



# THE CHICAGO-IOWA CITY PASSENGER RAIL PROGRAM

## Grant award fact sheet

January 2013



### Status update

- In October 2010, an award for \$230 million in High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) funds was jointly awarded to Illinois and Iowa to establish new intercity passenger rail service between Chicago and Iowa City.
- In fall 2011, the Iowa and Illinois DOTs requested that the Federal Railroad Administration split the award into two phases. Phase 1 would implement service from Chicago to Moline, and Phase 2 extend the service to Iowa City.
- During 2012, the Iowa DOT began a larger scale planning study – the Chicago to Council Bluffs-Omaha Regional Passenger Rail System Planning Study, while putting the extension to Iowa City on hold. This planning study is expected to provide additional information that will set in motion the next steps toward initiating passenger rail service in Iowa.

This fact sheet includes the details for the Chicago to Iowa City route as planned in the initial 2010 federal grant award.

### Route and train characteristics

- Two daily round trips
- Travel time 4 hours and 20 minutes one way
- Initial maximum speed of 79 mph
- 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, 102.5 miles.
- New stations at Geneseo and Moline, Ill.; and Iowa City

- Ridership includes passengers diverted from other modes annually: 60 percent of passengers from automobiles; 24 percent from air travel; 9 percent from buses; and 7 percent are new riders who otherwise would not have traveled.

### Collaboration

- Iowa and Illinois DOTs 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, are in place 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, thus demonstrating local support.

### Service outcomes

- On-time performance will be 90 percent or higher.
- Projected annual ridership is 257,000 for 2017.

## Project costs

- \$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, Ill., for the passenger rail station.

## Cost distribution (estimated)\*

<b>\$310.3 million</b>				Total project cost
<b>Iowa \$108.6 million</b>		<b>Illinois \$201.7 million</b>		Cost by state
<b>IA</b>	<b>Federal \$86.8 M</b>	<b>IL</b>	<b>Federal \$143.2 million</b>	Cost by funding source
State \$20.6 M	Local \$1.2 M	State, local and other \$58.5 M		

\*Rounded to nearest \$100,000

## Public and economic benefits

- Improve our nation's transportation infrastructure and assist in providing transportation alternatives to the citizens and businesses of Iowa and the Midwest
- Improves the state's rail infrastructure, which is used for both freight and passenger transportation
- 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 during the first 30 years
- Increases business activity, estimated at \$25 million per year following service initiation
- Encourages transit-oriented development
- Upgrades more than 70 highway-railroad crossings in Iowa, and more than 60 in Illinois, by adding warning systems to improve motorist and train safety

## 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 the 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 during the first 30 years)
- Incorporates Iowa and Illinois DOTs' "GreenLine" vision – a program advancing innovative, sustainable practices

## Long-term vision

The Iowa DOT's vision will create a passenger rail network that connects Iowans to each other and the country, and makes Iowa a more attractive place to live, work and visit. By integrating passenger rail into the broader multimodal transportation system, it can be a significant contributor to improved mobility, economic competitiveness, community revitalization, and reduced fuel use and emissions. It is a vision where travel by train is comfortable, efficient and reliable, and leaves a light footprint on the environmental landscape.

The link between Chicago and Iowa City via the Quad Cities is the first link in an incremental approach to implementation – to increase service over time, based on market demand, operational feasibility and funding.



**More information is available on the Iowa DOT's  
Website: [www.iowadot.gov/iowarail](http://www.iowadot.gov/iowarail)**



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