Working to implement a 21st century passenger rail system by adding the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative network and additional state-supported corridors to the region’s existing passenger rail infrastructure.
State Reports

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- North Dakota
- Wisconsin

Illinois DOT Update
Beth McCluskey, Intermodal Project Implementation
MIPRC
October 9, 2017
Passenger Rail in Illinois

- Amtrak operates 56 daily trains in and through Illinois.
- Amtrak serves nearly 5 million riders at Illinois stations.
- Illinois subsidizes 30 state-sponsored trains that provide service in 4 regional corridors, with 2 million annual riders.

Amtrak Illinois Corridors

- Chicago – Milwaukee Hiawatha Service
  (jointly supported with WisDOT)
  - 7 daily round trips (6 on Sundays)
- Chicago - St. Louis Lincoln Service
  - 4 daily round trips
- Chicago – Quincy IL Zephyr/Carl Sandburg
  - 2 daily round trips
- Chicago – Carbondale Illini/Saluki
  - 2 daily round trips
Studies for future improvements

» Chicago to Detroit EIS
» Chicago to Milwaukee EA
» Chicago Terminal Zone Study
» Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study

Chicago to Detroit-Pontiac EIS

» Partnership between Michigan, Indiana and Illinois DOTs in association with the FRA
» Evaluating passenger rail improvements for the Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac passenger rail corridor
» Completion of EIS positions Chicago-Detroit-Pontiac corridor for future federal funding when available
» http://www.greatlakesrail.org/
Chicago to Milwaukee EA

- Partnership between Illinois and Wisconsin DOTs, in association with the FRA
- Evaluating expansion of Hiawatha service up to 10 round trips per day
- Completion of EA positions corridor for future federal funding when available.

Chicago Terminal Study

- FRA grant to Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), and Metra
- Study will yield recommendations for: improved intercity passenger rail service in the Midwest; long-distance Amtrak trains; planned expansion of Metra rail service
- Study will supplement rail planning efforts:  
  - Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac Corridor  
  - Chicago/Joliet corridor  
  - CREATE program  
  - Chicago Union Station (CUS) Master Planning Study
Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study

- FRA-led planning study exploring potential for a high-performance multi-state intercity passenger rail network in Midwest, utilizing sophisticated FRA model CONNECT, which can estimate ridership and costs for intercity rail networks.
- Study builds on previous planning efforts, including Midwest Regional Rail Initiative.
- Will ultimately provide a strategic 40-year framework out to 2055 for the Midwest passenger rail network, service, financing and governance.
- Coordination with 12 Midwest states, including multiple stakeholder events throughout 2017.

Chicago to Quad Cities Passenger Rail Service

- Proposed Amtrak Service between Chicago and Moline with stops at La Grange, Naperville, Plano, Mendota, Princeton, and Geneseo (new station).
- Uses existing BNSF line between Chicago and Princeton, and Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS) from west of Princeton (Wyanet) to Moline.
- Program currently totaling approximately $225 Million.
- Preliminary engineering activities with Iowa Interstate resuming with IDOT’s program manager (design, environmental, construction management services). We anticipate the completion of scoping by June 2018.
Chicago – St. Louis HSR

Chicago to St. Louis Corridor with 9 stops in between

13 Counties
Cook, DuPage, Will, Grundy, Livingston, McLean, Logan, Sangamon, Macoupin, Jersey, Madison, St. Clair, and St. Louis
Current Program Budget: $1.95 Billion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Track &amp; Structures</td>
<td>$637 Million</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Crossings, Fencing, OH Bridges</td>
<td>$194 Million</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>$40 Million</td>
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<td>Stations</td>
<td>$35 Million</td>
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<td>Rolling Stock/Equipment</td>
<td>$609 Million</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<td>Signal &amp; Communications</td>
<td>$205 Million</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Services</td>
<td>$231 Million</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,951 Million</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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Note: This summary does not include Tier 1 and Tier 2 EIS's, Joliet Multimodal, or other individual projects.

What are we building?

- Upgrades for passenger speeds up to 110 mph
- Design and construction of 262 miles of main track including concrete ties and welded rail between East St. Louis and Joliet
- Realignment of curves
- New second tracks and sidings
- Grade crossing warning devices
- Construction of grade crossings
- Train control signaling
- Turnouts, culverts, bridges, fencing, etc.
- Purchase of six new high-speed train sets
- Eight (8) new/renovated stations
Grade Crossing Improvements

- 4 quadrant gates
- New signage and pavement markings
- ADA accessibility directive signage
- Pedestrian crossings / sidewalks
- Extensive liaison with IDOT Highways, local agencies, ICC, FRA, and others
- Detours coordinated with community

Station Improvements

- New or renovated facilities
- Increased passenger safety, comfort and convenience
- Lighting, site and parking improvements
- New ADA compliant boarding platforms
HSR Corridor Accomplishments

- Installation of new rail, concrete ties and related components
- Upgrades made to bridges and culverts, drainage and signalling systems
- New sidings and sections of double track
- Major safety upgrades at crossings with four-quadrant gates and loop detectors
- New stations open in Dwight, Pontiac and Alton. New station in Carlinville and upgraded station in Lincoln opening soon.
- First wave of new Siemens Charger locomotives delivered; 33 total will be delivered by early 2018.

Current and Future Challenges

- Hard funding deadline
- Numerous agreements needed to be developed
- Local agency grade crossing disagreements
- PTC design / certification
- Equipment procurement
- Environmental issues
Thank you!

State Reports
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
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- Wisconsin
Passenger Rail in Indiana

- *Hoosier State* operates four round trips per week on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday; Monday evening and Tuesday morning
  - Combines with the *Cardinal* to provide daily round trip service to Chicago with stops in Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselear and Dyer
  - *Cardinal* continues on to New York with an additional Indiana stop in Connersville
  - Cardinal Alliance is an effort to make the Cardinal daily train service, sponsored by the state of West Virginia.
- Amtrak’s long distance service the *Lake Shore Limited* and the *Capitol Limited* has stops in Waterloo, Elkhart, South Bend
- The *Wolverine*, Michigan’s state service has stops in Michigan City and Hammond
**Hoosier State Service**

- Average annual ridership of 31,000
- Operates over CSX in Indiana plus five other host railroads in Illinois
- Unique partnership with station cities along corridor
- $3M per year in current biennium budget (line item)

**Hoosier State Performance**

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenues</td>
<td>$885,973</td>
<td>$906,702</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
<td></td>
<td>$86,981</td>
<td>$76,163</td>
<td>-12.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ridership</td>
<td>27,060</td>
<td>27,470</td>
<td>2.34%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,648</td>
<td>2,342</td>
<td>-11.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-time Performance</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>-7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>-49%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
State Funding Programs

- **Industrial Rail Service Fund (IRSF)**
  - Grant program for Class II and Class III freight railroads and port authorities
  - Purpose is for railroad infrastructure improvements to promote economic development
  - Average amount available per FY is $2.7M

- **Railroad Grade Crossing Fund (RGCF)**
  - Grant program for local public agencies, Class II and Class III freight railroads and port authorities
  - Purpose is for activities that enhance safety at rail-highway intersections
  - Current amount available per FY is $750,000

- **Local Rail Crossings (LRX) Program**
  - HEA 1002 included provision for INDOT to seek bonding authority to separate grade crossings
  - $125M estimated total program
  - Program is in very early development stages (2018 launch)

South Shore

- West Lake extension from Hammond to Dyer
- Double tracking between Gary and Michigan City
Other Activities

- 2017 Indiana Rail Plan
- FRA Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study
- Chicago – Ft. Wayne – Columbus, OH corridor planning
- Chicago – Detroit corridor FEIS/ROD
- Cardinal Commission led by West Virginia

State Reports
- Illinois
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PASSENGER RAIL INITIATIVES IN KANSAS

- Kansas City-Wichita-Oklahoma City-Fort Worth Corridor
  - Amtrak Feasibility Study completed in March 2010
  - Service Development Plan (SDP) Completed in November 2011
  - Report prepared jointly for KDOT and OKDOT
  - No additional analyses has been completed
SOUTH WEST CHIEF ROUTE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

- Southwest Chief Route Improvement Project (TIGER VI Grant) - Grant Recipient: Garden City, KS
  - Total project budget - $21,769,963
    - Federal TIGER VI Grant amount - $12,469,963
    - KDOT - $3,000,000
    - BNSF - $2,000,000
    - AMTRAK - $4,000,000
    - Local units of government in Kansas and Colorado - $300,000
    - Majority of work in Kansas, balance of work in Colorado
    - Project began in September 2015 and has been completed

Southwest Chief Route Improvement Project includes the following elements for design and construction:
  - Rail replacement
  - Switch replacement where rail is being replaced
  - The rehabilitation of grade crossing surfaces impacted by the replacement of rail
  - Return to 79 MPH operating speed on improved track segments
  - Project will also benefit freight rail operation efficiencies
**THE SOUTHWEST CHIEF ROUTE ADVANCEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

- **TIGER VII - Grant Recipient: La Junta, CO**
  - TIGER application grant - $15,210,143
  - CDOT - $1,000,000
  - NMDOT - $1,000,000
  - KDOT - $1,000,000
  - BNSF Railway - $2,000,000
  - AMTRAK - $4,000,000
  - Local Communities in CO, NM and KS - $176,000
  - **TOTAL** - $24,386,143
  - Improvements will be apportioned across CO, NM and KS based on local match contributions
  - Design and construction similar to TIGER VI project
  - Approximately 52% of improvements will be in CO
  - Project is currently under construction
  - Anticipated project completion in 2019

---

**TIGER IX Project Application - Colfax County, CO**

- **TIGER IX - Grant Recipient: La Junta, CO**
  - TIGER application grant request - $19,300,000
  - Application deadline – October 16, 2017
  - CDOT - $1,000,000
  - NMDOT - $1,000,000
  - KDOT - $1,000,000
  - BNSF Railway - $3,000,000
  - AMTRAK - $3,000,000
  - Proposed total project cost - $28,300,000
  - Local Communities in CO, NM and KS (amount not known yet)
  - Improvements will be apportioned across CO, NM and KS
  - Project design and construction similar to TIGER VI and VII projects
  - Project application, budget, scope of work, etc. currently under development
THANK YOU! QUESTIONS...

John W. Maddox
Freight and Rail Program Manager
Bureau of Transportation Planning
Kansas Department of Transportation

State Reports
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
- **Michigan**
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- North Dakota
- Wisconsin
Michigan Update

MIPRC

TIM HOEFFNER
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF RAIL
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Michigan’s Passenger Rail System

Amtrak Services in Michigan:

- **Wolverine**
  - Chicago-Detroit-Pontiac
  - 304 miles
  - 3 Round-trips daily

- **Pere Marquette (PM)**
  - Chicago - Grand Rapids
  - 176 Miles
  - 1 Round-trip daily

- **Blue Water (BW)**
  - Chicago – Port Huron
  - 319 Miles
  - 1 Round-trip daily

Michigan services do not include any Amtrak long-distance trains.
Michigan Accelerated Rail Corridor
Kalamazoo – Dearborn

- Amtrak owns 97 miles between Kalamazoo & Porter, Indiana
  - This portion of the corridor is designed to allow train speeds up to 110 mph.
- MDOT owns 135 miles between Kalamazoo & Dearborn

Stations
Station Developments & Repairs

- Ann Arbor
  - http://www.a2gov.org/departments/systems-planning/planning-areas/transportation/Pages/Ann-Arbor-Station.aspx
- Detroit
  - MDOT & City of Detroit soliciting a Development partner
- Port Huron
  - Local community
  - RFP issued
- Bangor
  - Platform repairs
- Jackson
  - ADA Repairs

Infrastructure Improvements
Michigan Accelerated Rail Corridor (Underway)

- Transition of ownership completed in 2013
- Track Rehabilitation throughout corridor
- Double Track Project (Dearborn – Ypsilanti)
  - Completed November 2015
- Battle Creek – Kalamazoo
  - Completed Summer 2016
- Ypsilanti – Battle Creek
  - Completed
- Train Control/Signal Investments throughout corridor
  - Completed – Testing ongoing
- Entire work schedule expected completion – December, 2018

Equipment
Next Generation Locomotives

Corridor Service Development Plan & Programmatic EIS
Vision for the Program Corridor

A safe and reliable passenger rail service that offers frequent, daily round trips at speeds up to 110 mph between Chicago, Illinois and Detroit/Pontiac, Michigan.

www.michigan.gov/greatlakesrail

Planning Components & Milestones

- Evaluation of route improvements & alternatives
- Public Input
- Tier I Environmental Impact Statement
- Service Development Plan

Milestones

- June 2012 – Kickoff
- August 2012 – Notice of Intent
- September 2014 – Draft EIS
- Late Fall 2017 – FRA Approval of FEIS
- Winter early 2018 – Record of Decision
Reasonable Route Alternatives
South of the Lake (SOTL)

Related Studies
Coast to Coast Study (Completed)

https://mibyrail.org/coast-to-coast-line/

Ann Arbor – Traverse City

https://www.groundworkcenter.org/projects/a2tc/a2tc-train-from-tc-to-ann-arbor.html
M-1 Rail

M-1 Rail
State Rail Conference

Michigan Rail Conference

- 5th annual Rail Conference held in Kalamazoo, MI – August 2017
- [http://rail.mtu.edu/event/5th-annual-michigan-rail-conference](http://rail.mtu.edu/event/5th-annual-michigan-rail-conference)
- 1st Regional Rail Conference
Questions?

State Reports
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Minnesota Passenger Rail Projects Update

MIPRC Annual Meeting

Dan Krom, MnDOT Passenger Rail Office

Objective: Increased passenger rail service at enhanced speeds between the Twin Cities and Chicago

Current Status

• Updating ridership forecasts and operations modeling
• Refining the purpose and need statement
• Goal: Agreement from FRA on the preferred service alternative
• Estimated completion – Fall 2017
Service Alternatives Analysis

Determine what additional track and signal infrastructure may be needed to:

• Support 80 mph frequent passenger train service at a high level of efficiency and reliability
• Reduce or eliminate any negative operational impacts to future freight service caused by the new passenger service

Service alternative screening analysis:

• 80 mph service at 4 or 6 round trips
• Review estimated capital and operating costs against projected revenue

Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago High Speed Rail Corridor

2nd Empire Builder Frequency

Twin Cities – La Crosse - Milwaukee-Chicago

• Existing Empire Builder Chicago-Seattle/Portland
• Over 100,000 riders annually Chicago-TC
• Most using for regional travel: 70% of ons-offs in Wisconsin are travelling to locations within that corridor segment
• Feasibility study for 2nd train completed in 2015:
  • 2nd round-trip Chicago-TC on the Empire Builder corridor
  • Existing stations; convenient times that complement the Empire Builder schedule
  • Favorable ridership and revenue projections supported advancing to the next step
2nd Empire Builder Frequency: TCMC Phase 1 and 2 Study

- TCMC study phase 1 includes:
  - Analysis of integration with Hiawatha Service
  - Further operations/capacity modeling and infrastructure needs identification
  - Concept engineering and capital cost estimates for identified infrastructure
  - Pre-NEPA activities (Purpose and need, alternatives analysis, outreach)
  - Service alternatives and how they integrate with the Hiawatha Service
  - Purpose and Need Statement released in July 2017
  - Public informational meetings in September 2017
  - Expected completion of Phase 1 Study in Fall 2017
  - Phase 2 will complete NEPA/SDP requirements for federal funding to implement

Minnesota: Northern Lights Express

- Intercity passenger rail service- 4 round trips/day, up to 90mph
- Connects Minneapolis and Duluth
  - Coon Rapids
  - Cambridge
  - Hinckley
  - Superior
  - 150 miles
  - Existing BNSF tracks
Minnesota: Northern Lights Express - Status

- 2009 Feasibility Study
- Alternatives analysis studies complete in 2012
- Tier 1 EA completed, FONSI – 2013
- Completion of PE/NEPA Phase – June 2017
  - Financial Plan – Dec 2016
  - Service Development Plan – March 2017
  - Tier 2 Project Level EA – June 2017
- Final environmental approval – November
- If funding for final design and construction is received in a timely manner, service could start as early as January 2020.

State Reports
- Illinois
- Indiana
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Passenger Rail Investment and Improvements in Missouri

MIPRC Briefing
Wichita, KS
October 2017

Current Passenger Rail Improvements

Passenger Projects
- $3 million federal grant for PTC implementation
- Midwest fleet work for new locomotives
- $25,000/year for station improvements
- $12 million grant for PTC at Kansas City Terminal Railroad
- $18 million grant co-applicant w/IDOT for Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis
Current Passenger Rail Improvements

Preliminary engineering and environmental review completed on five projects in FY 2015:

- Knob Noster passing siding
- Kingsville passing siding
- Hermann crossover
- Bonnotts Mill crossover
- 2nd track – Lee’s Summit to Pleasant Hill
Applications for Infrastructure

- **INFRA Grant**
  Merchant’s Bridge Superstructure
  - $212 million
  - 65% non-federal match (estimated)

- **TIGER Grant (rural)**
  Bonnot’s Mill Crossover
  - $7 million
  - 50% non-federal match

New Arcadia Amtrak Station

- New $550,000 Platform
- Texas Eagle Route
- Award from Amtrak
- Great Lessons Learned
Investments = Results

- On Time Percentage: 86%
- Ridership: 4%
- Revenue: 42%
- Customer Satisfaction: 90%

Eric Curtit
Administrator of Railroads
MoDOT
573-751-7476
eric.curtit@modot.mo.gov
State Reports

- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
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- Minnesota
- Missouri
- North Dakota
- Wisconsin
North Dakota’s portion of the line offers spectacular sites, such as the Gassman Coulee Trestle bridge near Minot and historic depots at Williston (1910), Stanley (1902), Minot (1905), Rugby (1907, also on the National Registry of Historic Places), Devils Lake (1907), and Fargo (1906); many are newly renovated.

Amtrak Empire Builder

- Amtrak’s Empire Builder line offers two daily trains between Chicago and the Pacific Northwest along major portions of the Lewis and Clark Trail. The Empire Builder offers seven stops in North Dakota.

- North Dakota’s portion of the line offers spectacular sites, such as the Gassman Coulee Trestle bridge near Minot and historic depots at Williston (1910), Stanley (1902), Minot (1905), Rugby (1907, also on the National Registry of Historic Places), Devils Lake (1907), and Fargo (1906); many are newly renovated.

Passenger Rail Service Status and Improvements

- There were no passenger rail disruptions this past year between Grand Forks, Devils Lake and Rugby as in previous reports.

- NDDOT was awarded $1.03M through the 2015 Safe Transport of Energy Products (STEP) Grant.
  - Application focused on a corridor of crossing enhancement projects along the passenger rail line through North Dakota.
  - Finalizing agreements and preparing for project construction in spring of 2018.
STEP Grant Improvements

- The project will:
  - Install four (4) signal systems at current passive rail-highway at-grade crossings; and
  - Upgrade 19 - 21 existing rail-highway signals to LED lights
    - Exact number dependent on actual costs.
- Improvements are throughout BNSF’s Glasgow, Devils Lake, and Hillsboro subs, in North Dakota.

2040 ND State Rail Plan

- Updating North Dakota’s State Rail Plan
  - Incorporating comments received into final plan for adoption.
- Passenger Rail findings:
  - The seven Amtrak Stations provide accessibility to many of the large population centers in the state.
  - 54% of North Dakotans live 25 miles or less from an Amtrak Station; 60% of North Dakotans live 50 miles or less from an Amtrak Station.
  - Ridership grew in ND in 2012-13 with the oil boom and has decreased principally due to the decline of activity in the Bakken region.
- Plan Web Page:
State Reports

- Illinois
- Indiana
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- Missouri
- North Dakota
- Wisconsin
WisDOT update

- Current department focus for passenger rail: *Maintain and improve existing passenger rail service and corridors*
- Amtrak service in Wisconsin

Milwaukee-Chicago Amtrak Hiawatha Service

- Wisconsin’s state-supported intercity passenger rail route
- 7 Round-trips daily Milwaukee Intermodal- Milwaukee Airport – Sturtevant – Glenview - Chicago Union Station
Milwaukee-Chicago Hiawatha Service Performance

- 829,000 riders SFY17; 3.4% increase over 2016
- Over 95% on-time performance over the past year
- In state fiscal year 2017, 75% of total costs were covered by ticket revenues.
- Seating capacity issues persist on peak trains

Recent Hiawatha Service Initiatives

- New equipment: locomotives in service
- Schedule changes for weekend service
  - New Friday night train; restored Saturday early AM train
- New Promotions
  - Buy one get one half off on Saturdays
  - Increased student discount
  - Kids Ride Free on summer weekends
- Advertising program
- Amenities added over the past few years
  - Wi-Fi
  - Roll on trackside checked bike service
  - Pets program
- Fare structure changes in 2016: Peak/Off-peak fares
WisDOT Update: Intercity bus connections to Amtrak

- New connections from Madison to the Hiawatha Service and Empire Builder with Badger Bus.
  - Badger Coaches is now an Amtrak Thruway, connecting to Hiawatha Service trains and the Empire Builder from Madison
- Working to improve existing Thruway bus connections at Milwaukee
  - Milwaukee-Fox Cities-Green Bay

Chicago-Milwaukee ICPR Corridor EA and SDP: 10 Hiawatha Round-trips

- Environmental Assessment and Service Development Plan for the Chicago-Milwaukee Hiawatha Service corridor to:
  - add 3 additional daily round-trip frequencies, for a total of 10 round-trips daily
  - reduce travel time and improve reliability
- Complex corridor with 65 Metra commuter rail trains, 25 freight trains, and 16 Amtrak trains daily (proposed increase to 22 Amtrak)
- Over $155 million (2014 dollars) in railroad infrastructure improvements; total capital $200 million
**Chicago-Milwaukee ICPR Corridor EA and SDP: 10 Hiawatha Round-trips**

- **Purpose:**
  - Address growing demand for rail service in the corridor, and seating capacity issues on existing trains
  - Address increasing traffic congestion and other mobility issues, and support economic development in the corridor
  - Provide a viable option for more travelers by offering more schedule options,
  - Improve reliability, and potentially reduce travel time
  - Improve multimodal connections

- **Objective:** Eligibility for federal funding for final design and construction

**Chicago-Milwaukee EA and SDP Projects**

Railroad infrastructure projects (7 in Illinois, 3 in Wisconsin) needed to accommodate additional trains and maintain reliability

- 2 universal crossovers in Glenview & Lake Forest
- UPRR siding extension at A20 in Glenview, IL
- Freight speed increase A20 to Rondout
- Metra holding track at Deerfield
- Rondout 3rd track extension to the south
- Metra Fox Lake 2nd Track
- Milwaukee Airport Rail Station 2nd platform
- Muskego Yard signalization for 2 freight through-tracks
- Milwaukee Intermodal Station – Cutoff CTC installation

Total Railroad Infrastructure cost: over $155 million
Chicago-Milwaukee ICPR Corridor EA and SDP: 10 Hiawatha Round-trips

- Draft Completed; Released October 2016 with public involvement in October - January 2016/2017
- Ridership in first year of 10 round-trip schedule: approximately 1,000,000
- Capital costs roughly $200 million

- Status Update / Next Steps
  - Public comments:
    - Strong support from
      - Wisconsin stakeholders and public
      - business community in Southeast Wisconsin and Illinois
    - Opposition from some north-shore Illinois suburban communities due to track projects and freight noise and vibration
  - Additional environmental analysis is underway to address comments
  - Anticipated final EA to FRA in early 2018
  - Metra grant applications and projects at Rondout would help move project forward
2nd Empire Builder Frequency
Twin Cities – La Crosse- Milwaukee-Chicago

• Existing Empire Builder Chicago-Seattle/Portland
  • Over 100,000 riders annually Chicago-TC
  • Most using for regional travel: 70% of ons/offs in Wisconsin are travelling to locations within that corridor segment

• Feasibility study for 2nd train between Chicago, Milwaukee, and TC completed in 2015:
  • Existing stations; convenient times that complement the Empire Builder schedule
  • Favorable ridership and revenue projections

• Ongoing Phase 1 Pre-NEPA Study
  • MnDOT-led study
  • RTC modeling, engineering, capital costs, pre-NEPA activities
  • Next phase: complete NEPA/engineering and Service Development Plan for federal funding

Improving and promoting Midwest connections:
Milwaukee – Detroit 2 round-trips daily
Milwaukee – St. Louis 3 round-trips daily
Etc.
The Status of Passenger Rail Improvements in the Region and Plans for the Future

Thank you! Questions?

Working to implement a 21st century passenger rail system by adding the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative network and additional state-supported corridors to the region’s existing passenger rail infrastructure.