



NEWSRELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 24, 2024

***Borealis* Ridership Reaches 100,000 Passengers in 22 Weeks**

Amtrak and states celebrate with customers and supporters

ST. PAUL, Minn. – Overwhelming public interest in the new state-sponsored [Borealis](#) trains between St. Paul and Chicago has propelled year-to-date ridership past the 100,000 customer mark this week. Operated daily by Amtrak under contracts with Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois, state transportation department and Amtrak officials turned out today to ride both the east and westbound *Borealis* trains.

“We’ve been pleasantly surprised by the excitement and ridership that the new service has created and couldn’t be prouder of our partnership. The number of full trains, even at mid-week on the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago corridor, is leading Amtrak and our state partners to look at how we can add capacity,” said [Amtrak President Roger Harris](#), who added that Amtrak ridership nationwide is on trend to set a record this year.

“Reaching 100,000 passengers in less than six months is a testament to the good things that can happen when we provide a service that is needed,” said Minnesota Transportation Commissioner [Nancy Daubenberg](#). “We are very excited to reach this milestone and look forward to strengthening our partnerships with communities, as well as federal, state and local governments, and Amtrak to continue providing a safe, reliable, and sustainable transportation option.”

“We are excited to celebrate this significant milestone with our partners today,” said Wisconsin Transportation Secretary [Kristina Boardman](#). “Strong ridership from day one demonstrates the interest in passenger rail in Wisconsin and is a testament to the partnership between Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois and Amtrak to provide this service to riders. We will continue to work with our federal and state partners to explore additional passenger rail opportunities.”

“Illinois is proud to be a partner with Minnesota, Wisconsin and Amtrak in providing the *Borealis* service,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary [Omer Osman](#). “Reaching the 100,000-passenger milestone so soon after service began demonstrates the appetite and importance with the public to better connect our cities and offer multiple modes of transportation to get where they need to go.”

[More>>>](#)

To celebrate, customers were given complimentary refreshments and commemorative certificates entitling every passenger to 500 bonus [Amtrak Guest Rewards](#) points. As a fun addition, each passenger received a “100-Grand” candy bar as a snack or a keepsake, courtesy of Amtrak.

Borealis trains originate from St. Paul at midday and Chicago in the late morning with Amtrak [everyday discounts](#) for children ages 2-12, students, seniors, veterans, military personnel and families, groups, and others. The trains offer Coach and Business Class in addition to a café car featuring regional items.

Customers enjoy wide reclining seats with ample legroom, no middle seats, free Wi-Fi, and views of the Mississippi River between St. Paul and La Crosse, Wisc. in both directions.

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 MnDOT

Created in 1976, the [Minnesota Department of Transportation](#) (MnDOT) oversees transportation by all modes including land, water, air, rail, walking and bicycling. Its mission is to connect and serve all people through a safe, equitable and sustainable transportation system. Stay connected to MnDOT through [our Social Hub](#).

About WisDOT

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) was officially established in 1967. It provides leadership in the development of a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system for the people of Wisconsin and the state's many visitors. Learn more about WisDOT at [wisconsindot.gov](#) and connect with WisDOT on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#) to stay up to date on the latest transportation news in Wisconsin.

About IDOT

The [Illinois Department of Transportation](#) (IDOT) has statutory responsibility for the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of Illinois' extensive transportation network, which encompasses highways and bridges, airports, public transit, rail freight and rail passenger systems. This vast transportation system supports the fifth largest state in the nation and more than 100 million visitors annually. [IDOT's Stay Connected](#) page serves as an interactive hub to facilitate transportation news, events, video and photo galleries, and to promote information through social media platforms targeting all transportation stakeholders.

CONTACTS:

Amtrak Corporate Communications
Marc Magliari
800 562.1904
MediaRelationsChicago@Amtrak.com

Minnesota Department of Transportation
Office of Communications and Public
Engagement
Julie Bartkey
612 759.0499
Julie.Bartkey@state.mn.us

Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
Claire Paprocki
608 266.8666
Claire.Paprocki@dot.wi.gov

Illinois Department of Transportation
Bureau of Passenger Rail and Transit
Scott Speegle
312 793.2794
Scott.Speegle@illinois.gov