



New Federal Passenger Train Grants

57 Projects in 23 States Funded

U.S. DOT on Oct. 25 awarded \$2.4 billion in regular Fiscal 2010 appropriations through the High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Program.

States requested a total of three times the amount available even though these grants require a 20% state match.

Iowa gets \$230 million for a new Amtrak Chicago-Quad Cities-Iowa City train. The Iowa Interstate Railroad (see Posner, p. 3), is a willing host. The train will

use BNSF between Chicago and a new connection at Wyanet, IL.

California gets nearly \$902 million for many projects, including \$715 million to build the first track segments and stations in the Central Valley (Merced-Fresno-Bakersfield) for its

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Elections: Many Impacts, Fewer Trains?

Wisconsin: Gov.-elect Scott Walker (R) reiterated Nov. 9 that he plans to kill the well-advanced Madison-Milwaukee project. This would put the state on the hook for \$14.25 million in contract cancellation fees and funds already spent, and \$83.4 million in Chicago-Milwaukee needed with or without the new line (*Wisconsin*

State Journal). It comes after federal officials reached their first high-speed agreement with a major railroad—CP in Wisconsin. Gov. Jim Doyle (D) suspended the project Nov. 4. U.S. DOT says the \$810 million in Recovery Act rail funds awarded to Wisconsin would go to rail projects in other states.

Ohio: Gov.-elect John Kasich proclaimed “passenger rail is not in Ohio’s

Amtrak to Order 70 Electrics Hundreds of Jobs Created

Amtrak will buy 70 new electric locomotives from Siemens for Northeast Corridor and *Keystone* services. Amtrak Chairman Thomas Carper and Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph Szabo announced this Oct. 29 in Sacramento.

The six-year, \$466 million order will create 250 jobs split among plants there and in Norwood, OH and Alpharetta, GA, all of which are powered by renewable energy. The 250 does not include jobs Siemens’ suppliers and subcontractors will create.

The units, the first of which will be delivered in February 2013, will:

- have advanced safety features;
- be designed for easier maintenance and faster turn-around times; and
- have better energy efficiency due to regenerative braking that automatically

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HOPE’S WISH IS GRANTED



- Amtrak, via Facebook

Amtrak President & CEO Joseph Boardman marks reopening of the ex-Missouri Pacific station in Hope, AR. Amtrak’s *Texas Eagle* is to begin serving the city of 10,000, between Texarkana and Arkadelphia, by April 2011.

future.” Gov. Ted Strickland (D) halted the Cincinnati-Columbus-Cleveland project. U.S. DOT says Ohio stands to lose the \$400 million it got to start service.

Florida: Gov.-elect Rick Scott (R) has been more nuanced regarding the Tampa-Orlando bullet train project. An aide wrote to NARP Chair Bob Stewart that assurance is needed that “the investment [is] justified by demonstrating a return on investment” to taxpayers.

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2nd Vancouver Train Saved

Thanks to pressure from rail advocates, elected officials and the tourism industry, the second daily Amtrak Portland-Seattle-Vancouver *Cascades* train will run at least another year. This train began just before the 2010 Winter Olympics and has enjoyed high ridership since.

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) had asked for nearly \$550,000 to cover its customs & immigration services for the northbound train. Political pressure in Ottawa from British Columbian Parliament members helped convince CBSA to continue to service the train at no charge - as it does at hundreds of highway border crossings. ■

New Auto Train Terminal



- Amtrak

U.S. Rep. John Mica (R-FL), likely Chairman next year of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, speaks in Sanford, FL, at dedication of Amtrak’s new 10,000-sq-ft facility serving *Auto Train*. The new station, opened Oct. 18, was financed with Recovery Act funds. Seating 600, it is four times bigger than its vintage 1971 predecessor.

Karen Rae Emphasizes "Solid Foundation"

Deputy Federal Railroad Administrator Karen Rae told NARP's Council, "The President did begin in earnest...one of the few bipartisan discussions that goes on in Washington, which is that of infrastructure." She clarified that the "4,000 miles of new track" Obama called for in his Labor Day talk includes urban, commuter and intercity rail.

She acknowledged frustration with the rate at which high speed rail funds have been released. She said the program is less than two years old. FRA is working

hard to strike the right balance between "getting the money out the door and giving the program a solid foundation."

Regarding railroad objections to the program, she said, "We are not talking about passenger trains above 110 mph sharing track with freight trains." Similarly, passenger trains above 125 mph would require separate rights of way.

She reiterated that travel time matters more than top speed, and that connections between intercity trains and local

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Posner: Healthy Freight Railroads Are Key

NARP Member (since 1969) Henry Posner III, Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS) chairman and Railroad Development Corporation (RRDC) pres., told the Council, "To have passenger service, you've got to have healthy freight service."

RRDC invests in railroads worldwide, some with passenger services. He thinks we likely will see more private operators enter the passenger business here, especially on short hauls. He said such operators can run more cost-effectively and this helps diffuse some of rail

critics' arguments.

He is excited that IAIS will soon host an Amtrak train (p. 1) and said IAIS is open to running its own passenger service in the future. "It's almost upon us, folks, and this is a great thing. What we need are success stories."

Posner praised NARP Pres. Ross Capon and the respect he's earned amongst freight railroad management. "He burns with a quiet fire that demands both attention and respect. [NARP's] influence is disproportionate to its size." ■



Posner (r) with NARP Pres. Ross Capon - Ken Briers



Houston (r) with NARP Chairman Bob Stewart - Ken Briers

NARP Honors Indian Trails; Their President Speaks

NARP honored Indian Trails for a century of service to travelers in Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin. Gordon Mackay, Indian Trails' president said that until about a decade ago, his company viewed Amtrak as a competitor. Indian Trails, the largest provider of Amtrak Thruway service in Michigan, now sees itself and the intercity bus as a partner with the passenger train in providing a seamless network of efficient public ground transportation.

NARP Chairman Bob Stewart presented Mackay with a special plaque honoring the carrier's role in extending the reach of the public transportation network.

Of the worsening energy and climate crises, Mackay cautioned: "I don't think our society has wrapped its head around [the gravity of the situation]...Politicians are not the answer. Individuals like you and me must make steps to conserve energy, including use of mass transit.

"None of us can succeed at moving people in this country without working together. My biggest frustration is that these major forms of transportation don't have a dialogue. We need to get all the players to sit down together and understand each other's operations so that we can work together." ■



Ken Briers

Amtrak's Michael Franke



Gordon Mackay - Malcolm Kenton



Karen Rae - Malcolm Kenton

Houston On Walkable Communities and Trains

Classically-educated architect and urban designer Bradford R. Houston explained the New Urbanism movement's efforts to build neighborhoods, towns and cities "the old-fashioned way." That means designs that favor walking and biking over driving. Change-resistant educators, developers and public officials pose huge obstacles.

He urged passenger train advocates to join forces with New Urbanists. Walkable communities built around train stations are key to growing train ridership. Even now, half the U.S. population lacks access to an automobile.

A Provo, Utah native, Houston fell in love with Britain's walkable towns while

studying architecture at Cambridge University. He spoke passionately about the sense of place and community that gets lost in most car-oriented American cities. He said traditional, compact, mixed-use development is illegal under zoning codes in most of the U.S.

He showed design aspects that deter walking and biking, even for short distances, pointing to the area around the Amtrak station in Salt Lake City. He says pedestrian- and bike-friendly train stations have much more positive impacts.

"The common idea ... is a return to traditional town planning," said Houston. "Not only can we return to building walkable communities, we are." ■

High-Speed Rail Grants

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new high-speed rail line.

There is \$100 million for 40 new bi-level coaches and six new locomotives for the *Pacific Surfliners* and *San Joaquins*. Also, \$16 million will fund modifications to existing stations, track and signals from San Francisco to San Jose in preparation for high-speed track construction.

Florida receives \$801 million (in addition to the \$1.25 billion awarded in July) to construct the Orlando-Tampa high-speed rail line and buy 180 mph trainsets for it.

Connecticut will use \$121 million to double-track the New Haven-Springfield line, install positive train control and improve grade crossings and stations, in preparation for more frequent service.

Michigan, with \$150 million, will purchase (subject to Surface Transportation Board approval) and upgrade Norfolk Southern's ex-Michigan Central Kalamazoo-Dearborn line and do major track work in West Detroit.

Delaware gets \$13 million to install a third track on the Northeast Corridor through Wilmington.

Stations: **Kansas** will complete final design for the restoration of the Lawrence Amtrak (ex-Santa Fe) station; **Massachusetts** will do engineering and en-

vironmental work for capacity expansion at Boston's South Station; **Minnesota** will begin construction to rehabilitate St. Paul's Union Depot as a multimodal hub including Amtrak; **Oregon** will do preliminary work to restore Portland Union Station and upgrade its tracks.

Various track, switch and signal upgrades will be done in **New York, Illinois** and **North Carolina**.

On the planning side,

- **Georgia** will prepare for its portion of the Charlotte-Atlanta corridor;
- **Virginia** will do engineering and environmental work for electrified, high-speed Washington-Richmond service;
- **Florida** will study Orlando-Miami high-speed rail;
- **Maine** will complete a service development plan for extending the *Downeaster*;
- **New Hampshire** will do a Boston-Concord service development plan;
- **Texas** will do preparatory work for an Oklahoma City-Ft. Worth corridor with potential Austin-San Antonio extension;
- **Idaho, Missouri, Nevada, Oregon**, and **Oklahoma** will complete or update their state rail plans. ■

The full list of projects is at www.bit.ly/hsr010.

Hudson Tunnels Die Again

A reprieve for the plan to build two new tunnels and tracks linking New Jersey with Manhattan ended Oct. 27. New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie (R) announced continuation of the shutdown of the Access to the Region's Core Project (ARC).

The day after Christie first killed the project (Oct. *News*, front page), U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood on Oct. 8 said he had given Christie "options for continuing the...project." A working group of DOT and state officials would review the "options and provide a report to Governor Christie within two weeks."

LaHood added \$358 million to the \$3 billion federal cash contribution. Federal officials had raised the adjusted project cost to \$9.775 billion—up \$1.075 billion since the project entered final design 21 months ago. The extra funds maintained the federal contribution at one-third.

But New Jersey remained on the hook for cost overruns and Christie would not accept this. The state "won't pay a nickel more than we think we have to," he told the *Newark Star-Ledger* Nov. 11.

Given the desperate need for new tunnels, and Christie's insistence that New Jersey foot a much smaller share of any new project, Amtrak began consultations with New Jersey Transit (NJT) aimed at redirecting tunnels to Penn Station, making them useful to both Amtrak and NJT.

Amtrak VP—High Speed Rail Al Engel said, "We're beginning to explore what value there is in the ARC work that can be salvaged" (*Daily Record*, Nov. 8).

On Nov. 8, federal officials sent New Jersey a bill for the estimated \$271 million (plus interest and penalties) in federal funds already spent on the ARC. ■

For NARP's Nov. 5 release on ARC and on the importance of continuing to build a modern Hackensack River bridge, go to www.bit.ly/arcpush

Midterm Election

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House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure: The likely new chair is Rep. John Mica (R-FL), high-speed rail advocate and frequent Amtrak critic. Chairman James Oberstar (D-MN) was not re-elected. The committee's top Democrat likely will be Nick Rahall (WV).

House Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee: Amtrak critic Tom Latham (R-IA) likely will be chairman.

California: Jerry Brown (D), a train supporter, was elected Governor.

Georgia: Gov.-elect Nathan Deal (R) says passenger rail is "part of the future"; favors regional sales tax referendum.

Illinois: Pro-rail Gov. Pat Quinn (D) was re-elected and moderate Rep. Mark Kirk (R) won Obama's old Senate seat.

Maryland: Gov. Martin O'Malley (D) was re-elected by a big margin. He favors light rail, not bus rapid transit, for new Baltimore and suburban DC lines. ■

For more election results analysis visit www.bit.ly/harpvote.

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFTS TO NARP

While planning your year-end giving, please consider NARP both for cash and stock gifts. Donating stock to NARP (or any charity) relieves you of the burden of documenting your cost basis—particularly useful where determining the basis is difficult. Getting the tax benefit does require itemizing your tax deductions.

New Electrics

returns electricity to the grid.

As new units enter service, Amtrak plans to retire its 20 DC electric locomotives first, then the 29 AC units and 15 HHP-8 locomotives. The net increase of six units will support anticipated service expansion.

"This is an exciting time for our company as we approach our 40-year anniversary. We are making important and lasting changes that will help shape the future of transportation in America." ■

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Amtrak
Rendering of the recently ordered Amtrak Citie Sprinter ACS-64 electric locomotive from Siemens.



Robert J. Stewart, Chairman; John Delora, Albert L. Papp, Jr., Arthur Poole, David Randall, Vice Chairs; Stephen J. Salatti, Secretary; Kenneth T. Clifford, Treasurer

Ross B. Capon, President & CEO; Sean Jeans-Gail, Communications Director; Tiffanie H. Childs, Coordinator of Resource Development; Malcolm M. Kenton, Transportation Assistant; Lawrence E. Scott, Special Assistant to the Chairman.

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our mission: a modern, customer-focused national passenger train network that provides a travel choice americans want.

FALL 2010 COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES MEETING - GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Amtrak Asst. V.P. Michael Franke Looks To the Future

Speaking less than three weeks before an election that cast a dark cloud over Pres. Obama's high speed rail program, Michael Franke, Amtrak's Assistant Vice President for Policy and Development for the Central Division was upbeat.

He spoke of the strong state responses to the availability of federal funds for intercity passenger rail projects. "Our office has done 12 feasibility studies for new services in the past two years."

He said host railroads have cooperated on every study by providing inspection trips, their data and projected freight traffic growth.

For corridor development, Franke

emphasized that frequencies and travel times matter more than top speed. "The magic number seems to be five round-trips, evenly spaced throughout the day, when you start to see [train] ridership growth go up exponentially."

Amtrak will benefit from 19 projects in the CREATE project to address Chicago area railroad congestion. Construction has begun on the Englewood flyover which will grade-separate 78 daily Metra Rock Island line trains from 14 Amtrak and 46 freights on Norfolk Southern.

"The mass obsolescence of our fleet is a huge problem," Franke admonished. "[Our 130-car order] is just a start." ■

Michigan Pioneered Intermodal Depots

NARP member John Langdon of Holland led an Oct. 14 tour that included:

- Kalamazoo's beautiful, 1887 Michigan Central station has also served intercity and local buses since 2006. The city bought the station in the early 1990s.
- Holland, where a rebuilt, once-aban-

doned station serves Amtrak and intercity buses and as the hub for local transit.

- Grand Rapids' impressive, new Central Station for local and intercity buses, the current Amtrak station, and site of a planned Amtrak facility just south of Central Station. ■

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

Nov. 8 Amtrak Timetable Key Items:

- Morning *Missouri River Runners*: east departs Kansas City later (8:15) with connection restored from *Southwest Chief*, west departs St. Louis earlier (9:45).
- *Lake Shore Ltd.* stops at Poughkeepsie, NY.
- *California Zephyr* serves Richmond, CA. Eastward Emeryville departure is

9:10 am (40 min. earlier).

- *Southwest Chief*: Significant timing changes. See *Advisory* in October *News*.
- *Coast Starlight* stops at Richmond and Burbank Airport, CA.
- *Downeaster* trains 689 & 699 depart Boston earlier.
- Additional *Keystone* trains now stop at Ardmore. Weekend schedules will

Rae

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transit are crucial.

The Obama vision is not a "nationwide" high speed rail network. It is "about creating regional economies [served internally by high speed rail] that are interconnected by some level of service."

"Science" must support agreements with host railroads. For example, FRA must compare the date when a railroad is projected to reach capacity with no passenger-related capacity investment with the comparable date further in the future if such investment does take place.

Rae noted the big freight mobility challenge facing the U.S. "We transport 40 tons of 'stuff' per person annually." She envisions a stronger intermodal market as "the place where high-performing freight [and] passenger rail meet."

She admonished the NARP Council not to focus exclusively on Amtrak: "We need to be careful to draw a vision that incorporates room for some new things, including a much, much stronger Amtrak."

Rae praised Maine's *Downeaster* for its impact on economic development and its incredible "community buy-in."

She urged us to continue to educate the public on the importance of the high speed rail investments. ■

ADVISORY CONT'D

shorten once track work is complete.

Illinois trackwork means no *Lincoln Service* trains between Bloomington/Normal and St. Louis Nov. 15-23 & Nov. 30-Dec. 10 (buses substituted). *Texas Eagle* will detour missing St. Louis-Chicago stops.