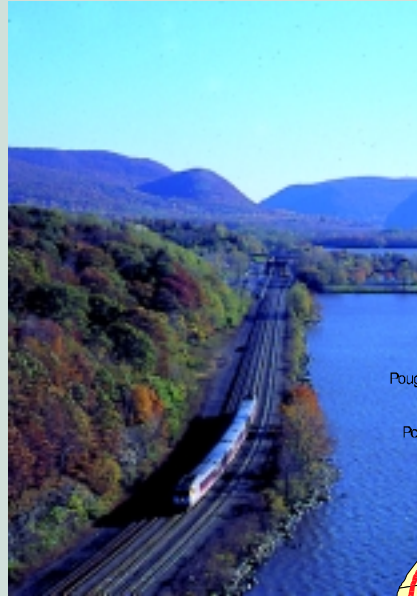


Enhancing Rail Connections

After decades of deteriorating service and shortened lines, railroads are making a resurgence in Dutchess County. Metro-North and Amtrak have invested millions in newer trains, raised platforms, improved parking and lighting at station stops, and intermodal connections. With ridership approximately doubling over the last decade, Metro-North has proposed three possible rail extension projects to take advantage of their fastest growing market area.



Harlem Line Wassaic Extension, Amenia Metro-North Railroad has recently expanded its Harlem Line service from Dover Plains to a new station north of Wassaic in Amenia. A smaller Ten Mile River passenger stop was also constructed in the vicinity of the Taconic Developmental Center off NYS Route 22. The extension, which reinstates service discontinued in 1972, will serve ridership that has increased at a rate of 18 percent a year in the last decade.

Hudson Line Extension Metro-North is considering a feasibility study of the potential for extending Hudson Line service north of the City of Poughkeepsie. Since extension into Northern Dutchess will have significant local and regional implications, Metro-North has committed to continued public discussion throughout the study process.

Beacon Line Service Metro-North has initiated a Beacon Line Feasibility Study to determine the potential for providing passenger service between southern Dutchess County and Westchester County. The rail line between Beacon, Hopewell Junction, and Brewster in Putnam County, formerly known as the Housatonic Line, could provide local residents with service to White Plains and possibly east into Connecticut.

Transit-Oriented Development Potential Transit-oriented development projects concentrate a mix of uses including housing within a 5-10 minute walking distance of a rail station. Modeled after traditional villages that originally grew around railroad stations, like Pawling and Millbrook, these pedestrian intensive precincts reinforce rail use, but without the need for extensive car trips or large parking lots. Convenient intermodal transportation connections to bus, taxi, ridesharing and bicycle facilities are also central features in transit-friendly projects.

Several rail stops in Dutchess could benefit from new infill development near the station, including Beacon, Wingdale at the converted Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center, and Poughkeepsie, which has a long-term plans in place for a transit-oriented neighborhood and intermodal center at its waterfront. Future rail extensions will offer new opportunities for transit villages, possibly at Hopewell Junction or a potential station stop up the Hudson.