

Amtrak Wants Public Ideas for Chicago Union Station Improvements

Revisions to the Concourse to be designed in advance
of the Amtrak-owned station's 100th anniversary

CHICAGO – Amtrak is reimagining the Concourse at Chicago Union Station and is seeking the ideas of the traveling public, other station users and area residents. Improvements to the boarding process, modernized amenities, and new services are among the changes to be designed.

A survey, now posted at ChicagoUnionStation.com, kicks off the design phase of the project. A QR code (below) linking to the survey is on video screens throughout the station. The survey is



open through the end of this month. Amtrak is committed to engaging with users of Chicago Union Station throughout design work and eventual construction.

This is the design for the first major enhancement at track level and above since 1991 in a station that serves tens of thousands of Amtrak and Metra customers daily. It is an element of CHIP, the Chicago Hub Improvement Program, which has been repeatedly endorsed by state, regional and federal leaders.

“The station [first opened in 1925](#) and Amtrak will involve our partners and the general public to develop a preferred design that will take us into the next hundred years,” said Jeannie Kwon, Amtrak Vice President, Mega Programs Development and Coordination. “The work at Chicago Union Station, our most critical linchpin for travel across the national network, will be performed using federal capital funds along with generous contributions from our partners for both the design and construction elements of the project.”

“We will continue, with our partners at Metra, the City of Chicago, Cook County, the states of Illinois and Michigan, among others, to pursue all viable funding avenues. This includes, but is not limited to, pursuing grant opportunities to help fund the construction to rework the Concourse and deliver a state of the art, first-class station that mirrors the stature of a premier city,” said Barney Gray, Amtrak Assistant Vice President for Major Stations.

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Leading the design team at this Amtrak-owned station is Chicago-based Epstein, in partnership with FXCollaborative. This partnership combines Epstein's expertise in managing large, multi-faceted teams on complicated public facilities with New York-based FXCollaborative's design experience on transportation projects.

Epstein designed the \$26.5 million Terminal 5 concessions area in Chicago O'Hare International Airport, Tunnel and Restroom Modernization at O'Hare and Terminal Redevelopment at Chicago Midway International Airport. Epstein has worked on other historic Chicago landmarks, including the underground parking garage, underground lobby, and *Pioneer Zephyr* exhibit area at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, the only surviving major building from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.

FXCollaborative designed the recently opened and well-received \$24 million Amtrak Metropolitan Lounge and Office Complex in the Moynihan Train Hall for the Amtrak-owned New York Penn Station.

Epstein and FXCollaborative frequently collaborate, leveraging each team member's strengths to deliver complex, world-class projects successfully. The two firms most recently completed the award-winning major renovation and expansion to the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York.

Epstein is committed to achieving an Amtrak goal of 28.2% DBE/SBE participation. Epstein pledges to commit 15.3% of design fees to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms and 12.9% to Minority/Women/Veteran/People with Disabilities -owned firms. In many cases they will play a role in providing assessment, planning, design or engineering services to the team.

"We are proud to partner with Amtrak on this ambitious and challenging project. The importance of Chicago Union Station as part of the regional and local transportation network cannot be overstated," said Randy Buescher, Epstein Principal-in-Charge.

"Strategically renovating the station will transform and shape Chicago Union Station for years to come," said Stephan Dallendorfer, lead designer for FXCollaborative on project.

When the current Concourse design was finished 32 years ago, Amtrak had an annual passenger count of 2.3 million in Chicago. In 2019, that total was 3.3 million, with new routes to and from Chicago in development in Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota, among other [Amtrak MidwestSM](#) states. Annual Metra ridership, over the same period at Chicago Union Station, has grown from 26.6 million to 32.6 million.

This is one of several [major infrastructure projects](#) Amtrak's newest department, Capital Delivery, is advancing. Amtrak is investing in modern trains, updated stations, new tunnels and bridges, and other critical infrastructure upgrades. We're enhancing the customer experience across the country, improving safety and reliability, driving economic development, reducing trip times, expanding capacity, advancing accessibility and promoting a more sustainable future. Unprecedented capital funding for passenger rail in the federal [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) is producing [A New Era of Rail](#).

About Amtrak[®]

For more than 50 years, Amtrak has connected America and modernized train travel. Offering a safe, environmentally efficient way to reach more than 500 destinations across 46 states and parts of Canada, Amtrak provides travelers with an experience that sets a new standard. Book travel, check train status, access your eTicket and more through the [Amtrak app](#). Learn more at [Amtrak.com](#) and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About Epstein

Founded in 1921, Epstein is a Chicago-based, full-service design and engineering firm, providing clients with a single source for their project needs. During the firm's 102-year history, Epstein developed a reputation for delivering a number of high-profile Chicago projects on time and on budget. These endeavors include significant developments such as the last two major expansions of McCormick Place Convention Center, the Museum of Contemporary Art, Harold Washington Library Center. For more information, see [EpsteinGlobal.com](#)

About FXCollaborative

FXCollaborative are experts in planning and designing improvements to rail transportation facilities and will lead the planning and architectural design of Chicago's Union Station. FXCollaborative recently completed the New York Penn Station Master Plan and a similar project for the Central Concourse within the station. In addition, the firm has been selected to complete the Penn Station Redevelopment Project. Visit [FXCollaborative](#) to learn more.

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