

Rochester-Twin Cities

Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan and Tier 1 EIS



Saint Paul Transitways Policy Discussion

June 10, 2015



Project Sponsors

- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- Olmsted County Regional Railroad Authority
- Federal Railroad Administration

Project History

- 1991: Tri-State HSR Study – Chicago-Twin Cities
- 2000: Tri-State II Study – Chicago-Milwaukee-Twin Cities
- 2003: Rochester Rail Link Feasibility Study
- 2004: Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Project Notebook
- 2009: Tri-State III Minnesota Segment Assessment
- 2010: Minnesota State Rail Plan Completed
- 2012: Zip Rail Project Initiated
- 2013: Alternatives Analysis Initiated
- 2014: Federal Tier 1 EIS Initiated
- 2015: Explore Transition to Private Sector

Purpose and Need

Purpose

- Provide intercity passenger rail service linking the regional economic center of Rochester and the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area economic hub
- Provide travel options for the growing population and accessibility to population centers
- Improve safety, convenience and time of travel
- Consistency with Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan

Purpose and Need

Need

- Increase in population and employment in Rochester, the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, and Southeast Minnesota
- Future travel demand to accommodate growth in economic generators and destinations such as the Mayo Clinic and the University of Minnesota, as well as services and industries that will support those facilities.
- Limited existing direct and convenient connection opportunities for the corridor between Rochester and the Twin Cities

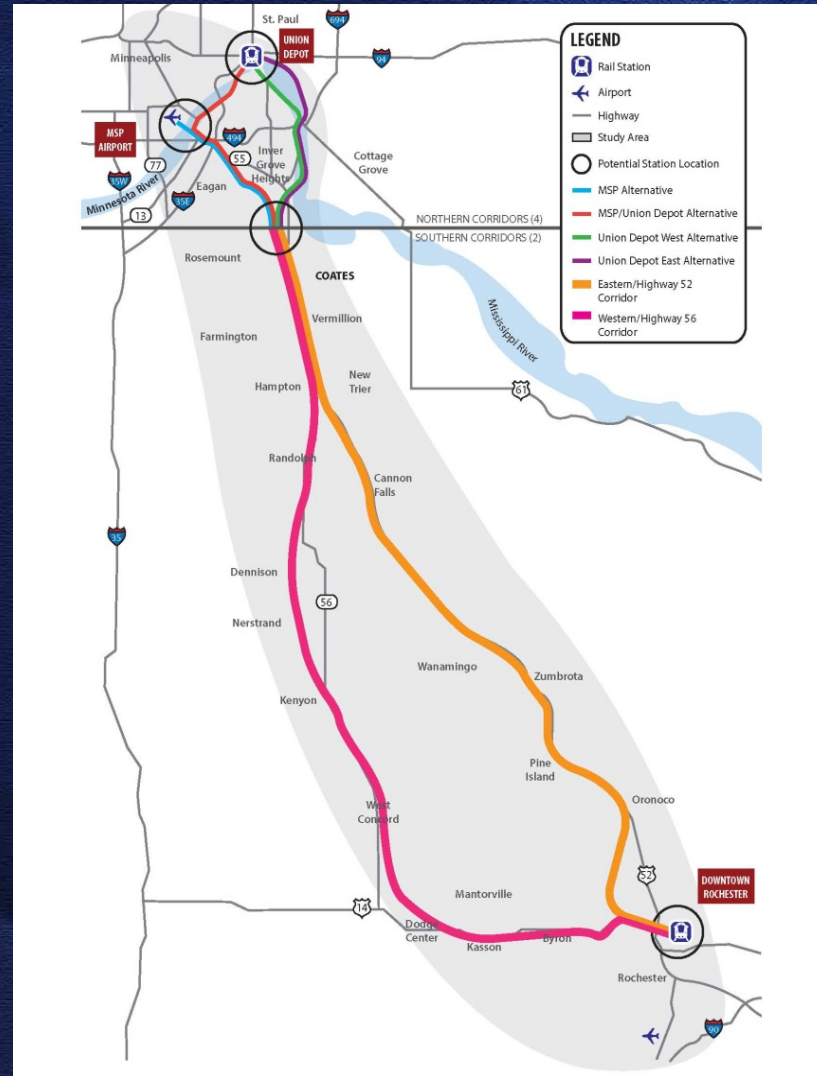
Project Development Objectives

- Reduce Travel Time at least 50%
- New double track construction using existing rail/roadway right-of-way to maximum extent possible
- Secure, sealed, electrified corridor with 186+ mph capability
- Elevate as needed to avoid road closures/spatial conflicts and land use impacts
- Minimize intermediate stops
- Integrate TOD under development umbrella
- Maximize private investment

Scoping Decision Document

Scoping Decision Document: Tier 1 EIS Alternatives

- *Completed January 2015*
- *8 end-point to end-point alternatives*



Scoping Decision Document

Scoping Decision Document: Tier 1 EIS Alternatives



Why Twin Cities to Rochester?

- Twin Cities population: 3.3 million
- Rochester population: 110,000
 - Rochester currently has 110,000 jobs
 - Mayo Clinic employs 35,000 on Rochester campus
 - 40,000 workers commute daily into Rochester
 - \$6 billion Destination Medical Center expansion at Mayo Clinic and related development in Rochester currently underway
 - Destination Medical Center initiative will add 35,000-45,000 new jobs
 - 10,000 patients, visitors and caregivers arrive daily in Rochester – will increase to 20,000/day
 - 70,000 daily commuters anticipated

Why Twin Cities to Rochester?

- Today, 10,000 workers, patients, visitors and caregivers travel daily between Twin Cities and Rochester, increasing to ~18,000/day
- Current travel mode is automobile, bus or shuttle with 90 min travel time. Commercial RST-MSP air service also available
- HSR will reduce travel time from 90 min to <40 min - statistically merging the labor markets of Rochester and the Twin Cities
- Reduced automobile travel will significantly reduce structured parking requirements in Rochester

Current Project Status

- Self-funded by MnDOT and OCRRA
- No Federal funding to date
- Currently in Federal NEPA Tier 1 EIS and SDP to remain eligible for federal funding if applicable
- Transition to Private Sector may alter development timeline and requirements - full effect yet to be determined
- At transition, Private Sector responsible for completing environmental review and preliminary engineering at their risk
- Private sector responsible for design, build, own, operate, and maintain (DBOOM) project delivery

Technical Advisory Committee

- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
 - MnDOT
 - Federal Railroad Administration
 - Federal Aviation Administration
 - Metropolitan Council
 - ROCOG
 - Metropolitan Airports Commission
 - Rochester International Airport
 - University of Minnesota
 - Dakota, Dodge, Goodhue, Hennepin, Olmsted, Ramsey and Rice Counties
 - Cities of Bloomington, Byron, Cannon Falls, Eagan, Hampton, Inver Grove Heights, Northfield, Pine Island, Rochester, Rosemount, St. Paul, Wanamingo, Zumbrota
 - Canadian Pacific Railway
 - Union Pacific Railway
 - Flint Hills Resources
 - UMore Development, LLC
 - SE Minnesota Rail Alliance

Public Involvement Activities

- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Public meetings
- Newsletters
- Project website (www.goziprail.org)
- Social media

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