Study Goal

Produce a 40-year framework for the Midwest intercity passenger rail network, including a prioritization of corridors and investment projects, a governance structure, and funding strategy.
FRA Regional Rail Planning Efforts

Midwest Regional Rail Plan
Southeast Regional Rail Plan
Southwest Regional Rail Plan

Study Participants

- Stakeholder Planning Group
  - Primary Midwest Rail Plan States (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI)
  - Other stakeholders: host and operating railroads, MIPRC, MPOs and municipalities, advocacy groups
- Complementary Jurisdictions: KY, NY (Buffalo), TN, PA (Pittsburgh), WV, Ontario
Elements of a Regional Rail Plan

- Baseline Conditions & Market Assessment
- Generalized Network Vision & Service Plan
- Governance Strategies
- Prioritized Investments & Map
- Costs, Benefits & Funding

Draft Regional Rail Plan \rightarrow State-by-State Adoption \rightarrow Adopted Regional Rail Plan

(intl. incorporation into STIPs and State Rail Plans as needed)

Intended Study Outcomes

**A Regional Intercity Passenger Rail Plan for the Midwest**

- Summary of existing rail and transportation plans
- Assessment of existing and potential future passenger travel demand
- Analysis of the performance of each corridor as a standalone investment and as part of a potential network
- A high-level prioritization of Midwest corridors
- A Midwest governance structure that originates primarily from the Midwest state DOTs
- A benefit-cost analysis for the regional network
- Lessons learned to provide comprehensive regional rail planning guidance
What the Study is NOT

• DOES NOT identify specific routes or alignments for corridors that make up the network
• DOES NOT identify specific station locations
• DOES NOT come to conclusions regarding capacity or operating feasibility
• DOES NOT represent a commitment to implementing specific projects

Regional Plan in Context

Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study
**Strategic Plan** – Provides Framework for Investments
• Sets service goals
• Identifies Opportunities for Network Integration

State Rail Plans

Corridor Implementation Plans
1. **Lead Stakeholders (States)**
2. **Other Planning Group Stakeholders**
3. **All other interested parties**

**Stakeholder Engagement Goals**

- *Inform the work being undertaken by FRA and the consultant team;*
- *Achieve support and consensus on the outcome of the planning study; and,*
- *Encourage on-going participation in advancing the projects and programs required to implement the Midwest framework.*
Study Milestones to Date

- September 2016 – Study Kickoff
- January 2017 – Stakeholder Planning Group Established
- March 2017 – Stakeholder Meeting, Chicago – Baseline Condition
- June 2017 – Stakeholder Meeting, Saint Paul – Network Building Blocks
- September 2017 – Stakeholder Meeting, Detroit – Subnetwork Concepts
- December 2017 – Stakeholder Meeting, Chicago – Draft Regional Network
- February 2018 – Contract Lapse
- September 2018 – Contract Renewed
- Spring 2018-Spring 2019 – CONNECT Model Refinements
- September 2019 – Contract for Additional CONNECT Analysis

High-level View of Plan Process
CONNECT Overview

- **CONceptual NEtwork Connection Tool**
- **Sketch-planning** tool developed by FRA that estimates the performance of intercity passenger rail corridors and networks
- Intended for use at the outset of the planning process, primarily in a regional network context
- Relies on a national trip table for markets between 50 to 850 miles apart
- Provides high-level CBSA-to-CBSA ridership and revenue forecasts based on proposed frequencies and service levels, as well as capital cost and O&M cost estimates, benefit-cost analysis, and other performance indicators

Technical Approach

Three Elements of Integrated Rail Planning

1. Market Demand
2. Infrastructure Assessment
3. Service Planning / Network Integration
Goals and Principles

Shared Regional Network Planning Goals
1) Maximize the utility of capital investment across the full range of potential markets and passenger types
2) Improve regional and intercity rail connections between small/mid-sized cities and large metropolitan areas; and among mid-sized cities within the Midwest
3) Advance corridors that maximize ridership (new)
4) Build toward the maximum viable service tier for corridors in network
5) Encourage capital investment in the short-term that is consistent with state’s plans and the long-term network vision
6) Support improvements that are mutually beneficial to passenger and freight rail (new)
7) Minimize the friction of passenger transfers
8) Progress regional networks that support national and urban needs (new)
9) Maximize economic opportunities from passenger rail corridor development (new)
10) Consider regional and intercity rail connections to major airports within the region

Goals and Principles

Service Principles – Service Tiers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corridors</th>
<th>Top Speeds (mph)</th>
<th>Other Common Characteristics</th>
<th>Primary Markets Served</th>
<th>Minimum Reliability Target (On-time Performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Express</td>
<td>over 125</td>
<td>Frequent service; dedicated tracks, except in terminal areas; electric-powered</td>
<td>Serving major metropolitan centers</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional</td>
<td>90–125</td>
<td>Frequent service; dedicated and shared tracks; electric- and diesel-powered</td>
<td>Connecting mid-sized urban areas with each other or with larger metropolitan areas</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emerging / Feeder</td>
<td>Up to 90</td>
<td>Shared tracks</td>
<td>Connecting mid-sized and smaller urban areas with each other or with larger metropolitan areas</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Independent</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Corridors that have minimal effect on network performance and/or where minimal ridership connects through to the rest of the network</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Insights on Study Objectives

- Not looking to make bold conclusions
  - Define corridors based on the core, essential markets
  - Define levels-of-service broadly (i.e. by Service Tier)
- Focus on ruling out unpromising options, not identifying a single, detailed preferred option
- Recognize value of existing and proposed services that are independent of the regional network

Initial Draft Network
Indianapolis Travel Times – Core Express

In Core Express, over 80% of all trips (auto, air, bus) are between markets that are accessible by rail in under 4 hours.

Travel Market
Composition of Rail Ridership

Overall network ridership increases by ~11 M from Regional to Core, however, the proportion of where those trips come from is relatively constant.

Importance of Governance

- The implementation of a Regional Rail Plan requires extensive coordination
- A governance structure can facilitate the coordination and implementation of the plan and its projects across multiple jurisdictions
  - Formalize roles and responsibilities
  - Develop protocols and decision-making procedures
  - Establish accountability and oversight
  - Represent individual states’ and other stakeholders’ objectives
- A functioning governance framework can sustain the momentum of the regional plan
**Governance Models**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Based on Collaboration or Agreement</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Authorized by Legislation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordinated State Efforts</td>
<td>Single State Agency Contracting with/ on behalf of other States</td>
<td>Public / Private Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition/ Partnership</td>
<td>Multi-State Commission</td>
<td>Multi-State Special Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federal-State Commission</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lessons from Stakeholder Input**

*Path Forward on Governance*

- MIPRC acknowledged by all as a success
- Catch-22 for more detailed, deeper institutional arrangements (project-specific agreements, operating oversight, etc.)
  - Attracting implementation funding calls for formalizing supporting institutional arrangements
  - Takes effort and political capital to create institutional arrangements, but hesitancy to make effort until money is on the table
Need for Follow-On Analysis

• CONNECT model improvements Spring 2018 – Spring 2019
• New, more consistent Auto trip table for demand forecasting
• Possible implications for initial study conclusions
• What path forward for the MWRRPS?

Follow-On Work Plan

Follow-on contract proposal received May 2019, Executed September 2019

1. Review effect of CONNECT refinements
   • Baseline Conditions
   • Market Assessment
   • Network Concepts
2. CONNECT analysis of potential network concept changes
3. Stakeholder Planning Group Engagement
   • Webinar on CONNECT effects - ~ February 2020
   • Meeting on potential network changes - ~ June 2020
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