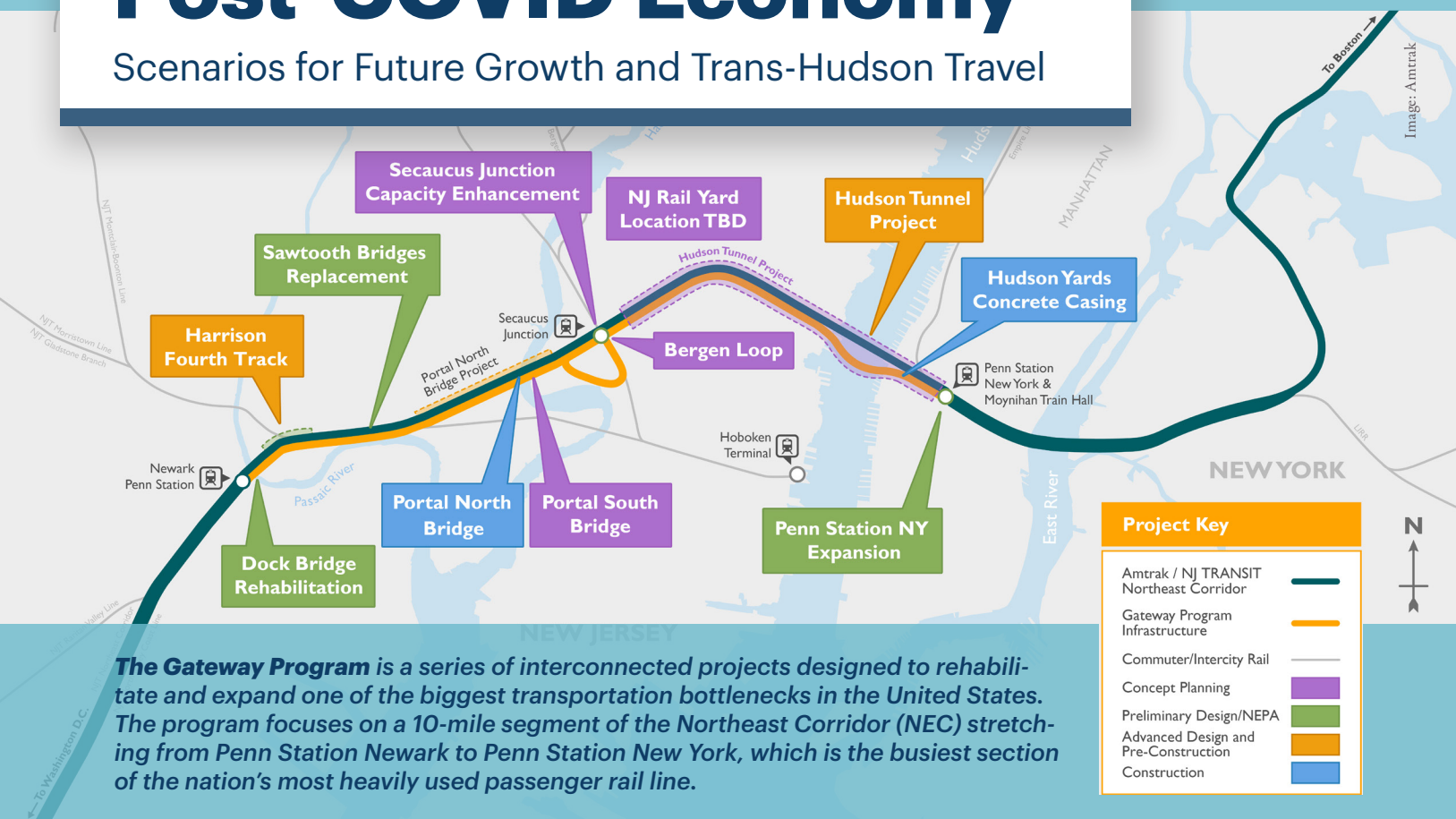




# Gateway and the Post-COVID Economy

## Scenarios for Future Growth and Trans-Hudson Travel

This factsheet summarizes a 2022 Regional Plan Association report. Learn more at [rpa.org](https://www.rpa.org)



## Transit ridership across the Hudson River will return, it's only a matter of "when" not "if."

We either build the infrastructure to meet this demand or forfeit future growth and sustainability.

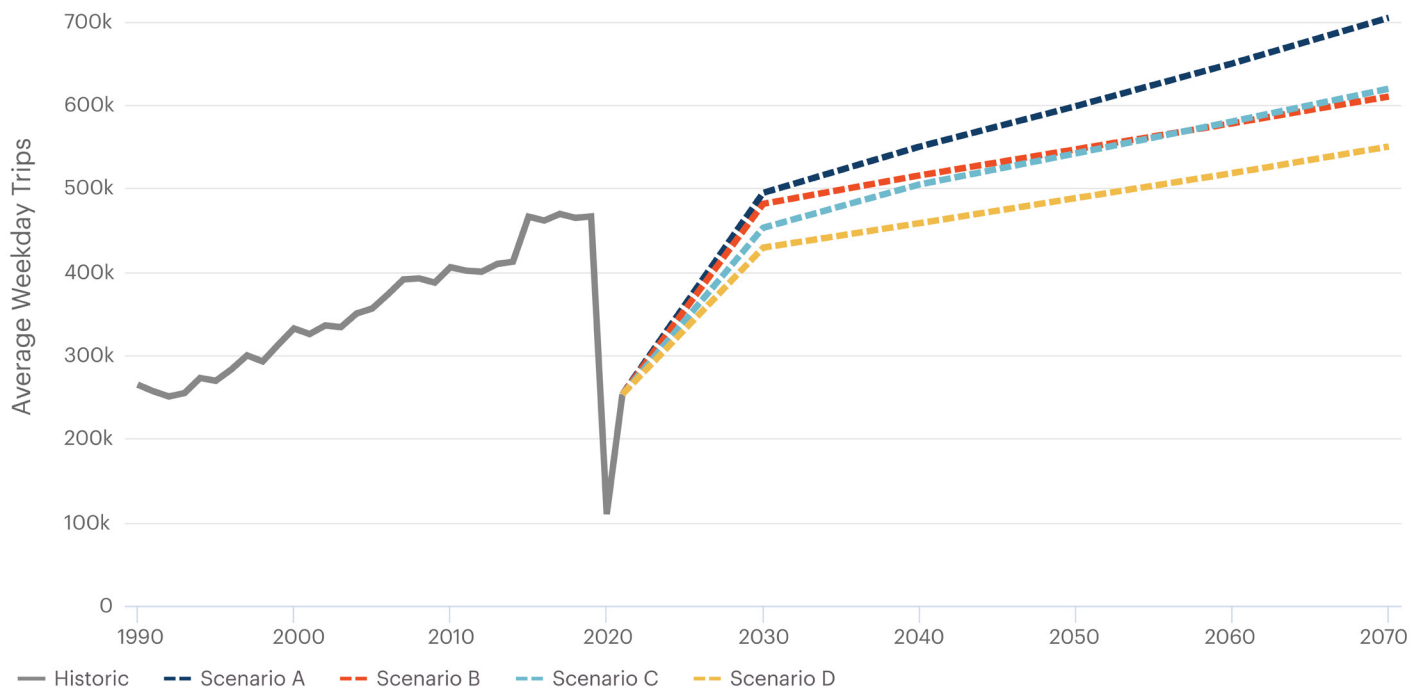
New research from Regional Plan Association (RPA) finds that by 2050, 15-32% more people will travel by transit across the Hudson River on peak weekdays compared to 2019. This means ridership will exceed pre-COVID levels by the time the Hudson Tunnel project is scheduled to be completed.

## TRANS-HUDSON TRANSIT WILL GROW

Although increased hybrid and remote work is likely here to stay, trans-Hudson transit ridership will continue to increase because:

- ▶ Many workers still commute five days per week
- ▶ Non-work trips, for school, medical appointments, shopping, family visits and entertainment will continue to grow faster than work trips
- ▶ Northern New Jersey, the origin of the vast majority of Trans-Hudson trips, is expected to remain the largest source of new housing in the region outside of New York City
- ▶ There is no extra capacity at the bridges and tunnels to accommodate an increase in automobile traffic
- ▶ Regardless of hybrid and remote work trends, the number of commuters will increase over the decade or more it will take to complete the new tunnel

# Historic and Future Trans-Hudson Ridership



RPA modeled four scenarios for future trans-Hudson ridership growth over the next 50 years. Two assumed the average worker would double time spent working from home from its pre-pandemic level of 5% to 10%, and two that assumed it would quadruple to 20%. For these pairs, RPA assumed different rates of regional job and population growth. One close to its average rate of growth from 1989–2019, and one at only half that amount.

## COSTS OF DELAY

There is no time to waste when it comes to building the Hudson Tunnel project and the rest of the Gateway Program. Any delay could seriously cost the region and impede its economic recovery by:

- ▶ Discouraging companies and residents from staying in the region
- ▶ Deferring 83,000 jobs that would come with building the tunnel and replacing Portal North Bridge
- ▶ Reducing the reliability of Amtrak and NJ Transit rail service
- ▶ Increasing the risk of a catastrophic shutdown of one or more of the two existing tracks before a new tunnel is built

What's more, Gateway offers the most sustainable path forward for our region. Gateway will help curb greenhouse gas emissions by reducing reliance on cars, improving air quality and reducing suburban sprawl by encouraging more transit-oriented development, even if work-from-home increases fourfold from pre-pandemic levels.

*Built to last, but not this long...the current Hudson tunnel has been in use since 1910.*



Portal North Bridge Rendering: Amtrak

## THE FUTURE IS A CHOICE

Not only is Gateway necessary to accommodate a future increase in trans-Hudson ridership, but the completion of the program, especially the Hudson Tunnel project, will determine which scenario of economic and transit-based growth modeled by RPA's researchers is most likely. With the better service and additional capacity that Gateway would provide, growth is likely to be higher and work-from-home lower than it would be otherwise.