

Amtrak Receives Federal Grants to Improve Chicago Service and Support Partner Projects across the Midwest

Competitive grants fund CHIP and other improvements in our national hub

CHICAGO – Amtrak and Midwestern partners have been awarded up to \$300 million to improve passenger rail service with grants from the Federal Railroad Administration’s [Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements \(CRISI\) competitive grant program](#).

“These grants will directly support Amtrak priorities, including the [Chicago Hub Improvement Program \(CHIP\)](#) – an Amtrak-led Midwest megaproject aimed at improving passenger rail service into Chicago – and advance our goal to double Amtrak ridership nationwide by 2040,” said [Amtrak CEO Stephen Gardner](#). “I want to thank the Biden-Harris Administration, Congress, and our state, host and commuter partners for supporting the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA), which made these significant grants possible.”

“This week’s CRISI grants are part of a series of unprecedented rail investments under the Biden-Harris Administration to improve and expand America’s rail networks, including our passenger rail network. CRISI grants will benefit several Amtrak routes in the Midwest that riders rely on every day and potential future corridors that would contribute to further growth in the region, said [FRA Administrator Amit Bose](#). Under the Biden-Harris Administration and through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, FRA has announced funding for 300 rail projects nationwide—the most significant investment in American rail in more than 50 years. We look forward to our continued work with Amtrak and State partners to deliver the world-class passenger rail our citizens deserve.”

“Illinois holds a unique position as the converging point for railroads that cross our nation,” said [U.S. Senator Dick Durbin](#). “This significant federal investment will ensure our state remains not just a crossroads, but a thriving nexus that efficiently connects people, goods, and ideas. I’m proud to have helped bring local officials, the State, Amtrak, and other stakeholders together to improve our rail network for passengers in Illinois and throughout the Midwest.”

“Illinois is a national epicenter of passenger, commuter and freight rail, and improving rail service and reliability across the Midwest is critically important,” said [U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth](#). “I’m proud to see these significant federal investments coming to our region to help make it easier, faster, safer and more efficient for people and goods to get where they need to

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go. I'll keep working to ensure that our state and region are receiving the federal resources they deserve to remain a national leader in the transportation sector.”

“Improved safety and accessibility for passenger rail in Chicago will benefit not just Chicagoans but millions of Americans around the country,” said [U.S. Congressman Mike Quigley \(IL-05\)](#), Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies. “I’ve been proud to work with Amtrak and my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee to ensure funding like these grants are routed to projects in our region.”

“Chicago’s Union Station is the 4th busiest train station in the country with [almost 3 million riders](#) in 2023. Improving passenger rail service must be a priority to offer efficient and effective intercity mobility service for the millions of users who choose trains for business or leisure trips,” said [U.S. Congressman Jesús “Chuy” García \(IL-04\)](#), member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. “The funds announced today under the historic Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will help modernize passenger train services that keep people moving and support our economy.”

“This is how you make trains genuinely better for people everywhere, relieving bottlenecks, increasing speeds, and bolstering safety,” said [Rail Passengers Association President & CEO Jim Mathews](#). “Like last year’s grant announcements for the Midwest, today’s \$300 million is thanks to the historic IIJA which so many of us worked so hard to achieve. There’s still much more to do, but the IIJA was a significant downpayment on reversing generations of underinvestment in passenger rail, and we’ll work just as hard for the next funding round.”

Funding awarded specifically to Amtrak will support these projects:

- **Wolverine and Blue Water Capacity Enhancement: Niles-Glenwood Road** (up to \$8,384,000)

This project – directly a part of CHIP – will advance final design for plans to increase capacity along a 19-mile, mostly single tracked segment of the Amtrak-owned Michigan Line. This congested area delays Amtrak *Blue Water* and *Wolverine* services connecting Michigan and Chicago, along with Norfolk Southern freight trains. The project will set the stage for future construction to improve service reliability, minimize traffic bottlenecks and reduce trip times for customers. Amtrak and the Michigan Department of Transportation will contribute the required local funding match.

- **Grade Crossing Shunt Enhancement Safety Project** (up to \$58,800,000)

This project includes procurement and installation of Onboard Shunt Enhancement devices for 443 locomotives and 192 cab cars on the nationwide Amtrak-operated fleet to enhance grade crossing activation reliability. Amtrak and partner State Departments

of Transportation, CN railroad, and railroad equipment supplier partners recently completed successful preliminary testing of this onboard innovative device that will improve grade crossing activations and reduce problems that have impacted train operations and fleet requirements for several years. This investment will improve service reliability and ensure continued safety protection. Amtrak, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Wisconsin and 13 other state transportation departments will contribute the required local funding match.

In addition, Amtrak supported several critical Midwestern grants which received funding and will benefit the Amtrak network and customers, including:

- **Springfield Rail Improvements** (up to \$157,100,000)
City of Springfield, Ill.
- **Muskego Yard Bypass Project** (up to \$72,800,000)
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- **The Future of Midwest Passenger Rail-Phase 1** (up to \$1,840,000)
Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission

This is the second round of CRISI grant awards funded by the IJJA's vision for expanded and improved passenger rail. Last week, [Amtrak President Roger Harris](#) joined Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Administrator Amit Bose, Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson, representatives from the Southern Rail Commission and other local leaders to [break ground on the Gulf Coast Corridor Improvement Project](#), which is supported by a \$178 million CRISI grant [announced late last year](#) in the first round of CRISI grants funded by the IJJA.

Many of the CRISI grants awarded nationally in these grant award cycles will also benefit host freight or commuter railroads over which Amtrak trains operate. The CRISI Program is an important funding source for vital projects, including rail safety and workforce development initiatives, not eligible under other competitive FRA grant programs.

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 Amtrak's Historic Infrastructure Investments

Amtrak is leading a new era of passenger rail, investing in modern trains, enhanced 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.

Traditionally known as a passenger rail operator, today Amtrak is also a major construction company executing the largest capital program in Amtrak's history. With over \$50 billion of capital investments in planning and development,



these historic investments are made possible by the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) enacted in 2021.

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