

## What is the Northern Branch?

The Northern Branch is a single-track rail line running from North Bergen in Hudson County through the Bergen County communities of Fairview, Ridgefield, Palisades Park, Leonia, Englewood and Tenafly. The Northern Branch project is approximately eleven miles long. The line is owned by CSX Transportation which operates freight trains on the line to service a small number of customers.

### What is planned?

NJ Transit plans to operate passenger rail service on the Northern Branch, as an extension of the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLRT) system from its current terminus at Tonnelle Avenue in North Bergen to Tenafly. NJ Transit has selected as a preferred alternative electric-powered Light Rail Vehicles to provide this service.

### Where will it take me?

The Northern Branch will serve the easternmost tier of Bergen County, and riders can transfer to ferries at Port Imperial and to the PATH system and seven of the ten lines of the NJ Transit rail system at Hoboken.

### Will people ride it?

NJ Transit has performed an analysis showing that extension of the HBLRT to Tenafly will attract 24,000 passenger trips daily by the year 2030.

### Will it reduce driving?

Analysis by NJ Transit showed that extension of the HBLRT to Tenafly will take 8,500 cars off the road each day.

### What will service be like?

NJ Transit plans to operate service from early morning through late evening hours, seven days a week, with trains running every 6-12 minutes at rush hour. A trip from Tenafly to Hoboken would take 37 minutes.

### What will it look like?

Light Rail Vehicles on the Northern Branch will most likely look similar to those already operating on the HBLRT and Newark Light Rail.

### Will it be noisy?

No. Electric-powered Light Rail Vehicles produce less noise than equivalent diesel trains or buses. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the project will contain a detailed assessment of the noise impacts from the Northern Branch.

### Will it be safe?

Yes. An analysis by the Transportation Research Board showed that Light Rail systems are safe and that Light Rail accidents at any given location are very rare.

### How clean is it?

Electric-powered Light Rail Vehicles emit no pollutants. Power is supplied by overhead wires; no fuel is burned by the Light Rail Vehicle.

### What will it cost?

Preliminary cost is estimated to be between \$800 and \$900 million and is included in the joint long-range capital programs of the NJDOT and NJ Transit, which taps into both Federal and State Transportation Trust Funds.

### What about property values?

While property values have not yet been studied in detail along the Northern Branch, experience has shown that property values have increased in New Jersey communities where new or improved rail service has been implemented.

### What is the status?

NJ Transit has prepared a Draft EIS and submitted it to the FTA (Federal Transit Administration). The Draft EIS is currently being reviewed by the FTA. NJ Transit is currently proceeding with requested modifications and will submit the changes by early spring 2011. Once the FTA has finalized the Draft EIS, it will be released for public input and comment as required by the EIS process. Upon completion of the comment period, NJ Transit may proceed with the project. More information about the EIS can be found on the project website:

[www.northernbranchcorridor.com](http://www.northernbranchcorridor.com)

### What are the major issues?

- The Borough of Tenafly opposes new rail transit service running through the center of town.
- The Borough of Leonia, while it does not oppose the rail line, is against the construction of the 500 to 600 parking spaces that NJ Transit feels are necessary to support the service. Leonia wants a small parking area with drop-off only.

NJ Transit has stated that the rail line would not be competitive if it cannot attract a sufficient number of riders and provide enough parking to meet demand. NJ Transit also confirms that competition for Federal funding is tight. The FTA will be looking for agreement amongst the affected municipalities that the rail line is supported along the length of the corridor to move the project forward and receive FTA support.