

Amtrak proposes \$6.5B Philadelphia railyard overhaul

By Kim Slowey | June 17, 2016



Dive Brief:

- After a two-year, \$5.25 million study, Amtrak has proposed a \$6.5 billion, 35-year plan to redevelop a 175-acre parcel of land around one of its Philadelphia stations, The Philadelphia Inquirer reported.
- Amtrak's plan for 18 million square feet of "dense urban neighborhood" includes new housing for 10,000 residents and 1.2 million square feet of commercial space, all partially built over 88 acres of existing rail yards in the city's University City area.
- Amtrak said the plan — the details of which are largely contingent on the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority's (SEPTA) decision about the location of an underground concourse — requires \$2 billion of infrastructure investment, which will make \$4.5 billion of private investment possible.

Dive Insight:

Amtrak has also proposed a relocation of a major expressway ramp to serve a new bus terminal north of the station, a new plaza around the existing Amtrak station, and a revamp of the station's interior with a retail component and new passenger concourse. Partners in the Amtrak study also included Drexel University, Brandywine Realty Trust, SEPTA, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

Cities across the U.S. are seeing an influx in major developments. Last month, developer Related Midwest announced its plans to build a 62-acre, multibillion-dollar mixed-use development in the middle of Chicago on an abandoned rail yard. Their goal is to fill the space — now a gathering place and makeshift camp for the city's homeless — with office, retail and residential development, much like it is in the process of doing in New York City with its Hudson Yards project.

A recent study determined that the 28-acre, \$25 billion Hudson Yards project will add \$18.9 billion to the city's economy by the time it's completed and will make up 2.5% of its gross domestic product. The study said the development will also generate approximately \$500 million in city taxes and 5,000 affordable housing units. The first commercial tower in Hudson Yards opened a few weeks ago, and the next phase of development will see construction begin over the existing rail yards on the property.

source: www.constructiondive.com