

Three-Year Strategic Plan 2017-2019

National Association of Railroad Passengers

Jim Mathews / President & CEO

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Foreword

NARP Board, Council, Members & Staff:

In my brief time as your President & CEO, I've been encouraged to see progress on our issues to a degree none of us would have thought possible.

A coalition of traditional Republicans and urban Democrats managed to secure broad agreement to restore long-suspended service between New Orleans and Orlando. This same coalition also united to demand changes in Amtrak's accountability to passengers for service. Rail now has a place in the overall Surface Transportation law, which is now no longer "the Highway bill." The FAST Act provided increased funding for passenger rail as well as programs to spur interest in new food and beverage options, alternative service providers and expansion.

We've helped to energize Mayors across the country to advocate forcefully for service to their community, an advocacy that – multiplied across all of the cities and towns represented – may well mark the beginning of the passenger-rail renaissance all of us have hoped to spur.

Within our Association, as we approach our 50th birthday we have worked to professionalize our staff, modernize our databases and administrative procedures and to build our credibility with federal agencies, commissions and officials. And we can point to many successes in these realms. Finally, we secured an estate gift equal to several years of our revenue, a transformative moment in our Association's history and one that gives us the space to contemplate our strategy, our goals and our objectives for the next 50 years. Now is the time for us to act decisively to shape our future and do things our members have long wanted to do but until now simply couldn't consider.

Welcome to *your* strategic plan.

As a strategic plan, this serves as our guide for setting priorities for investing resources, such as our funding, effort and time. This plan also helps address my personal priorities, priorities, which I hope you, share. Lastly, as our "North Star," this plan should help us stay focused when all other guideposts fail. Initiatives, resources, time and effort should be directed forcefully at those areas that support these strategic priorities...and if they don't, we should have the discipline to drop them.

How To Read This Document

Attached to this plan are sections outlining our goals and objectives, each targeted to address their respective priority and synchronized over three one-year periods. If the priority is the overarching theme, then the goal is a milestone to improve the priority and the objective is the concrete action to advance the goal.

For example:

Priority 1

Goal 1

Objective 1.1.

Objective 1.2.

Goal 2

Objective 2.1.

We'll develop objectives following the SMART principle, which holds that goals should be *Specific* (detailed and unambiguous in what needs to be done), *Measurable* (progress or accomplishment can be measured or tracked), *Attainable* (the bar is high enough to stretch but low enough not to be impossible), *Relevant* (focused only on the goal or priority), and *Time Bound*.

Although this is a three-year plan, it's not possible to accurately predict our operating environment three years from now. External factors such as changing levels of federal appropriations, introduction of new technologies, or changes to laws influence our goals and objectives. Therefore, the Board should review goals and objectives annually for relevance and the Board and President should work together to delete, adjust or add new priorities, goals and objectives whenever needed.

Thank you for your continued support in giving me the privilege to serve as your President & CEO.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Mathews", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jim Mathews
President & CEO

We are the National Association of Railroad Passengers

Our Vision Statement

National Association of Railroad Passengers, bringing together passengers and partners to create A Connected America

Our Mission Statement

Equipping individual citizen-advocates with the knowledge and data they need to educate the general public and elected and appointed officials about intercity passenger rail's role in a 21st century multimodal transportation network

Our Core Values

Citizenship – Mobility – Opportunity – Nonpartisanship

Our Slogan

The Voice of the American Passenger

Our Motto

“Working every day to strengthen A Connected America”

Our Purpose

- 1) To provide, sustain and expand an organization to encourage and aid citizens of the United States, urban and rural, in realizing their power and influence to shape national transportation policy by improving transportation options in their communities, especially rail.

- 2) To empower those citizens by providing knowledge, tools, data, resources and organization they need in communities large and small to participate effectively in the political process as transportation citizen-advocates.
- 3) To support like-minded partners in industry and the advocacy community to work toward common goals, while seeking specific opportunities to build wider coalitions with potentially dissimilar groups.

Our Strategic Priorities

- 1) **A Connected America** – Work vigorously to create a modern multimodal transportation network worthy of the 21st Century, linking states and regions together for economic opportunity with a high-quality, balanced intermodal and multimodal transportation system that serves every American.
- 2) **Build Partnerships** – Increase our presence in national and local communities to amplify the voice and influence of the American passenger.
- 3) **Inspire Ingenuity** – Harness the passion and knowledge of individual members to work from the “bottom up” in ways that are most effective in their communities’ circumstances.
- 4) **The Voice of America’s Passengers** – Promote our recognition as the authoritative nationwide voice for the millions of fare-paying Americans whose dollars support intercity passenger rail, commuter rail, local transit and transit alternatives. We are not industry or government, but passengers.
- 5) **Create Member Value** – Make being a member even more special – recognize the value and talent of each member; increase the fun and enhance fulfillment of the experience to make members want to stay and others to want to join, whether through successful advocacy, a sense of meaningful contribution, valuable personal benefits or simple camaraderie and fellowship.
- 6) **Build The Future** – Secure our membership base while broadening our appeal through effective advocacy and sound stewardship. Develop our organizational as well as functional leaders, beyond the DC office into the grassroots and volunteer leadership.

Our Work

For nearly 50 years, the mission of the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) has been to work for a modern, customer-focused national passenger train network that provides a travel choice Americans want.

Today, we’re expanding that mission and vision. We believe that as we build our future, all transportation modes (road, air, water, and rail) must work together in balance – doing what each mode does best while moving people, goods and ideas

seamlessly together across our states and regions and using efficient, effective rail as a way to tie other modes together.

We can unite our great nation once again with this 21st Century transportation system. Passenger and freight rail, like all the modes, will be important parts of this new economic engine. In this way, a 21st century transportation system is an inherently human vision of the future. It's our vision. And we call it ***A Connected America***.

A Connected America links states and regions together with a high-quality, balanced intermodal and multimodal transportation system that serves all our citizens, not just those in the high-density Northeast.

We embrace a modern, efficient network that connects transit to intercity rail, intercity rail to airports, airports to transit, and so on. And we want to find novel ways to break the logjam of funding and civic interest to find ways forward.

NARP supports urban mobility like bike-share, light rail, streetcars, subways and bus rapid transit. NARP also supports linking these assets to our rural heartland through modern, efficient and affordable commuter and intercity passenger rail.

This 21st Century Network will do for our country what the interstate highway system did a generation ago, positioning us to compete and to win in the new century's highly linked and rapidly evolving economy.

Rebuilding our country's infrastructure for the 21st Century is a big project: bigger than government, bigger than any of us as individuals, and bigger even than the creativity of private industry, which has powered American innovation and progress throughout our history. In short, it is so big that it must be a national priority where we all succeed together or we will fail individually, failing future generations along the way.

If we as a country are to build our country's future certainly we will need both public and private money. We also need good ideas and political leadership at all levels. Couple this with academic perspectives from our colleges and universities, advocacy groups, and our best and brightest individuals, and we can work together to get the U.S. back to work rebuilding our transportation network.

Most importantly, we need people to demand that we as citizens of the greatest country in the world have a civil discourse on the ways to secure this 21st Century transportation grid now. We must not settle for any system that leaves large parts of our country relegated to a third-world status, and we must not settle for tired and divisive politics at a time when we need to come together.

Indeed, if we are to retain our position, we can't afford *not* to make such investments, for the cost of doing nothing will overwhelm the cost of building for the future. As a

country, we can't compete for jobs in the global economy with a broken transportation network.

Our states and regions, especially in "flyover" states in Middle America, risk becoming the "have-nots" in the richest country on Earth without access to a 21st Century transportation network. "Flyover country" is a uniquely North American phenomenon among the world's developed nations. Isolating huge swaths of potential economic productivity takes off the table our country's competitive advantage in the world economy. Why would we do that?

If we fail to come together now, we will have left our children a sad legacy, an America where all of us, rich or poor, rural or urban, have transportation options that are worse than those our parents had. That would be irresponsible and inexcusable.

Our Internal Challenges & Opportunities

To realize our vision and to have the tools we need to get there NARP is currently working on several areas internally, focused primarily in four areas: improving our effectiveness and visibility, re-invigorating our grassroots core, energizing the wider public and investing in the people and tools to act as a legitimate policy partner at the local, regional and national level.

Effectiveness & Visibility

To improve our effectiveness as a national advocacy organization, we need to raise our profile and our visibility and, by extension, rapidly recruit more members in desired demographic segments.

NARP remains unknown in many important segments. Most veteran long-distance rail travellers know us and many have been long and loyal members of the organization. But for college students, young professionals, corridor-train riders, and even some local elected officials and authorities, NARP is either a complete unknown or believed to be largely a "club" for retired railfans.

Our voice nationally is only as loud as the collective strength of our membership, and associations that really move policy nationally tend to have at least 100,000 members (National Rifle Association, Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association, American Association of Retired Persons, etc.). We must grow our numbers, not only among our traditional demographics but alongside them, attracting college students, young professionals, corridor-train commuters and like-minded civic and industry partners.

We do this by demonstrating that becoming a member helps advance policy goals these populations agree on: rural mobility, access to transportation, better, faster,

more modern trains, connections to other modes. We also do this by creating and maintaining an attractive package of tangible, dollars-and-cents member benefits such as travel discounts and member services (our new vision- and hearing-benefit program, for example).

Thus, addressing this goal becomes a relatively straightforward marketing effort, to ensure that more Americans know who NARP is, what we stand for and how we can help make their lives better, either through advancing the benefits rail can bring them or through supplying real benefits to their wallets or pocketbooks.

Reinvigorating Grassroots Core

We need to re-energize the grassroots elements of NARP's program to capitalize on recent grassroots successes such as the Gulf Coast restoration coalition and the positive provisions of the FAST Act.

We made significant strides in 2015 and the first half of 2016 by acting much more deliberately at the local level, meeting with elected officials, transportation planners and agencies and federal legislators' district offices in 12 states. During these meetings, we positioned ourselves as resources for information, data, advice and access to our members rather than as just another "interest group" pressing a cause. *We were partners, not problems.* Our objective was not simply advocating a point of view, but building a coalition – crucially, efforts led by local officials and residents, *supported by us rather than directed by us.*

The results were encouraging. We were invited, for example, to take an active role alongside Senate Commerce Committee staff in drafting key provisions of the rail authorization measure. That language that was eventually included in the overall Transportation bill as part of a rail title, thus realizing a 40-year NARP goal. The measure was later approved by 83 of 100 Senators on the way to passage into law in November 2015. This was in large part due to local efforts that took place in Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and, to a lesser extent, in Montana.

Likewise, six House amendments that would have killed Amtrak (by zeroing the railroad's federal appropriation) were defeated within about three hours of their introduction because NARP members at the local level were energized to call and email their congressmen and to press their local officials (Mayors and County officials) to do the same. House staff actually told us at one point "how do you turn them off?"

The strength of a national advocacy organization of any kind comes from the recognition that it represents a broad cross-section of American voters, a constituency that "stands-in" for many more citizens across the country. Particularly as we renew our advocacy for a truly national network of interconnected passenger rail service, our strength must come from the bottom up, from communities across

the country that want to preserve their service or get their service started. That's why NARP's local presence needs to be improved, and our ties with local coalition partners strengthened.

Energizing The Public

We need to take steps to generate excitement and support for a new vision of passenger rail in the general voting public, to change the national conversation about rail and to create an environment that is more receptive to NARP policy objectives.

Today, the rail community in the U.S. is focused on preaching to the choir. Amtrak spends most of its energy persuading government contacts at the State and Federal levels that it is a service worth keeping. Rail equipment suppliers spend their marketing and promotion dollars pitching their equipment to operators (such as Amtrak or Keolis) or to state agencies (CalTrans), while largely ignoring the voting public whose dollars will pay for those trainsets and whose support can be pulled by a referendum.

There is no single venue at which the rail community, collectively, tries to show the larger voting public why it should support investment in passenger rail. NARP comprehensively packages information on the social, environmental, economic and development benefits of passenger rail. And often we make the same mistake as the rest of the rail community: we share that information primarily with policymakers and those who we already know are receptive to our messages (readers of Trains magazine, for example, or attendees at State ARP meetings or railfan-oriented conventions and events).

One result is that passenger rail does not have the broad-based general support of taxpaying voters that it needs in many communities. They aren't necessarily opposed; they're simply unaware or unengaged. This means that they are susceptible to influence by anti-rail forces. This is being played out in California, where broad-based support for the High-Speed Rail initiative has quickly curdled into outright hostility among voters who have the very real power to de-fund and stop the entire effort. Nobody cultivated those voters after the initial push in 2008, and now rail supporters are paying the price.

Investing To Become A Legitimate Policy Partner

NARP can increase its influence on policy and process by creating our own, organic data and research organization that can support grassroots organizers and leaders and generate meaningful and newsworthy data and content for policymakers and the public.

It is one thing to highlight the research of others, and quite another to lead the national conversation by producing arresting original research and regular data products.

Recall that one way in which NARP extended its influence during 2015's legislative action was by serving as a resource for legislative aides and staff drafting legislation. Policymakers are overwhelmed with requests and work demands, and those who can provide ready-made help and credible data will get a seat at the table.

There is a dearth of passenger-rail data available in the U.S. The data supplied by Amtrak are sometimes purposely vague and reveal little beyond the national network. The Federal Railroad Administration has some data, but generally offers it raw with no useful analysis. Trade publications such as *Trains*, *Progressive Railroading* and *Railway Age*, report nearly exclusively on freight-rail data.

NARP can produce original research and data products that can shape the national conversation. NARP can be the trusted, credible source for independent analysis from the point of view of passengers. We need to aggregate the available data in a digestible, useful format and make it accessible to policymakers and the public, and we need to build our own data model to ensure that we can produce studies when needed in response to a grant application, a government request, or a crisis that threatens rail. This would go a long way toward fulfilling the so-far only partly realized promise of our website as a resource for facts, data, papers, voting records, etc.

Conclusion

Rail advocacy demands all of us working together. Mode versus mode warfare is pointless. Local versus national is pointless too. NARP is one part of the conversation, and we believe a vital and leading part. But we need to invest in the organization, in its capabilities and in its individual members to remain vital, and we need to continue the process of forging alliances with like-minded partners anywhere they exist – from college campuses to small towns to regional advocacy groups or business leaders.

We invite our members to join us in what we hope is a systematic and disciplined process for transforming NARP and taking that next crucial step to advance passenger rail and strengthen the voices of all advocates and partners in the years to come.

Year 2017 – Goals and Objectives

Priority 1: A Connected America

Work vigorously to create a modern multimodal transportation network worthy of the 21st Century, linking states and regions together for economic opportunity with a high-quality, balanced intermodal and multimodal transportation system that serves every American.

Goal 1.1. – Put 80% of Americans within 25 miles of a rail station by 2035

Objective 1.1.1. – Identify grassroots coalitions of communities, led by Mayors, MPOs and Chambers, that can join together to make an economic case for service to their region

Objective 1.1.2. – Develop economic-improvement cases for targeted, prioritized lists of communities set for expanded service

Objective 1.1.3. – Encourage Amtrak (via grassroots, local officials and federal legislators) and other new and potential operators to adopt an aggressive strategy for expanding service

Objective 1.1.4. – Encourage ALL providers, including Amtrak, to consider ways to ally to expand service rather than to view each other as competitors fragmenting the market

Goal 1.2. – Foster aggressive re-investment in critical infrastructure projects (such as the National Gateway, the Baltimore & Potomac tunnel, CrossRail Chicago) to address safety concerns and jump-start growth

Objective 1.2.1. – Build a task force of NARP members in these geographic areas to carry a unified message of concern to Mayors, MPOs and legislators, and the press

Objective 1.2.2. – Develop a national media-awareness campaign (in concert with like-minded partners such as T4A) to create new urgency around infrastructure investment

Objective 1.2.3. – Convene a working group of financial and investment experts to brainstorm creative approaches to the growing burden of financing these improvements, as well as finding a way around the logjam of investing in new modern rolling stock/passenger coaches

Objective 1.2.4. – Research and publish a report on “The Cost of Doing Nothing”

Goal 1.3. – Encourage Amtrak, states and MPOs to partner nationally in expanding intercity bus routes and direct intercity passenger train service to airports, especially international hubs, in order to unleash pent- up economic growth

Objective 1.3.1. – Use our national meetings as “summits” on this topic to foster conversation among the principals

Objective 1.3.2. – Ask our local members in leadership roles (Board, Council or affiliated ARPs) to organize informal gatherings (‘working lunches’) to kick-off these kinds of conversations at the local level

Objective 1.3.3. – NARP DC should write letters, work with DC contacts and join with the Airports Association International and the American Association of Airport Executives to campaign to allow airports to use AIP funds, passenger-facility charges or other revenue streams to plan, build and operate shared intermodal stations serving trains and buses

Objective 1.3.4. – Strengthen relationships with transportation associations and transit agencies to encourage the bus/rail/air link

Goal 1.4 – Replace today’s patchwork of infrequent service and outmoded equipment with frequent service operated with modern locomotives and passenger cars, outfitted with modern amenities on a first-world transportation infrastructure.

Objective 1.4.1 – Under the auspices of Objective 1.2.3., bring together the most creative minds in finance and investment to create a win-win solution to locomotive and coach investment

Objective 1.4.2. – Use our national meetings as “summits” on this topic to foster conversation among the principals

Priority 2: Build Partnerships

Increase our presence in national and local communities to amplify the voice and influence of the American passenger.

Goal 2.1. – Secure invitations to participate in policymaking at all levels

Objective 2.1.1. – Promote our availability to supply expertise for studies conducted by U.S. and state DOTs, the Federal Railroad Administration, or local MPOs

Objective 2.1.2. – Seek opportunities to be named in legislation (local, state, federal or tribal) directing that studies are conducted

Objective 2.1.3. – Seek out and respond to requests for information (RFIs), calls for papers, etc., via public notice processes

Goal 2.2. – Formally align with like-minded organizations who share our policy objectives

Goal 2.3 – Identify and cultivate potential non-traditional allies

Objective 2.3.1. – Work to develop formal agreements with five local Chambers of Commerce in 2017; continue to work on national Chamber

Objective 2.3.2. – Continue outreach to alternative transportation groups (bike-share alliances, new-urbanist transportation groups, etc.); sign at least one formal cooperation agreement in 2017

Objective 2.3.3. – Leverage NARP’s “Institutional Membership” program to bring MPOs, planning groups, local businesses and others into the NARP fold

Priority 3: Inspire Ingenuity

Harness the passion and knowledge of individual members to work from the “bottom up” in ways that are most effective in their communities’ circumstances.

Goal 3.1. – Develop and publish by April 2017 a list of initiatives and campaigns at the local level that cannot be accomplished by DC NARP staff

Objective 3.1.1. – Canvass members to identify and rank local priorities

Objective 3.1.2. – Anticipate 2017 federal legislative issues that may serve as tie-ins to local campaigns

Objective 3.1.3 – Begin to develop organization and structure of paid organizers in six NARP regions

Goal 3.2. – Solicit McCallum Grant proposals from local advocates, NARP members and state ARPs focused on local concerns

Priority 4: The Voice of America’s Passengers

Promote our recognition as the authoritative nationwide voice for the millions of fare-paying Americans whose dollars support intercity passenger rail, commuter rail, local transit and transit alternatives. We are not industry or government, but passengers.

Goal 4.1. – Continue to support our expanded professional media-relations infrastructure

Objective 4.1.1. – Secure our relationship with Xenophon Strategies

Objective 4.1.2. – Nationwide rollout of the campaign for A Connected America by summer 2017

Objective 4.1.3. – Expand social-media use to younger, non-rail audiences

Objective 4.1.4. – Aggressively pursue earned-media appearances at a higher rate than in previous years

Goal 4.2. – (REMOVED)

Goal 4.3. – Expand Customer Advisory Committee activities

Objective 4.3.1. – Promote the ability of NARP as a turnkey provider to build and operate customer-advisory committees on behalf of commuter-rail providers, charter operators and others

Objective 4.3.2. – Aggregate and publish “voice of passenger” information nationwide at least once per year as an independent third-party representation of the state of passenger rail in America; publicize widely

Goal 4.4. – Plan to develop and host a National Service Delivery Innovation Summit in 2018

Objective 4.4.1. – Create a process to consolidate and screen NARP members’ nominations for products and services that would improve service delivery aboard Amtrak trains

Objective 4.4.2. – Create a process to encourage Amtrak’s senior purchasers to share their needs and desires with NARP

Objective 4.4.3. – Develop the event strategy (location, timing, exhibit space/floor, pricing etc.) to support an initial event in 2018

Goal 4.5. – Convene a series of working groups to bridge the divide between passenger rail and freight operators

Objective 4.5.1. – Identify potential legislative solutions to the problem of Amtrak paying only minimally for access to the freight network

Priority 5: Create Member Value

Make being a member even more special – recognize the value and talent of each member; increase the fun and enhance fulfillment of the experience to make members want to stay and others to want to join, whether through successful advocacy, a sense of meaningful contribution, valuable personal benefits or simple camaraderie and fellowship.

Goal 5.1. – Re-emphasize member volunteer opportunities outside of Council or Board membership

Objective 5.1.1. – Re-examine volunteer position descriptions, re-write if necessary

Objective 5.1.2. – Develop “short-term” participation opportunities

Objective 5.1.3. – Examine feasibility of a “chapter” structure as a locus of local fellowship

Objective 5.1.4. – Develop “marketing” campaign for volunteer opportunities outside the NARP membership; encourage non-members, especially younger demographics, to join NARP for the purpose of volunteering for resume-building

Goal 5.2. – Renegotiate NARP member discount with Amtrak to be more appealing

Objective 5.2.1. – Work with Amtrak to increase discount for NARP membership

Objective 5.2.2. – Work to improve Amtrak Guest Rewards tie-ins

Objective 5.2.3. – Develop an annual “sale” discount program with Amtrak tied to new membership

Goal 5.3. – Examine a “chapter” structure to give NARP members a more local connection, with opportunities for social gatherings as well as “work”

Objective 5.3.1. – Develop “greenfield” chapter structure and pricing by April 2017

Objective 5.3.2. – Develop “affiliate” program structure and pricing for state ARPs by April 2017

Objective 5.3.3. – Develop schedule of activities and “toolkit” for members looking to found a chapter

Objective 5.3.4. – Review by Board in October 2017

Goal 5.4. – Survey members to learn what benefits they would value

Objective 5.4.1. – Collate survey responses in February 2017; identify benefits vendors/providers by April 30, 2017; begin benefits rollouts ASAP within 2017

Goal 5.5 – Enhance the Heritage Circle and Silver Rail Society

Objective 5.5.1. – Develop ways to make membership more “premium” April 2017

Objective 5.5.2. – Develop better and more regular recognition programs for Heritage Circle and Silver Rail Society members January 2017

Objective 5.5.3. – Develop additional member benefits and discount packages for premium members October 2017

Priority 6: Build The Future

Secure our membership base while broadening our appeal through effective advocacy and sound stewardship. Develop our organizational as well as functional leaders, beyond the DC office into the grassroots and volunteer leadership.

Goal 6.1. – Develop and execute national new-member campaign

Objective 6.1.1. – Plan campaign in late 2016 for January 2017 launch

Objective 6.1.2. – Identify potential large-scale partners (AARP, fraternities/sororities) for targeted new-member acquisition efforts in Spring 2017

Objective 6.1.3. – Highlight benefits for new members

Objective 6.1.4. – Seek third-party help to study obstacles to specific membership levels (50K, 100K, etc.) to find ways to overcome those obstacles

Goal 6.2. – Communicate our successes

Objective 6.2.1. – Highlight legislative successes more loudly and in more varied ways

Goal 6.3. – Improve our financial position

Objective 6.3.1. – Step up execution on existing non-dues revenue-generating initiatives; replace those that aren't working

Objective 6.3.2. – Develop at least three new non-dues revenue-generating initiatives for launch in January 2017

Objective 6.3.3. – By April 2017 map out a five-year revenue plan to get the Association balanced to one-third splits among membership revenue, events revenue and grants/sponsorships

Objective 6.3.4. – Continue to secure large endowments

Goal 6.4. – Encourage professional development among NARP professional staff and key volunteer leaders

Objective 6.4.1. – Make ASAE training more widely available

Objective 6.4.2. – Seek out training opportunities from partners and allies

Objective 6.4.3. – Identify free computer-based resources for training

Year 2018 – Goals and Objectives

Priority 1: A Connected America

Work vigorously to create a modern multimodal transportation network worthy of the 21st Century, linking states and regions together for economic opportunity with a high-quality, balanced intermodal and multimodal transportation system that serves every American.

Goal 1.1. – Put 80% of Americans within 25 miles of a rail station by 2035

Objective 1.1.1. – Convene in February 2018 a summit of grassroots coalitions of communities, led by Mayors, MPOs and Chambers, to make a unified economic case for service to their region

Objective 1.1.2. – By February 2018 review and update 2017 economic-improvement cases for targeted, prioritized lists of communities set for expanded service

Objective 1.1.3. – Encourage Amtrak (via grassroots, local officials and federal legislators) and other new and potential operators to adopt an aggressive strategy for expanding service

Objective 1.1.4. – Encourage ALL providers, including Amtrak, to consider ways to ally to expand service rather than to view each other as competitors fragmenting the market

Objective 1.1.5. – Publish and promote a report in March 2018 recommending service expansion strategies (based on input from coalition stakeholders, Amtrak and host railroads)

Goal 1.2. – Foster aggressive re-investment in critical infrastructure projects (such as the National Gateway, the Baltimore & Potomac tunnel, CrossRail Chicago) to address safety concerns and jump-start growth

Objective 1.2.1. – By February 2018, create a targeted advocacy list of legislative initiatives, local and federal, that the task forces set up in 2017 of NARP members in these geographic areas.

Objective 1.2.2. – Examine ways to “clone” the Southern Rail Commission (in partnership with SRC principals) so as to duplicate the authoritative success of the Commission and create regional power centers to press for investment

Objective 1.2.3. – Re-convene the working group of financial and investment experts to brainstorm creative approaches to the growing burden of financing these improvements, as well as finding a way around the logjam of investing in new modern rolling stock/passenger coaches

Objective 1.2.4. – Research and publish an annual report in February 2018 on “The Cost of Doing Nothing”

Goal 1.3. – Encourage Amtrak, states and MPOs to partner nationally in expanding intercity bus routes and direct intercity passenger train service to airports, especially international hubs, in order to unleash pent- up economic growth

Objective 1.3.1. – Use our national meetings as “summits” on this topic to foster conversation among the principals

Objective 1.3.2. – Ask our local members in leadership roles (Board, Council or affiliated ARPs) to organize informal gatherings (‘working lunches’) to kick-off these kinds of conversations at the local level

Objective 1.3.3. – Depending on status of achievement in 2017, NARP DC should write letters, work with DC contacts and join with the Airports Association International and the American Association of Airport Executives to campaign to allow airports to use AIP funds, passenger-facility charges or other revenue streams to plan, build and operate shared intermodal stations serving trains and buses

Objective 1.3.4. – Strengthen relationships with transportation and transit agencies and others to encourage the bus/rail/air link

Goal 1.4 – Replace today’s patchwork of infrequent service and outmoded equipment with frequent service operated with modern locomotives and passenger cars, outfitted with modern amenities on a first-world transportation infrastructure.

Objective 1.4.1 – Under the auspices of Objective 1.2.3., bring together the most creative minds in finance and investment to create a win-win solution to locomotive and coach investment

Objective 1.4.2. – Use our national meetings as “summits” on this topic to foster conversation among the principals

Priority 2: Build Partnerships

Increase our presence in national and local communities to amplify the voice and influence of the American passenger.

Goal 2.1. – Secure invitations to participate in policymaking at all levels

Objective 2.1.1. – Promote our availability to supply expertise for studies conducted by U.S. and state DOTs, the Federal Railroad Administration, or local MPOs

Objective 2.1.2. – Seek opportunities to be named in legislation (local, state, federal and tribal) directing that studies are conducted

Objective 2.1.3. – Seek out and respond to requests for information (RFIs), calls for papers, etc., via public notice processes

Goal 2.2. – Formally align with like-minded organizations who share our policy objectives

Goal 2.3 – Identify and cultivate potential non-traditional allies

Objective 2.3.1. – Work to develop formal agreements with five additional local Chambers of Commerce in 2018; continue to work on national Chamber

Objective 2.3.2. – Continue outreach to alternative transportation groups (bike-share alliances, new-urbanist transportation groups, etc.); sign at least one additional formal cooperation agreement in 2018

Objective 2.3.3. – Leverage NARP’s “Institutional Membership” program to bring MPOs, planning groups, local businesses and others into the NARP fold

Priority 3: Inspire Ingenuity

Harness the passion and knowledge of individual members to work from the “bottom up” in ways that are most effective in their communities’ circumstances.

Goal 3.1. – Refine local initiatives and campaigns list to add new priorities for 2018

Objective 3.1.1. – Canvass members to identify and rank local priorities

Objective 3.1.2. – Anticipate 2018 federal legislative issues that may serve as tie-ins to local campaigns

Objective 3.1.3 – Expand organization and structure of paid organizers in six NARP regions

Goal 3.2. – Solicit McCallum Grant proposals from local advocates, NARP members and state ARPs focused on local concerns

Goal 3.3. – Publish status updates by April 2018 of the previously developed list of initiatives and campaigns at the local level that cannot be accomplished by DC NARP staff

Priority 4: The Voice of America’s Passengers

Promote our recognition as the authoritative nationwide voice for the millions of fare-paying Americans whose dollars support intercity passenger rail, commuter rail, local transit and transit alternatives. We are not industry or government, but passengers.

Goal 4.1. – Continue to support our expanded professional media-relations infrastructure

Objective 4.1.1. – Secure our relationship with Xenophon Strategies

Objective 4.1.2. – Continued-awareness/sustainment campaign for A Connected America; May 2018

Objective 4.1.3. – Expand social-media use to younger, non-rail audiences
Objective 4.1.4. – Aggressively pursue earned-media appearances

Goal 4.2. – (REMOVED)

Goal 4.3. – Expand Customer Advisory Committee activities

Objective 4.3.1. – Promote NARP’s ability to act as a turnkey provider to build and operate customer-advisory committees on behalf of commuter-rail providers, charter operators and others

Objective 4.3.2. – Aggregate and publish “voice of passenger” information nationwide at least once per year as an independent third-party representation of the state of passenger rail in America; publicize widely

Goal 4.4. – Host the National Service Delivery Innovation Summit in 2018

Objective 4.4.1. – Consolidate and screen NARP members’ nominations for products and services that would improve service delivery aboard Amtrak trains

Objective 4.4.2. – Confirm participation of Amtrak’s senior purchasers to share their needs and desires with NARP

Objective 4.4.3. – Finalize event strategy (location, timing, exhibit space/floor, pricing etc.) to support an initial event in early September 2018 (to support fiscal-year decision-making)

Goal 4.5. – Continue to support a series of working groups to bridge the divide between passenger rail and freight operators

Objective 4.5.1. – Identify potential legislative solutions to the problem of Amtrak paying only minimally for access to the freight network

Priority 5: Create Member Value

Make being a member even more special – recognize the value and talent of each member; increase the fun and enhance fulfillment of the experience to make members want to stay and others to want to join, whether through successful advocacy, a sense of meaningful contribution, valuable personal benefits or simple camaraderie and fellowship.

Goal 5.1. – Re-emphasize member volunteer opportunities outside of Council or Board membership

Objective 5.1.1. – Develop “short-term” participation opportunities

Objective 5.1.2. – Develop “marketing” campaign for volunteer opportunities outside the NARP membership; encourage non-members, especially younger demographics, to join NARP for the purpose of volunteering for resume-building

Goal 5.2. – Ensure NARP member discount with Amtrak remains appealing

Objective 5.2.1. – Work with Amtrak to identify affinity offers for NARP membership

Objective 5.2.2. – Work to improve Amtrak Guest Rewards tie-ins

Objective 5.2.3. – Develop an annual “sale” discount program with Amtrak tied to new membership

Goal 5.3. – Launch “chapter” structure to give NARP members a more local connection, with opportunities for social gatherings as well as “work” (January 2018)

Objective 5.3.1. – Distribute schedule of activities and “toolkit” for members looking to found a chapter (December 2017)

Objective 5.3.2. – Identify target list of initial “chapters” by January 2018

Objective 5.3.3. – Begin opening chapters January 2018

Objective 5.3.4. – Chapters Reception Celebration at April 2018 Day on the Hill meeting

Goal 5.4. – Survey members to learn what benefits they would value

Objective 5.4.1. – Collate survey responses in February 2018; identify benefits vendors/providers by April 30, 2018; begin benefits rollouts ASAP within 2018

Goal 5.5 – Promote the “enhanced” Heritage Circle and Silver Rail Society

Objective 5.5.1. – Execute and promote better and more regular recognition programs for Heritage Circle and Silver Rail Society members

Objective 5.5.2. – Develop additional member benefits and discount packages for premium members October 2018

Objective 5.5.3. – Work with Amtrak Vacations to develop premium tour discounts for Heritage Circle and Silver Rail members

Priority 6: Build The Future

Secure our membership base while broadening our appeal through effective advocacy and sound stewardship. Develop our organizational as well as functional leaders, beyond the DC office into the grassroots and volunteer leadership.

Goal 6.1. – Develop and execute annual national new-member campaign

Objective 6.1.1. – Plan campaign in late 2017 for January 2018 launch

Objective 6.1.2. – Identify potential large-scale partners (AARP, fraternities/sororities) for targeted new-member acquisition efforts in Spring 2018

Objective 6.1.3. – Highlight benefits for new members

Objective 6.1.4. – Execute plan to remove 2017 identified obstacles to specific membership levels (50K, 100K, etc.)

Goal 6.2. – Communicate our successes

Objective 6.2.1. – Highlight legislative successes more loudly and in more varied ways

Goal 6.3. – Improve our financial position

Objective 6.3.1. – Step up execution on existing non-dues revenue-generating initiatives; replace those that aren't working

Objective 6.3.2. – Develop at least three new non-dues revenue-generating initiatives for launch in January 2018

Objective 6.3.3. – Continue to execute steps outlined in 2017 five-year revenue plan to get the Association balanced to one-third splits among membership revenue, events revenue and grants/sponsorships

Objective 6.3.4. – Continue to secure large endowments such as the McCallum gift

Goal 6.4. – Encourage professional development among NARP professional staff and key volunteer leaders

Objective 6.4.1. – Make ASAE training more widely available

Objective 6.4.2. – Seek out training opportunities from partners and allies

Objective 6.4.3. – Identify free computer-based resources for training

Year 2019 – Goals and Objectives

Priority 1: A Connected America

Work vigorously to create a modern multimodal transportation network worthy of the 21st Century, linking states and regions together for economic opportunity with a high-quality, balanced intermodal and multimodal transportation system that serves every American.

Goal 1.1. – Put 80% of Americans within 25 miles of a rail station by 2035

Objective 1.1.1. – Convene in February 2019 a policy summit on progress of service expansion efforts recommended by grassroots community coalitions; issue a national “Report Card” on how it’s going and who is being left behind

Objective 1.1.2. – By February 2019 review and update 2018 economic-improvement cases for targeted, prioritized lists of communities set for expanded service

Objective 1.1.3. – Encourage Amtrak (via grassroots, local officials and federal legislators) and other new and potential operators to adopt an aggressive strategy for expanding service

Objective 1.1.4. – Encourage all providers, including Amtrak, to consider ways to ally to expand service rather than to view each other as competitors fragmenting the market

Goal 1.2. – Foster aggressive re-investment in critical infrastructure projects (such as the National Gateway, the Baltimore & Potomac tunnel, CrossRail Chicago) to address safety concerns and jump-start growth

Objective 1.2.1. – Update by February 2019 the targeted advocacy list of legislative initiatives, local and federal, set up by 2017 NARP-led task forces in these geographic areas.

Objective 1.2.2. – If feasible, move forward with efforts to “clone” the Southern Rail Commission (in partnership with SRC principals) so as to duplicate the authoritative success of the Commission and create regional power centers to press for investment

Objective 1.2.3. – Re-convene the working group of financial and investment experts to brainstorm creative approaches to the growing burden of financing these improvements, as well as finding a way around the logjam of investing in new modern rolling stock/passenger coaches

Objective 1.2.4. – Research and publish an annual report in February 2019 on “The Cost of Doing Nothing”

Goal 1.3. – Encourage Amtrak, states and MPOs to partner nationally in expanding intercity bus routes and direct intercity passenger train service to airports, especially international hubs, in order to unleash pent- up economic growth

Objective 1.3.1. – Use our national meetings as “summits” on this topic to foster conversation among the principals

Objective 1.3.2. – Ask our local members in leadership roles (Board, Council or affiliated ARPs) to organize informal gatherings (‘working lunches’) to kick-off these kinds of conversations at the local level

Objective 1.3.3. – Depending on status of achievement in 2017 and 2018, NARP DC should write letters, work with DC contacts and join with the Airports Association International and the American Association of Airport Executives to campaign to allow airports to use AIP funds, passenger-facility charges or other revenue streams to plan, build and operate shared intermodal stations serving trains and buses

Goal 1.4 – Replace today’s patchwork of infrequent service and outmoded equipment with frequent service operated with modern locomotives and passenger cars, outfitted with modern amenities on a first-world transportation infrastructure.

Objective 1.4.1 – Under the auspices of Objective 1.2.3., bring together the most creative minds in finance and investment to create a win-win solution to locomotive and coach investment

Objective 1.4.2. – Use our national meetings as “summits” on this topic to foster conversation among the principals

Priority 2: Build Partnerships

Increase our presence in national and local communities to amplify the voice and influence of the American passenger.

Goal 2.1. – Secure invitations to participate in policymaking at all levels

Objective 2.1.1. – Promote our availability to supply expertise for studies conducted by U.S. and state DOTs, the Federal Railroad Administration, or local MPOs

Objective 2.1.2. – Seek opportunities to be named in legislation (local, state, federal and tribal) directing that studies are conducted

Objective 2.1.3. – Seek out and respond to requests for information (RFIs), calls for papers, etc., via public notice processes

Goal 2.2. – Formally align with like-minded organizations who share our policy objectives

Objective 2.2.1. – Identify additional groups with whom a profitable alliance might be forged

Goal 2.3 – Identify and cultivate potential non-traditional allies

Objective 2.3.1. – Work to develop formal agreements with five additional local Chambers of Commerce in 2019; continue to work on national Chamber

Objective 2.3.2. – Continue outreach to alternative transportation groups (bike-share alliances, new-urbanist transportation groups, etc.); sign at least one additional formal cooperation agreement in 2019

Objective 2.3.3. – Leverage NARP’s “Institutional Membership” program to bring MPOs, planning groups, local businesses and others into the NARP fold

Priority 3: Inspire Ingenuity

Harness the passion and knowledge of individual members to work from the “bottom up” in ways that are most effective in their communities’ circumstances.

Goal 3.1. – Refine local initiatives and campaigns list to add new priorities for 2019

Objective 3.1.1. – Canvass members to identify and rank local priorities

Objective 3.1.2. – Anticipate 2019 federal legislative issues that may serve as tie-ins to local campaigns

Objective 3.1.3 – Expand organization and structure of paid organizers in six NARP regions

Goal 3.2. – Solicit McCallum Grant proposals from local advocates, NARP members and state ARPs focused on local concerns

Goal 3.3. – Publish status updates by April 2019 of the previously developed list of initiatives and campaigns at the local level that cannot be accomplished by DC NARP staff

Priority 4: The Voice of America’s Passengers

Promote our recognition as the authoritative nationwide voice for the millions of fare-paying Americans whose dollars support intercity passenger rail, commuter rail, local transit and transit alternatives. We are not industry or government, but passengers.

Goal 4.1. – Continue to support our expanded professional media-relations infrastructure

Objective 4.1.1. – Secure our relationship with Xenophon Strategies

Objective 4.1.2. – Continued-awareness/sustainment campaign for A Connected America; February 2019

- Objective 4.1.3. – Expand social-media use to younger, non-rail audiences
- Objective 4.1.4. – Aggressively pursue earned-media appearances

Goal 4.2. – (REMOVED)

Goal 4.3. – Expand Customer Advisory Committee activities

Objective 4.3.1. – Promote NARP’s ability to act as a turnkey provider to build and operate customer-advisory committees on behalf of commuter-rail providers, charter operators and others

Objective 4.3.2. – Aggregate and publish “voice of passenger” information nationwide at least once per year as an independent third-party representation of the state of passenger rail in America; publicize widely

Goal 4.4. – Host the second National Service Delivery Innovation Summit in 2019

Objective 4.4.1. – Consolidate and screen NARP members’ nominations for products and services that would improve service delivery aboard Amtrak trains

Objective 4.4.2. – Confirm participation of Amtrak’s senior purchasers to share their needs and desires with NARP

Objective 4.4.3. – Finalize event strategy (location, timing, exhibit space/floor, pricing etc.) to support an event in early September 2019 (to support fiscal-year decision-making)

Goal 4.5. – Continue to support a series of working groups to bridge the divide between passenger rail and freight operators

Objective 4.5.1. – Identify potential legislative solutions to the problem of Amtrak paying only minimally for access to the freight network

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Objective 5.1.1. – Develop “short-term” participation opportunities

Objective 5.1.2. – Develop “marketing” campaign for volunteer opportunities outside the NARP membership; encourage non-members, especially younger demographics, to join NARP for the purpose of volunteering for resume-building

Goal 5.2. – Ensure NARP member discount with Amtrak remains appealing

Objective 5.2.1. – Work with Amtrak to identify affinity offers for NARP membership

Objective 5.2.2. – Work to improve Amtrak Guest Rewards tie-ins

Objective 5.2.3. – Develop an annual “sale” discount program with Amtrak tied to new membership

Goal 5.3. – Continue to support launch of NARP “chapters” to give NARP members a more local connection, with opportunities for social gatherings as well as “work”

Objective 5.3.1. – Distribute schedule of activities and “toolkit” for members looking to found a chapter

Objective 5.3.2. – Chapters Reception Celebration at April 2018 Day on the Hill meeting

Objective 5.3.3. – Develop a “chapter news” publicity channel to highlight and promote the fun events and initiatives being launched locally

Goal 5.4. – Survey members to learn what benefits they would value

Objective 5.4.1. – Collate survey responses in February 2019; identify benefits vendors/providers by April 30, 2019; begin benefits rollouts ASAP within 2019

Goal 5.5 – Promote the “enhanced” Heritage Circle and Silver Rail Society

Objective 5.5.1. – Execute and promote better and more regular recognition programs for Heritage Circle and Silver Rail Society members

Objective 5.5.2. – Develop additional member benefits and discount packages for premium members October 2019

Priority 6: Build The Future

Secure our membership base while broadening our appeal through effective advocacy and sound stewardship. Develop our organizational as well as functional leaders, beyond the DC office into the grassroots and volunteer leadership.

Goal 6.1. – Develop and execute annual national new-member campaign

Objective 6.1.1. – Plan campaign in late 2018 for January 2019 launch

Objective 6.1.2. – Identify potential large-scale partners (AARP, fraternities/sororities) for targeted new-member acquisition efforts in Spring 2019

Objective 6.1.3. – Highlight benefits for new members

Objective 6.1.4. – Continue to execute plan to remove 2017 identified obstacles to specific membership levels (50K, 100K, etc.)

Goal 6.2. – Communicate our successes

Objective 6.2.1. – Highlight legislative successes more loudly and in more varied ways

Goal 6.3. – Improve our financial position

Objective 6.3.1. – Step up execution on existing non-dues revenue-generating initiatives; replace those that aren't working

Objective 6.3.2. – Develop at least three new non-dues revenue-generating initiatives for launch in January 2019

Objective 6.3.3. – Continue to execute steps outlined in 2017 five-year revenue plan to get the Association balanced to one-third splits among membership revenue, events revenue and grants/sponsorships

Objective 6.3.4. – Continue to secure large endowments such as the McCallum gift

Goal 6.4. – Encourage professional development among NARP professional staff and key volunteer leaders

Objective 6.4.1. – Make ASAE training more widely available

Objective 6.4.2. – Seek out training opportunities from partners and allies

Objective 6.4.3. – Identify free computer-based resources for training