

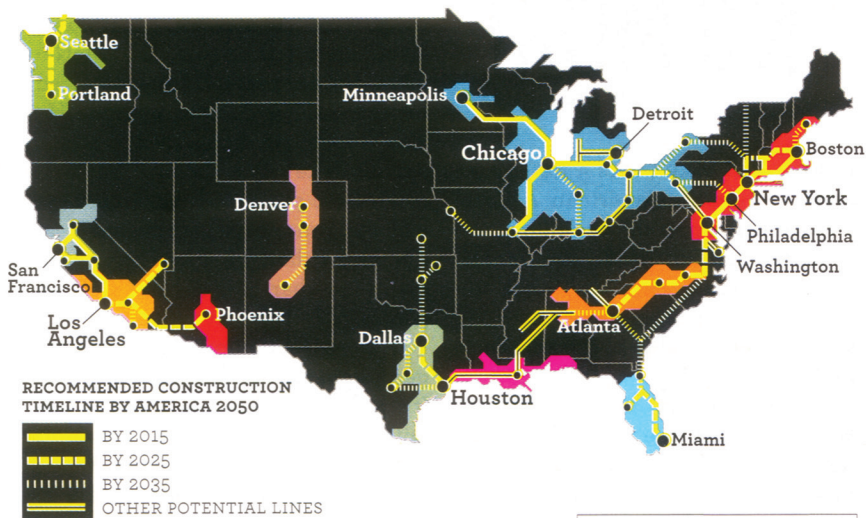
A NEED FOR SPEED?

BY ANDREW ROMANO

"IMAGINE BOARDING A TRAIN IN THE CENTER OF A CITY ... WHISKING through towns at speeds over 100 mph ... and ending up just blocks from your destination." That's the vision President Obama laid out in April while unveiling his plan to spend \$13 billion on high-speed rail (HSR) by 2014. But will it ever become a reality? Next month, D.C. will split the first funds among 11 designated corridors. A road map for the journey ahead:

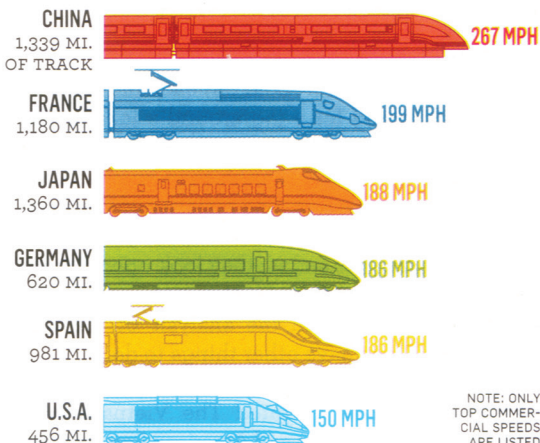
A BETTER-CONNECTED AMERICA

Advocates see HSR as a green way to link the megaregions of the future (shaded). Start with the highest-impact projects, they say, *then* grow the network.

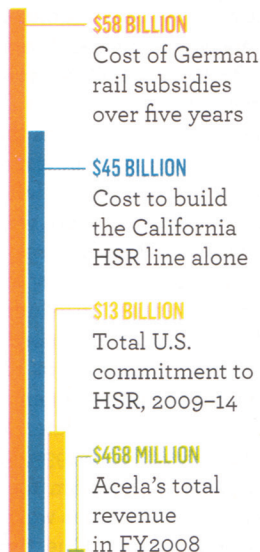


HOW THE U.S. MEASURES UP

With only one slower, shorter line in service (the Acela), we're far behind the leading HSR nations.



STICKER SHOCK



SOURCES: AMERICA 2050; U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE; AMTRAK