



# AGENDA

## Special Executive Committee

Thursday, September 8, 2022

@ 5:15 PM

Peoria County Courthouse, Room 403

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Resolution**
  - Passenger Rail Corridor Identification and Development Program
3. **Miscellaneous**
4. **Adjournment**

## AGENDA BRIEFING

**COMMITTEE:** Executive Committee  
**MEETING DATE:** September 8, 2022

**LINE ITEM:** General Fund Reserves  
**AMOUNT:** \$50,000

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**ISSUE:**

For RESOLUTION: Passenger Rail Corridor Identification and Development Program

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**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

Since the summer of 2021, the community has partnered with communities between Peoria and metropolitan Chicago to investigate reestablishing passenger rail service to Peoria. The Peoria MSA is the largest in Illinois without any passenger rail service. Both Chairman Rand and the County Administrator participate in the community stakeholder workgroup that is co-chaired by Mayor Ali and former Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.

The Federal Rail Administration has \$66 Billion available for passenger rail initiatives over the next 5 years. The Corridor Identification and Development Program is a new program to identify future rail corridors throughout the United States and is funded. The Corridor Identification and Development Program applications will be released in the 4th Quarter of this year. The City of Peoria, Tri-County Regional Planning Commission and the North Central Illinois Council of Governments have been working on a plan to prepare an application to get into the new rail corridor pipeline. The estimated cost for an application is between \$200,000-\$250,000. The passenger rail workgroup has requested the County contribute \$50,000 towards the application cost.

The application will be prepared by the consulting team that has already been working, as a consultant to the City of Peoria (on behalf of the broader coalition). The consultant teams that have worked on the feasibility study, Patrick Engineering and Hansen Engineering, are willing to engage with the City and the stakeholders to prepare an application. The City of Peoria will contribute \$100,000 towards the cost and the balance is recommended to be split between the other stakeholders with up to \$100,000 coming from the North Central Council of Governments for the communities in the northern part of the study area. Additional funding may be coming from Tri-County Regional Planning Commission. The stakeholder working group has also asked IDOT to utilize any unspent funds that they may have on the rail engagement to be applied to the application. Should the route be selected, the FRA would cover 80% of the cost of a Service Development Plan for the route.

The Corridor Identification and Development program includes:

- (1) A process for eligible entities to submit proposals for the development of corridors;
- (2) A process for the review and selection of such proposals;
- (3) Criteria for determining level of readiness for Federal financial assistance of a corridor (to include identification of the service operator, service sponsor, and capital project sponsors; engagement with host railroads; and other criteria determined appropriate by the Secretary);
- (4) A process for preparing service development plans;
- (5) The creation of a pipeline of intercity passenger rail corridor projects;
- (6) Planning guidance; and
- (7) Such other features as the Secretary considers relevant to the successful development of intercity passenger rail corridors.

Eligible Entities include:

- Amtrak;
- States;
- Groups of States;
- Entities implementing interstate compacts;
- Regional passenger rail authorities;
- Regional planning organizations;
- Political subdivisions of a State;

- Federally recognized Indian Tribes; and
- Other public entities, as determined by the Secretary.

Eligible Routes include:

- (1) A new intercity passenger rail route of less than 750 miles;
- (2) The enhancement of an existing intercity passenger rail route of less than 750 miles;
- (3) The restoration of service over all or portions of an intercity passenger rail route formerly operated by Amtrak; and
- (4) The increase of service frequency of a long-distance intercity passenger rail route.

The 14 criteria previously discussed as part of the selection criteria were included again:

- (1) Whether the route was identified as part of a regional or interregional planning study;
- (2) The projected ridership, revenues, capital investment, and operating funding requirements;
- (3) The anticipated environmental, congestion mitigation, and other public benefits;
- (4) The projected trip times and their competitiveness with other transportation modes;
- (5) The anticipated positive economic and employment impacts;
- (6) The committed or anticipated non-Federal funding for operating and capital costs;
- (7) The benefits to rural communities;
- (8) Whether the corridor is included in a State's approved State rail plan;
- (9) Whether the corridor serves historically unserved or underserved and low-income communities or areas of persistent poverty;
- (10) Whether the corridor would benefit or improve connectivity with existing or planned transportation services of other modes;
- (11) Whether the corridor connects at least 2 of the 100 most populated metropolitan areas;
- (12) Whether the corridor would enhance the regional equity and geographic diversity of intercity passenger rail service;
- (13) Whether the corridor is or would be integrated into the national rail passenger transportation system and would create benefits for other passenger rail routes and services; and
- (14) Whether a passenger rail operator has expressed support for the corridor.

For each proposed corridor, FRA will provide 80% of the funding to develop a Service Development Plan. The Service Development Plan provides more detailed information on routes, frequencies, speeds, trip times, capital projects needed, schedule of phasing, project sponsors, station locations, rolling stock needed, financial plan, intermodal plan, how it fits in the national rail network, and environmental and energy consumption benefits. The goal would be to develop a series of corridors that would establish a Project Pipeline for the FRA.

The County's source of funding our share of \$50,000 would come from the reserves of the General Fund, which has sufficient funds to support this effort. Based on the results of the survey conducted earlier in 2022, there is broad and overwhelming public support to try and reestablish passenger rail to the community. If approved, the stakeholder workgroup, county staff, and city staff will work with the consulting team to prepare the application. If the necessary funds are not raised from the stakeholder workgroup members, then an inadequate application could be prepared as staff from the City, County, and Tri-County do not have expertise to answer specific questions in the application.

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**COUNTY BOARD GOALS:**

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVAL**

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**COMMITTEE ACTION:**

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**PREPARED BY:** Scott A. Sorrel, County Administrator  
**DEPARTMENT:** County Administration

**DATE:** September 2, 2022

