SEPTA to Create Long-Term Vision for Regional Rail

**Goal: Integrate Regional Rail into SEPTA’s Frequent Transit Network**

PHILADELPHIA (September 21, 2021) – SEPTA announced today plans to develop a vision for Regional Rail through a yearlong analysis and public feedback process. “Reimagining Regional Rail” is a key initiative of SEPTA Forward, the Authority’s strategic plan, to revamp SEPTA’s services and deliver a seamless transit network to keep our region moving throughout the 21st century.

“With Reimagining Regional Rail, nothing is off limits,” said SEPTA General Manager and CEO Leslie S. Richards. “We are rethinking frequency, route lengths, fares, connections to buses and rail transit and more — all in the name of making Regional Rail more useful to more people.”

In SEPTA Forward, the Authority envisioned Regional Rail as a foundational part of one unified, equitable transit network serving all kinds of trips, no matter where people are or what mode they choose. Reimagining Regional Rail will create a vision of what that looks like and will identify the infrastructure, equipment, operations, and policies needed to get there.

Pre-pandemic, Regional Rail served 132,000 riders daily. But initial research revealed that even pre-COVID, many riders who would benefit from Regional Rail choose other SEPTA services for a variety of reasons, including higher fares, infrequent service, and accessibility.

“Thanks to our region’s legacy of investments in rail infrastructure, including the Center City Commuter Tunnel which linked together two iconic railroads, Philadelphia has the best regional rail infrastructure in North America,” said SEPTA Assistant General Manager of Planning Jody Holton. “It is time we reimagine our system based on the region’s changing and diverse travel needs — not just 9-to-5 commutes to work.”

SEPTA will work with people from across the region between now and summer 2022 to better understand why riders choose Regional Rail. These conversations will help our region identify a long-term vision, as well as shorter-term improvements to services, schedules, and fare polices that make Regional Rail more convenient.

To do that, SEPTA needs to hear from everyone – people who currently ride Regional Rail, people who used to ride, and people who have never ridden, as well as operators, staff, and other stakeholders. SEPTA is launching a survey to gather feedback and hosting a virtual meeting to kickoff this process.

This project launches amid a series of major efforts underway by SEPTA, including Bus Revolution, a comprehensive redesign of the bus network, new wayfinding tools designed to make SEPTA service easier to use as part of the Rail Transit Wayfinding Master Plan, Trolley Modernization, and King of Prussia Rail. Together, these projects work towards delivering the seamless, equitable transit network envisioned in SEPTA Forward.

To learn more about Reimaging Regional Rail, visit planning.septa.org.

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