



The Chicago-Iowa City passenger rail program

fact sheet



Route and train characteristics

- Initial maximum speed of 79 mph; average speed of 53.5 mph
- Two daily round trips
- Each train can accommodate 230 passengers; and will offer coach seating and food service
- Total route of 219.5 miles
- Trains operate on Amtrak at Chicago's Union Station, 0.8 miles; BNSF Railway from Chicago to Wyanet, Ill., 116.2 miles; and Iowa Interstate Railroad from Wyanet to Iowa City, Iowa, 102.4 miles
- New stations at Geneseo and Moline, Ill.; and Iowa City

Service outcomes

- Projected annual ridership is 246,800 for 2015
- Passengers diverted from other modes annually: 148,000 passengers from automobiles; 59,200 from air; 22,200 from buses; and 17,200 from new riders who otherwise would not have made the trip
- On-time performance will be 90 percent or higher

Project costs

- Overall cost: \$310 million
- Costs allocated between Iowa and Illinois
- Iowa and Illinois submitted a joint application for \$248 million (up to 80 percent of the project cost) from the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program through the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).
- The FRA awarded \$230 million under the HSIPR program to the Chicago to Iowa City route, and the U.S. DOT awarded a \$10 million TIGER II grant to Moline, IL for the passenger rail station.

Collaboration

- Iowa and Illinois departments of transportation have a strong partnership to initiate Chicago to Iowa City passenger rail service.
- The Midwest High-Speed Rail Steering Group, representing nine Midwestern states, executed a memorandum of understanding in 2009 supporting Midwest routes connecting to the Chicago hub.
- Agreements in principle with Iowa Interstate Railroad, BNSF Railway and Amtrak.
- Agreements in principle were established with the cities of Iowa City, Moline, and Geneseo for station development, demonstrating local support.

Cost Distribution (estimated)

\$310 million				Total project cost
Iowa \$102 million		Illinois \$208 million		Cost by state
IA	Federal \$81.4 million	IL	Federal \$166.6 million	Cost by funding source
↑	State and local \$20.6 million	↑	State and local \$41.4 million	

Public and political support

- The route has broad enthusiasm and support from community organizations and the public.
- State and local politicians have endorsed the program with numerous letters of support.

Legislative support

- Iowa's share of the match will come from a combination of state appropriations and local funding. The legislature appropriated \$3 million for fiscal year 2010, \$2 million for 2011 and \$6.5 million for 2012. Lawmakers also approved intent language to provide up to \$20 million over four years to help fund Iowa's commitment for matching federal passenger rail funding.
- Illinois announced in January 2010 that it would use \$45 million from its state capital plan for construction of the route.

Public and economic benefits

- Helps create jobs, improve our nation's transportation infrastructure and assist in providing transportation alternatives to the citizens of Iowa and the Midwest
- Supports the framework of livable, sustainable practices and communities
- Returns for every public dollar of investment (including all long-term costs of operation and maintenance), by delivering \$1.70 back to the public in reduced costs for transportation, fuel and pollution.
- Attains \$7.4 million in highway safety benefits per year
- Creates job growth estimated at 588 per year over the first four years during design and construction
- Increases business activity estimated at \$25 million per year following service initiation
- Encourages transit-oriented development
- Enhances intermodal connectivity with existing rail, bus, air, and transit services

Environmental benefits

- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 89,943 tons in the first 30 years of operation
- Fuel savings of 10,791,109 gallons during first 30 years
- Reduces vehicle miles of travel by 25,611,484 in the corridor annually
- Reduces congestion. Saves \$16.3 million in highway user costs
- Incorporates Iowa and Illinois DOTs' "GreenLine" vision – a program advancing innovative, sustainable practices

Competition for the federal High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail program

- In 2009, the grant program received many more requests than the amount of funding available. For the 2010 funding cycle, 20 corridor development applications from 10 states totaling \$7.8 billion competed for \$2.1 billion in funding.
- Federal Railroad Administration feedback on Iowa's 2009 application was positive; since fall 2009, Iowa and Illinois have worked to strengthen the project through building strong partnerships with communities and host railroads, and in refining the project engineering and environmental documentation.

Long-term vision

- Scheduled frequency can be expanded to offer more than two daily roundtrip trains
- Initial planning under way to potentially extend the route incrementally to Des Moines, Iowa, and Omaha, Neb.
- Speeds may be increased from 79 mph to 90 mph, or 110 mph with additional infrastructure investments

“We are anxious to build this new connection to create economic opportunities and transportation alternatives for residents in both states, within the framework of livable, sustainable practices and communities.”

~ From Illinois Governor Pat Quinn and Iowa Governor Chester J. Culver in a joint letter of support

More information is available on the Iowa DOT's Web site:
www.iowadot.gov/iowarail

