park on the western half above the concourse.

In the Grand Penn proposal, the new train hall would mimic the beaux arts architecture of the original Mead, McKim, and White station, including the open latticed steel columns and arched skylights of the 1910 concourse. The original Penn Station façade on Seventh Ave would be rebuilt in front of Penn2. Instead of rebuilding the Seventh Ave façade, a doric colonnade should be built around the train hall instead, with the original station entrance (modeled on the Brandenburg Gate) build as a grand gateway facing the Farley Post Office, serving as the Eighth Ave entrance to the new park. No doubt this would still be a complex and expensive scheme, but one perhaps far more likely to get a 'Yes' (rather than a 'No') by minimizing the community costs while maximizing the broader benefits.

If such a mega-project in its formative years can be steered by the ever-capable Mr. Byford, with support from both President Donald Trump and Governor Kathy Hochul, then perhaps there is a chance that planning documents and computer renderings will take the form of steel, concrete, and stone, for both a grander and more functional Penn Station.

Rhinecliff (Continued From Page 1)

ESPA has requested that a weekend discount be implemented, as weekend parking is free at Metro North's lots in Poughkeepsie and Beacon. ESPA has also requested that many potholes be fixed and that the lot be stripped. However, any such repairs may not occur until the overall station improvement project gets underway.

Meanwhile, no work has begun on either the rehabilitation of the historic station building (which is owned by Amtrak) or on the new high-level platform & necessary track reconfiguration (all on the right-of-way leased to Amtrak by CSX).

Sources have confirmed with ESPA that both NYSDOT and the Federal Railroad Administration share responsibility for the delays.

- The State has taken an inordinate amount of time to redesign the track configuration needed for the future 8-car high level platform (up from the original 6-car length).
- The FRA has insisted they will only review the Amtrak-led station building rehabilitation, and the State-led track and platform work, as one combined project. This has stalled the station building work. Additionally, the FRA has informed all parties that it will take twelve months to complete their review of the Categorical Exclusion (CE) NEPA classification for the track and platform work. The FRA has also prevented the State from commencing the required consultation process with the State Historic Preservation Office (aka Section 106 review) which is also delaying the work. The FRA announced the initial Rhinecliff improvement grant in August of 2022.



ESPA has been working closely with Assemblymember Shrestha and State Senator Hinchey on letters and other actions to increase the pressure on both the State and the FRA to obligate the grant, allow the station rehabilitation work to commence, and accelerate the review of the track and platform work, which is statutorily a CE project subject only to a documentation process.

The temporary Rhinecliff Station offers restrooms, air conditioning and full service ticketing.

Limited interior seating is available!

Amtrak To The State Fair...

Amtrak has continued its partnership with the New York State Fair to provide direct daily train service as the most convenient, cost-effective, family friendly and comfortable way to travel to and from the Empire State's largest annual event between Wednesday, August 20 and Monday, September 1. By taking the train, visitors will save on traffic, parking fees, and gas by arriving at the special Fairground station (station code NYF), which is only steps away from all the attractions).

Train service to the Fair includes:

- Westbound from New York, Albany & Intermediate Points:
 - Trains #63 (arrives at 1:11pm), # 281 (arrives at 4:21pm) & # 283 (arrives at 7:13pm)
 - These trains provide service to Rochester, Buffalo & Niagara Falls
- Eastbound from Niagara Falls, Buffalo & Rochester
 - Trains #284 (arrives at 9:31am) & #64 (arrives at 2:51pm)
 - These trains provide service to Albany, New York & Intermediate Points



Tickets are available at Amtrak.com, via the Amtrak mobile app, at station ticket counters or by calling 1-800-USA-RAIL.

Thanks To Our Corporate Members For Their Generous Support!



See New York and
Save 15%

Reminder...The popular 'I Love New York' 15% Discount continues to be offered for travel to/from all New York State destinations on Empire Corridor trains & the Ethan Allen Express. The current promotional offer is valid through 2025. Reservations must be made at least 5 days in advance of travel; black-out dates and other restrictions apply. The 15% discount is not available for travel on the Lake Shore Limited.

Visit Amtrak.com; click on 'Deals' at the top, then click on 'Deals & Promotions' and scroll down to the 'See NY & Save 15%' option to take advantage of this great offer.

Amtrak Share Fares make it easy to bring the whole crew by helping you save with each plus one. The more family, friends, loved ones you bring, the more you all save.

Share Fares provide a group discount of up to 60% off tickets for 8 passengers traveling together on the same reservation. Here's how the discount works: Passenger 1 – full price (or lowest available fare); Groups of 2 – full price (or lowest available fare); Groups of 3 – 15% off all tickets; Groups of 4 – 25% off all tickets; Groups of 5 – 37% off all tickets; Groups of 6 – 47% off all tickets; Groups of 7 – 54% off all tickets; Groups of 8 – 60% off all tickets. 2-day advance purchase required. Other terms & conditions apply.

Visit Amtrak.com; click on 'Deals' at the top, then click on 'Deals & Promotions' and then 'Share Fares'



Save on Group
Travel with
Share Fares
Up to 60% Off



ESPA Meetings

ESPA members and ALL other interested persons are welcome & encouraged to participate in ESPA Meetings!

Check 'Events' at www.esparail.org for the most current meeting information! Advance registration is required!

Upcoming ESPA Working Group Meetings

Saturday, October 25 12:00n - 3:00pm
Via Zoom

Saturday, November 15 12:00n - 4:00pm
In Person - Schenectady

Dates, times & locations are subject to change!

ESPA Membership

- ☐ Introductory Membership (\$20.00 for first year)
- ☐ Regular Individual Membership (\$35.00 per year)
- ☐ Student, Senior, Fixed-Income Membership (\$25.00 per year)
- ☐ Family Membership (\$45.00 per year)
- ☐ Sustaining Membership (\$65.00 per year)
- ☐ Patron Membership (\$120.00 per year)
- ☐ Association/Non-Profit Org. (\$300.00 per year)
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- ☐ Lifetime Membership (\$500.00 One Time)

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ESPA, P.O. Box 3012, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603

Empire Corridor - Effective To 10-10-25														New York – Albany – Utica – Syracuse – Rochester – Buffalo – Niagara Falls											
Train Number		63		69		281		233		283		291		49		237		239		241		243		245	
Frequency		Daily		Daily		Daily		Daily		Daily		Daily		Daily		Daily		Daily		Daily		M-F		S&S	
New York City	Dp	7:15a				10:20a		11:20a		1:20p		2:19p		3:40p		4:45p		5:47p		6:46p		9:44p		10:40p	
Yonkers	Dp	7:44a				-		11:44a		1:44p		2:43p		-		-		-		7:09p		10:10p		-	
Croton-Harmon	Dp	8:03a				11:01a		12:03p		2:03p		3:02p		4:26p		5:29p		6:32p		7:28p		10:29p		11:21p	
Poughkeepsie	Dp	8:45a				11:43a		12:45p		2:45p		3:44p		5:10p		6:10p		7:22p		8:10p		11:11p		12:03p	
Rhinecliff	Dp	9:00a				12:00n		1:00p		3:00p		4:00p		5:27p		6:22p		7:38p		8:25p		11:27p		12:19a	
Hudson	Dp	9:21a				12:25p		1:22p		3:22p		4:24p		-		6:43p		7:59p		8:46p		11:47p		12:39a	
Albany-Rensselaer	Ar	9:50a				12:50p		1:51p		3:45p		4:49p		6:20p		7:10p		8:28p		9:15p		12:16a		1:11a	
	Dp	10:10a	11:45a *			1:15p				4:10p		5:04p		7:05p											
Schenectady	Dp	10:34a	12:08p			1:39p				4:34p		5:28p		7:33p											
Saratoga Springs	Dp			12:35p								5:56p													
Fort Edward	Dp	↓		12:56p		↓				↓		6:17p		↓											
Amsterdam	Dp	10:52a	To			1:57p				4:52p		To		-											
Utica	Dp	11:51a	MTR			2:56p				5:51p		BUR		8:50p											
Rome	Dp	12:05p				3:13p				6:07p				-											
Syracuse	Ar	12:59p				4:09p				7:01p				9:51p											
	Dp	12:59p	Extended Layover On #69 At ALB			4:09p				7:01p				10:05p											
Rochester	Dp	2:20p				5:38p				8:22p				11:29p											
Buffalo-Depew	Ar	3:29p				6:44p				9:31p				12:29a											
	Dp	3:29p			6:44p				9:31p				12:39a												
Buffalo-Exchange	Dp	3:42p			7:05p				9:52p				To												
Niagara Falls, NY	Ar	4:52p			7:45p				10:38p				CHI												
		To TOR																							

Empire Corridor - Effective To 10-10-25 Niagara Falls – Buffalo – Rochester – Syracuse – Utica – Albany – New York												
Train Number		232	234	236	280	240	284	290	48	244	68	64
Frequency		Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily	Daily
												From TOR
Niagara Falls, NY	Dp				3:42a		6:37a		From			11:50a
Buffalo-Exchange	Dp				4:18a		7:12a		CHI			12:25p
Buffalo-Depew	Ar				4:35a		7:29a		8:53a			12:36p
	Dp				4:35a		7:29a		9:05a			12:40p
Rochester	Dp				5:33a		8:27a		10:06a			1:37p
Syracuse	Ar				6:55a		9:47a		11:28a			2:52p
	Dp				7:06a		9:57a		11:42a			3:02p
Rome	Dp				7:44a		10:37a		-			3:45p
Utica	Dp				7:59a		10:52a	From	12:42p		From	4:02p
Amsterdam	Dp				9:01a		11:54a	BUR	-		MTR	5:05p
Fort Edward	Dp							1:00p			5:33p	
Saratoga Springs	Dp							1:22p			6:02p	
Schenectady	Dp				9:21a		12:17p	1:58p	2:21p		6:38p	5:49p
Albany-Rensselaer	Ar				9:42a		12:39p	2:21p	2:53p		7:00p	6:17p *
	Dp	5:20a	6:50a	8:10a	10:05a	11:10a	1:05p	2:48p	4:05p	4:50p	7:35p	
Hudson	Dp	5:47a	7:12a	8:37a	10:31a	11:37a	1:31p	3:12p	-	5:15p	8:03p	
Rhinecliff	Dp	6:09a	7:36a	9:00a	10:54a	11:59a	1:54p	3:34p	4:55p	5:38p	8:25p	
Poughkeepsie	Dp	-	7:51a	9:15a	11:10a	12:15p	2:10p	3:48p	5:13p	5:52p	8:40p	
Croton-Harmon	Dp	7:01a	8:33a	9:54a	11:50a	12:55p	2:50p	4:29p	5:53p	6:32p	9:21p	
Yonkers	Dp	-	8:55a	10:16p	-	1:16p	3:11p	4:50p	-	-	9:42p	
New York City	Dp	7:45a	9:21a	10:45a	12:45p	1:45p	3:45p	5:24p	6:42p	7:27p	10:15p	
											Extended Layover On #64 At ALB	

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Amtrak Schedules Are Subject To Change Without Notice – Always Confirm Times With Amtrak In Advance Of Travel!

John Koslosky - YouTube Railroad Rambler



← NYSDOT has completed the construction of new platforms, reconfigured tracks and a new engine house at Tupper Lake for the Adirondack Railroad.

The project included the rebuilding of the wye at Tupper Lake, which will allow the railroad to turn equipment for the first time since the historic operation started service out of Thendara in 1992!



Amtrak Cascades

↑ ↓ Views of the first Amtrak Airo trainset released from Siemens Mobility's Sacramento, CA facility. After extensive testing, these new trains are expected to enter service in the Pacific Northwest in mid-2026. The future trainsets for Empire Corridor service will be similar in design and are currently scheduled to enter service on New York State routes in the early 2030's.

Bruce Becker - ESPA



↑ ESPA was an invited guest at the June 2nd ribbon-cutting for Alstom's new Plant #4 in Hornell, NY. The \$75 million facility joins Alstom's other extensive manufacturing & assembly plants in this Southern Tier community. Over 250 new jobs are being created at the new plant.

The state-of-the-art facility will allow Alstom to fabricate stainless steel rail car body shells in the US for the first. The initial order to utilize the new plant will be for 200 bi-level cars for Chicago's Metra commuter rail service.



Amtrak Cascades

Land Slip On Amtrak's Post Road Branch Suspends Service - Bruce Becker

Amtrak was forced to suspend all rail service east of Albany in early June due to a significant 'landslip' (or sinkhole) which occurred on private property located adjacent to Amtrak's Post Road Branch, which connects the Albany-Rensselaer station with the CSX line to points east. The suspension has affected both the Boston section of the Lake Shore Limited and the seasonal weekend-only Berkshire Flyer service to/from Pittsfield, MA. Bus substitutions have been in place since June and are currently expected to continue through at least November. Amtrak reports that the landslip is very significant and extensive rebuilding of the right-of-way's substructure will be necessary.

As of early August, Amtrak reorganized the consist of the Lake Shore Limited and for the next several months (until the Boston section can again operate) the train's Boston sleeper and lounge car will instead run to & from New York.

This will maintain 3 sleeping cars over the entire New York to Chicago route and for the first time in many years, snack & beverage services will be available to coach passengers between New York & Albany. However, the train consist has been reduced to only 4 coaches west of Albany (down from the normal 5). As of press time, only one 55-passenger bus is being operated for all passengers destined to & from Massachusetts points, which is a significant reduction in capacity.



WNYT - Albany 13