

# **LOOKING TO THE FUTURE AT METRA**



**High Speed Rail Alliance  
Presented by Jim Derwinski,  
Metra Executive Director/CEO**



# A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

- **On Track to Excellence**
  - Metra's first-ever strategic plan, covering 2018-22
  - Focused on operating and capital funding needs
- **My Metra, Our Future** covers 2023-27 and addresses new and persistent challenges:
  - Adapting to new ridership patterns
  - Operating and capital funding
  - Equity and climate change
  - Operating in a complex environment
  - Attracting and retaining employees



# BUILDING ON METRA'S VALUE TO THE REGION

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- Connecting people to destinations
- Providing an alternative to driving
- Contributing to sustainable land use development
- Reducing the region's greenhouse gas emissions
- Attracting businesses to the region
- Creating jobs
- Saving riders time and money
- Reducing traffic congestion



# MISSION & VISION: EVOLUTION TOWARD REGIONAL RAIL

## **MISSION - who we are**

Metra provides safe, reliable, efficient, and affordable **commuter rail** service that enhances the economic and environmental health of Northeast Illinois.



## **VISION - what we aspire to**

To proactively address evolving transportation needs, Metra will provide **regional rail** service that supports sustainable connected communities.

### Commuter Rail Characteristics

Operates at a higher frequency during peak periods and a significantly lower frequency off-peak

Schedules are more oriented to twice-a-day commuters

Midday and weekend service is relatively infrequent

Trains operate at specific times rather than at regular intervals

### Regional Rail Characteristics

Whenever possible, includes service at regular intervals with consistent stopping patterns throughout the day

Service is not just oriented around bringing commuters to the urban center

Provides an all-day transportation option for all trip types throughout the region

Significant service during rush-hour to meet travel demand, but less frequent peak service than traditional commuter rail

Comparison Table of Commuter vs Regional Rail, pg. 10

my  
**Metra**





# STRATEGIC GOALS

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- **Enhance service to grow ridership and provide mobility choices**
- **Ensure the Metra experience** is safe, **easy**, and enjoyable **for all customers**
- Attract a diverse workforce and **invest in our employees**
- **Innovate to become more efficient and effective**
- **Be a socially responsible organization committed to equity and sustainability**

**Regional Rail Vision  
is a Key Part  
of Each of Our  
Strategic Goals**





# WORKING TOWARD REGIONAL RAIL: NEW SCHEDULES



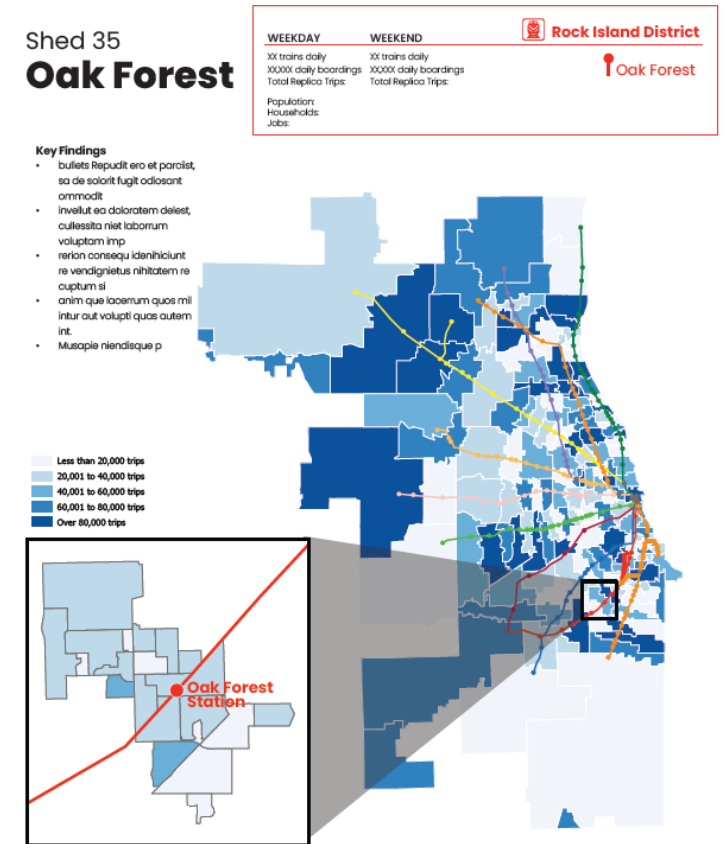
- Schedules have been reimagined with more midday service, more regular frequencies, and simpler service patterns
- Provides more flexibility to riders, reflecting current travel patterns





# WORKING TOWARD REGIONAL RAIL: ROUTE RESTORATION STUDY

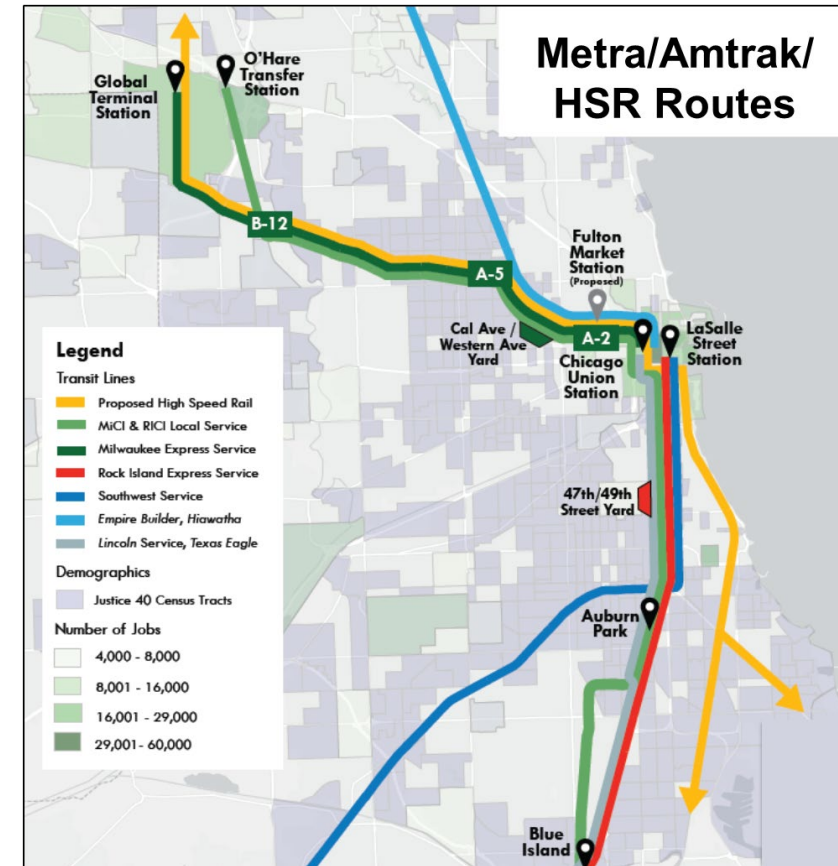
- FTA funded study to use “Big Data” to better understand current travel demand patterns
- Study ran February 2023 - February 2024
- Limited by existing infrastructure and rolling stock
- Goal is to incorporate findings into **near-term service changes**





# WORKING TOWARD REGIONAL RAIL: SYSTEMWIDE NETWORK PLAN

- Build on results of RRS – how can Metra better serve new/changing travel markets in the decades to come
- Study runs June 2023-June 2025
- NOT Limited by existing infrastructure & rolling stock
- Results will **guide Metra Capital Investments and Operations for next 2-20 years**







# ALL-ELECTRIC TRAINSET PROCUREMENT



# ALL-ELECTRIC TRAINSET PROCUREMENT

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- ***Trainset Order***

- Eight 2-car battery electric self-propelled trainsets
  - ADA compliant
  - Seats 112
  - Trainsets can be 2-4 cars total in length
- Options for additional eight 2-car trainsets and up to 32 trailer cars

- ***Financial Capital Impact***

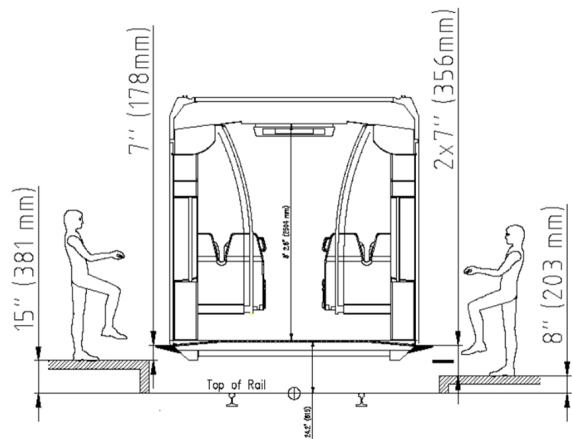
- October 2023 - Metra awarded LARGEST discretionary grant in its history
  - FTA Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality Program - **\$169.3 million**
- Discretionary grant funds entire base order with small Metra match - **does not take away any funds from other vital projects (i.e. bridges, stations, rolling stock rehabilitations, etc.)**



# ALL-ELECTRIC TRAINSET PROCUREMENT

- **Determining Factors**

- Low-level Boarding
- Better Passenger Flow
- Weight
- Flexibility
- Value



my  
**Metra**

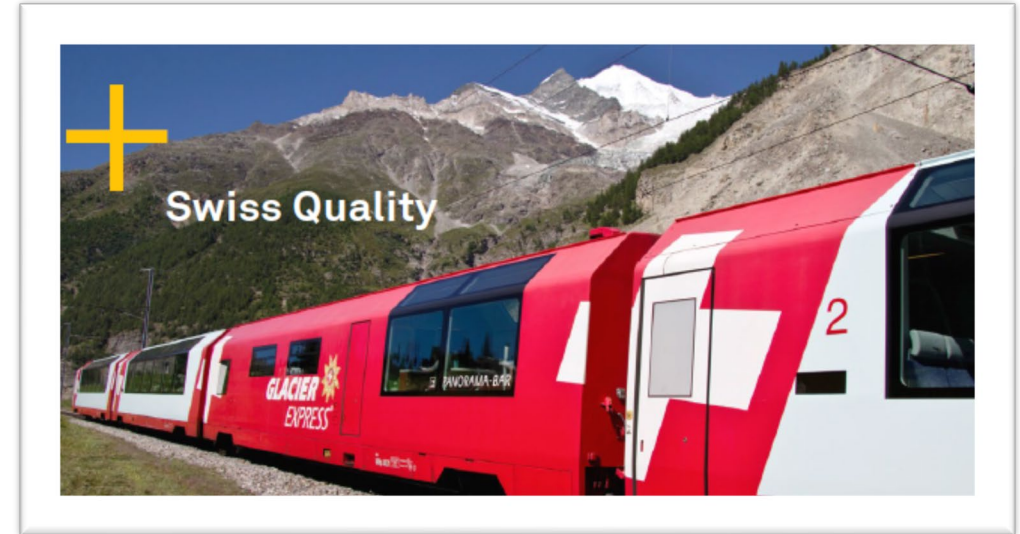




# ALL-ELECTRIC TRAINSET PROCUREMENT

## Stadler

- **Background**
  - Swiss Company
  - Large European Presence
  - Manufacturing Plant in Salt Lake City
- **Experience**
  - TEX Rail – Flirt DMU – 8 Trainsets – 5 Years in Service
  - Caltrain – KISS EMU 7-Car Trainsets – 19 Trainsets – Delivery and Testing in Process
  - Europe – Three Different Battery EMU Contracts in Process



# ALL-ELECTRIC TRAINSET PROCUREMENT

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- **Next Steps**

- Multiple Internal Committees to Form
  - Infrastructure Improvements - Mechanical, Engineering and Capital Delivery
  - Schedule and Service - Mechanical, Transportation, and Operations
  - Input throughout Design Process with Labor Organizations (similar to process used with New Car Procurement)





# ME 90 PROJECT



# MED 90 PROJECT OVERVIEW

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Last October, members of Metra's Engineering, Mechanical and Transportation departments conducted tests for operating Metra Electric trains at 79 mph.





# ME 90 - BENEFITS

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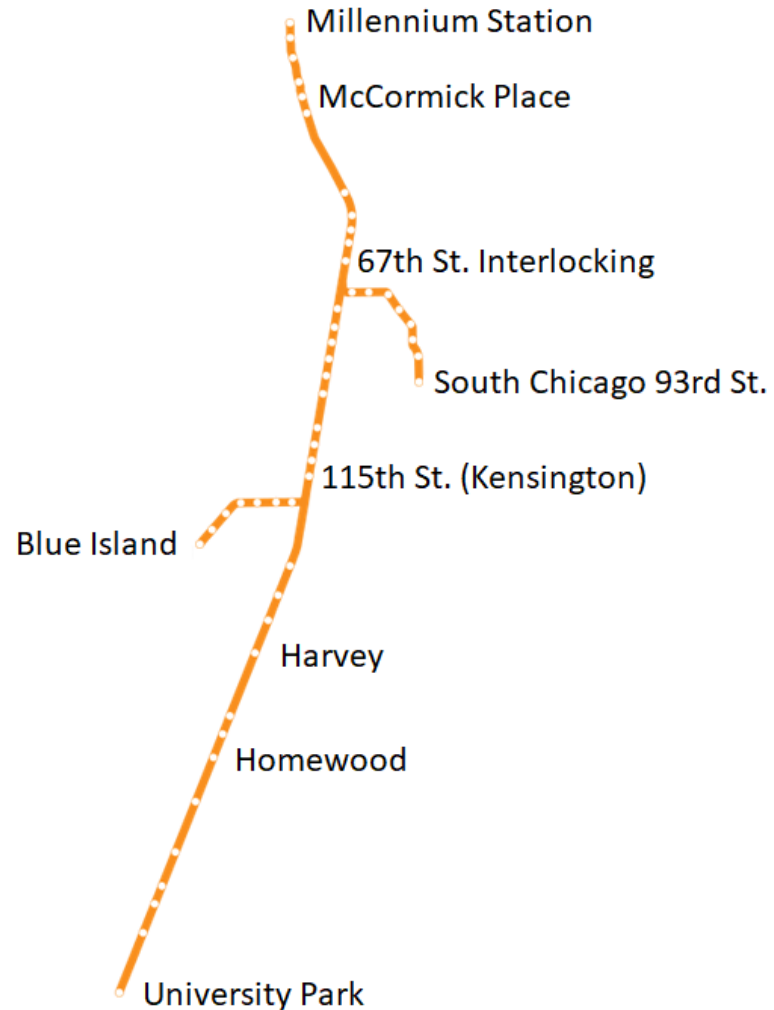
## Improving Passenger Mobility to the Region

- Faster Trips
- Frequency
- Consistency
- Resiliency
- Creating better connections to other destinations, such as Amtrak, CTA, NICTD, & Pace



# ME 90 - PROJECT MAP OF IMPROVEMENTS

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## Next Steps and Areas of Focus

1. University Park to Homewood
2. Homewood to Kensington
3. Kensington to 67<sup>th</sup> St.
4. 67<sup>th</sup> St. to McCormick Place
5. Onboard vehicles







# BRIDGE PROGRAM

# COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO BRIDGES

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- Comprehensive inspections
- Data-driven analysis
- Programmatic approach to upgrading bridges
- Bridge inventory in place





# NEXT STEP: FUNDING THE PLAN



## Current Approach

Replacing 3 bridges per year on average systemwide.



## Proposed Plan

20 year program replacing 5 bridges and rehabilitating 5 bridges per year.



100 bridges replaced



100 bridges rehabilitated



\$140M per year/\$2.8B total\*



## Enhanced Proposed Plan

20 year program replacing 12 bridges and rehabilitating 5 bridges per year, addressing all 210 bridges below desired standards.



240 bridges replaced



100 bridges rehabilitated



\$280M per year/\$5.6B total\*

\*Does not account for future escalation for program year start or escalation over 20-year program.



# BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION - NEXT 12 MONTHS

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- UPN Bridges-South 11 (Chicago)
- RI Bridge 86 / 78th St Auburn Park Entrance (Chicago)
- SWS Stoney Creek Bridge (Oak Lawn)
- MDN Bridge 418 (Ingleside)
- RI Vincennes Bridge (Chicago)
- RI Hickory Creek Bridge (Mokena)





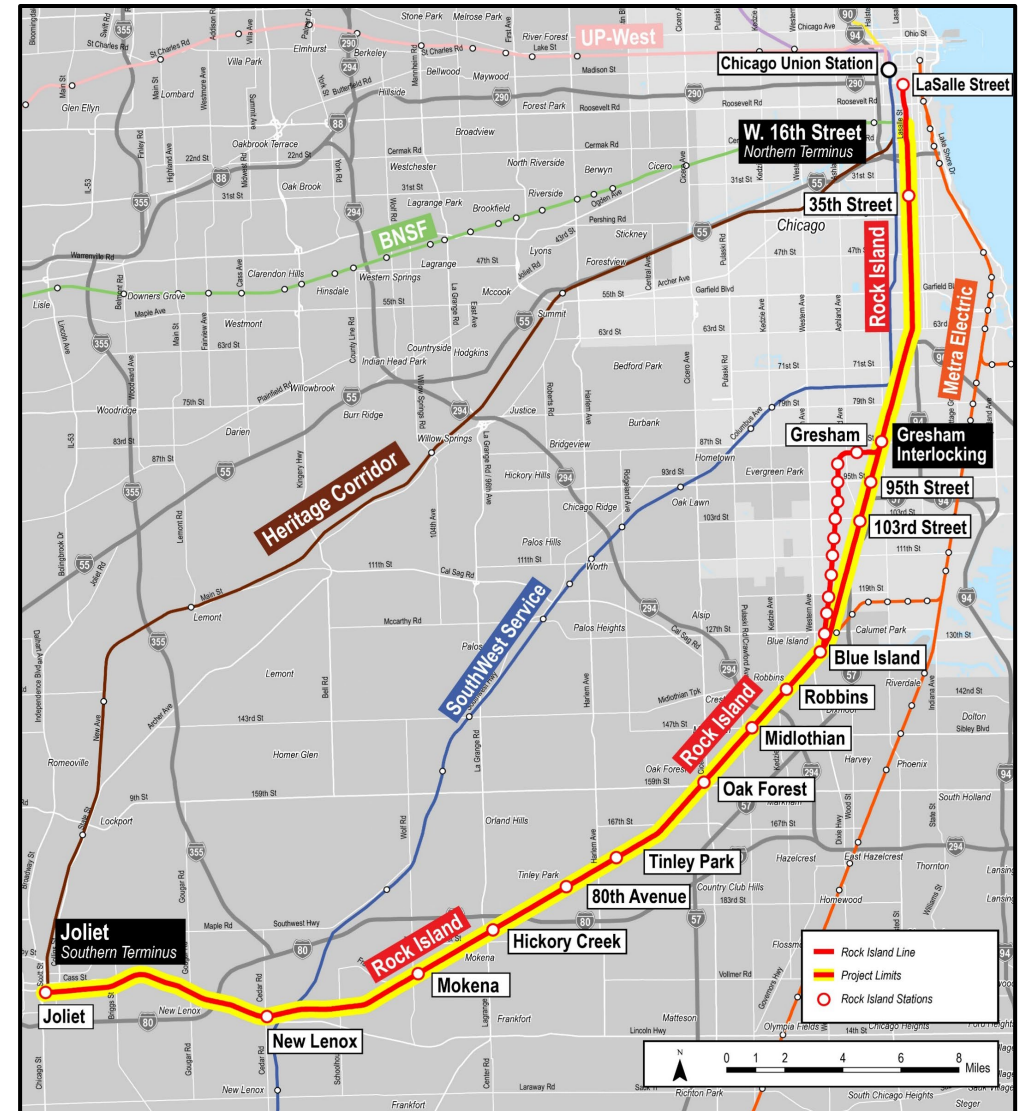
# ROCK ISLAND INTERCITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



Illinois Department  
of Transportation

# PROJECT PURPOSE

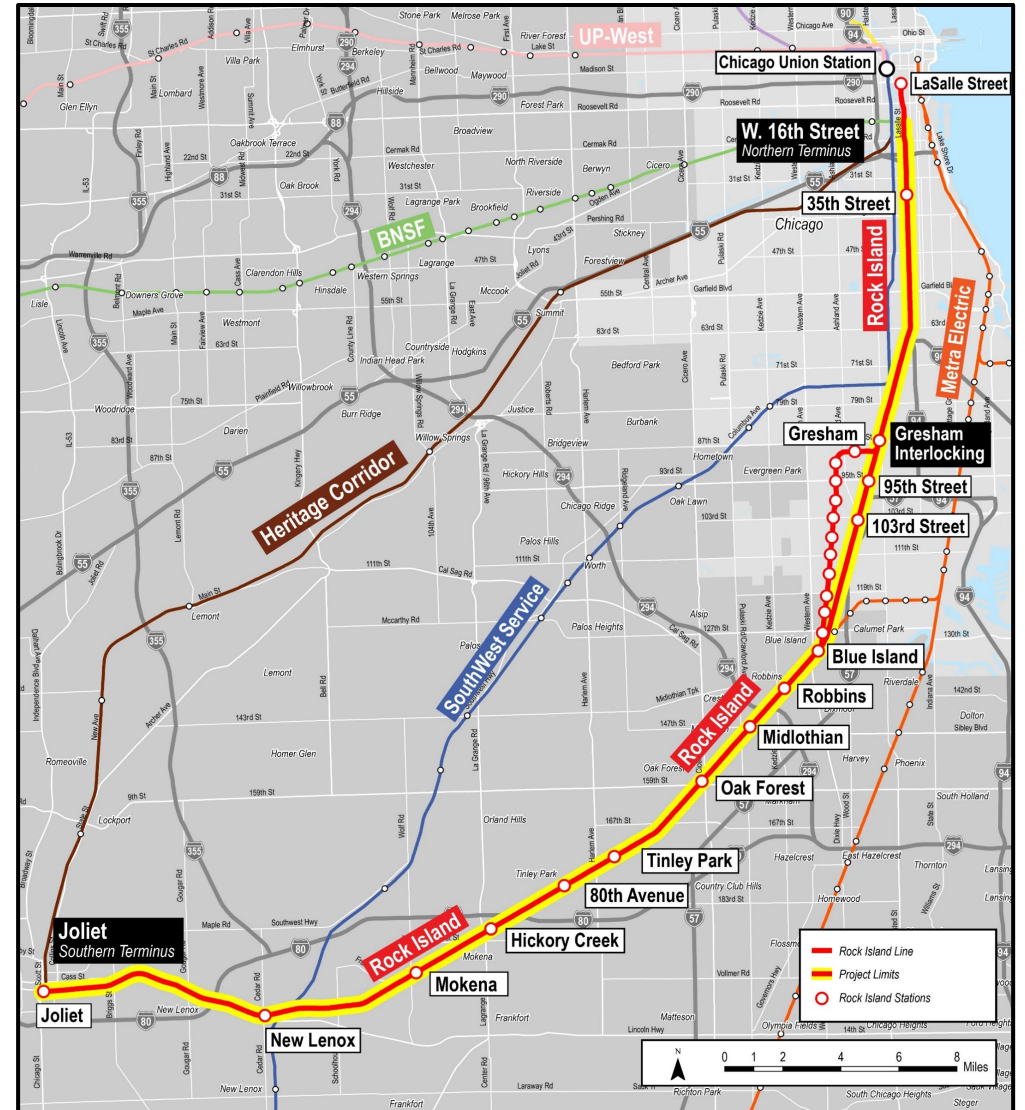
- **Add capacity and increase efficiency** to support moving of Metra and Amtrak passenger rail services to Rock Island Line
- **Amtrak and Metra passenger rail services** to be moved to the Rock Island Line:
  - Amtrak's **Lincoln Service** and **Texas Eagle**
  - Metra's **SouthWest Service**
- **40-mile rail corridor project**, between downtown Chicago & Joliet
- **\$800m-900m investment** along Metra's Rock Island Line



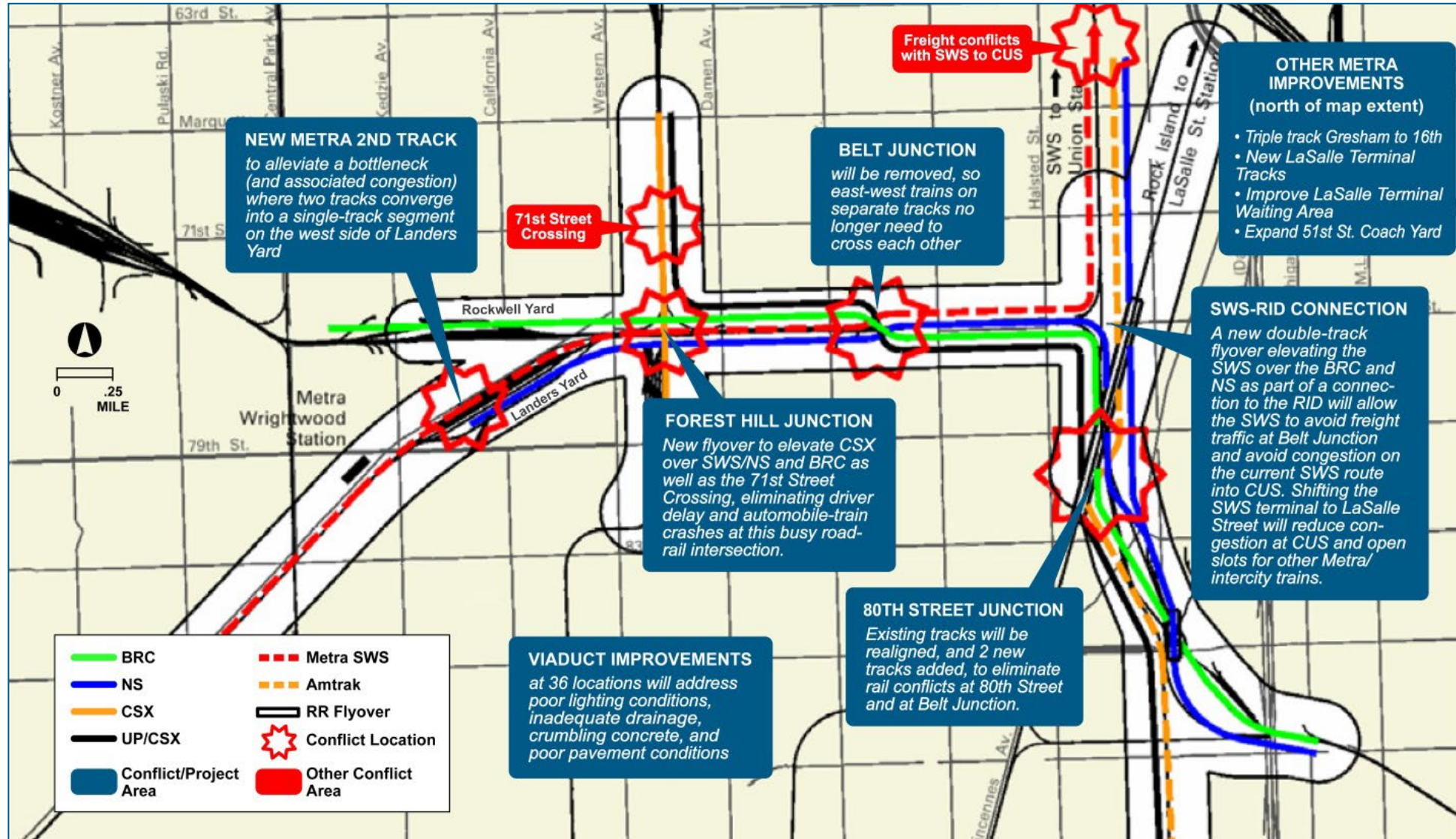


# PROJECT NEED

- **These Amtrak and Metra routes are often delayed** due to conflicts with freight trains
- **Rock Island Line has minimal freight conflicts, is publicly owned, and is publicly dispatched by a passenger operator**
- **Improvements to Rock Island Line will increase capacity and minimize conflicts**
- **Amtrak and Metra trains to move to the RI Line, improving on-time performance and reliability**
- **Builds upon recent 110 mph Amtrak service** between St. Louis and Joliet, addressing the remaining delays between Joliet & Chicago



# ANOTHER CRITICAL PIECE - THE 75<sup>TH</sup> ST. CIP





# FOREST HILL JUNCTION

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# PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

**1: Addition of a third mainline track** to increase capacity between 17th Street and 74th Street, including new or rehabilitated bridges and retaining walls

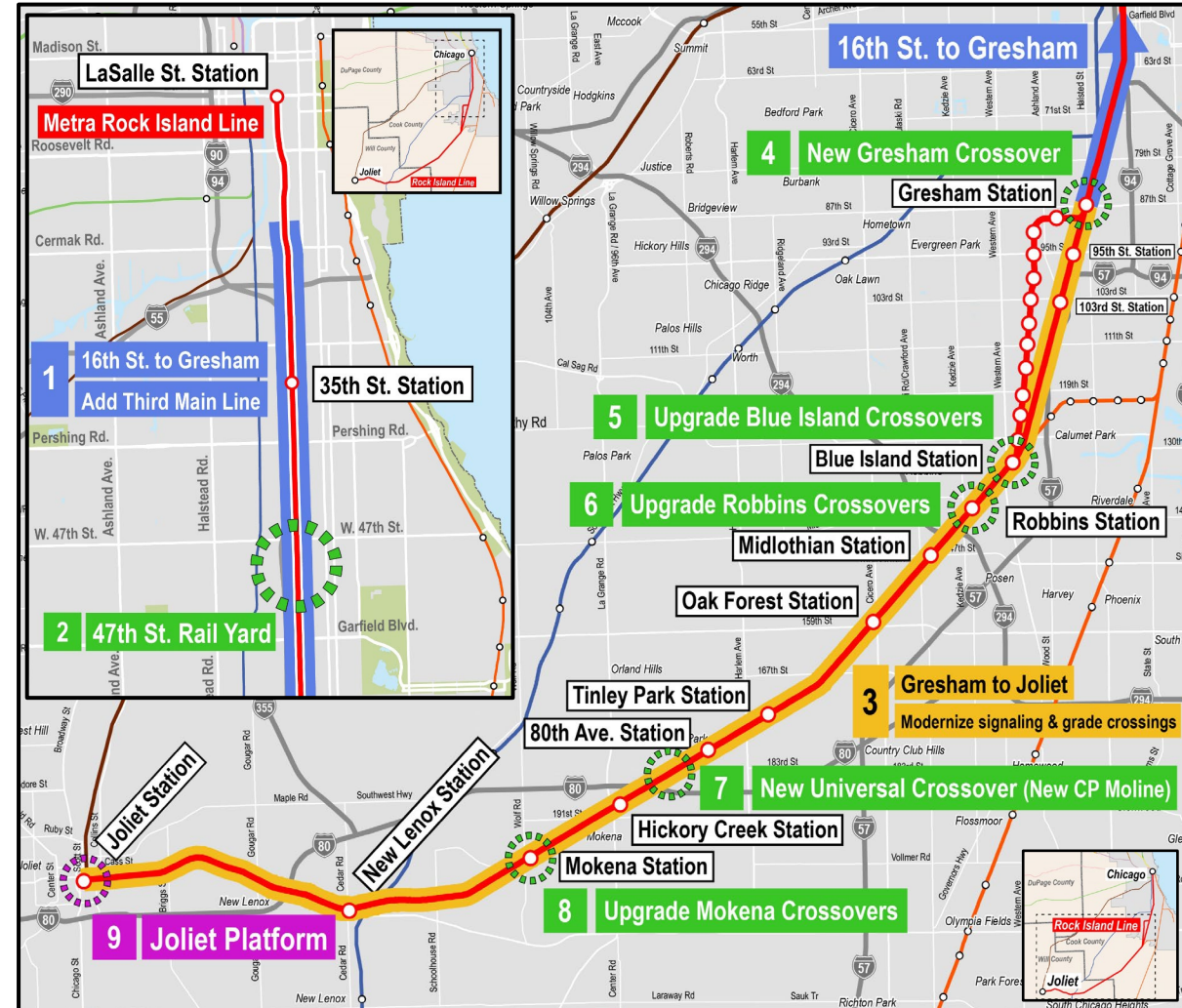
**2: Expansion of Metra's 47th Street rail yard** to increase capacity for train storage and maintenance to create track capacity to operate intercity service

**3: Signal modernization and grade crossing improvements** from Gresham to Joliet Station

**4 to 8: Improved rail interlockings** to allow for more efficient operations

**9: Improved Joliet station platform** for use by Amtrak and Metra, connecting directly to the 110 mph tracks for Amtrak service from Joliet to St. Louis

**10: Upgrades to one existing Metra station** to allow access for Amtrak fleet (exact station TBD)



# PROJECT BENEFITS

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- 1. Improved on-time performance** for Metra & Amtrak
- 2. Reduced delays** for Metra & Amtrak passengers
- 3. Enhanced safety** along the Rock Island Line
- 4. Improved train maintenance & storage facilities** for Metra
- 5. Greater efficiency of passenger & freight rail service**  
due to separation of passenger & freight traffic
- 6. Reduced carbon footprint**

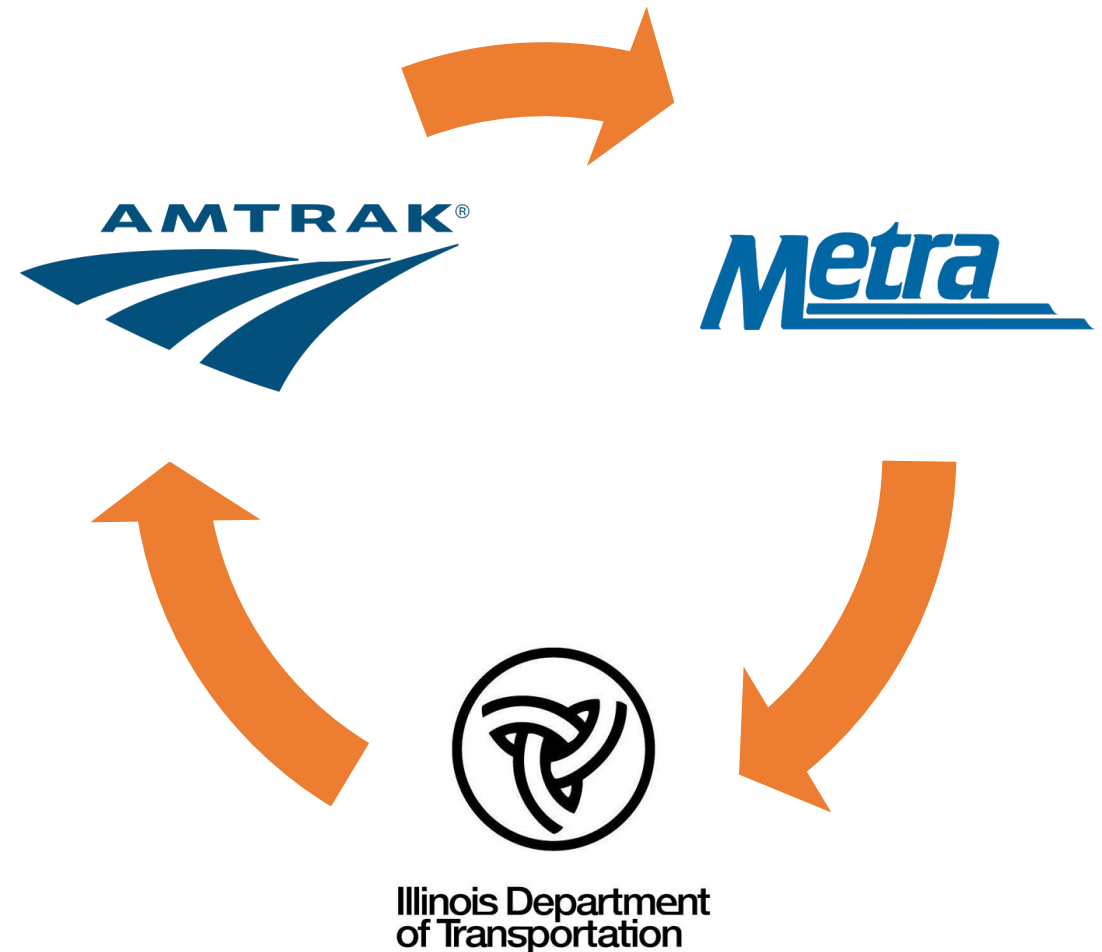




# INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

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- Project is consistent with the 2012 Chicago-St. Louis High Speed Rail planning study.
- Project has the full support of IDOT, Amtrak, and Metra.
- Project scope is the result of extensive interagency collaboration between agencies.
- Amtrak, Metra, and IDOT are jointly developing federal grant applications (CRISI & FSP) to fund project final design.
- Part of IDOT's Corridor ID program



PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

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**Foundational fixes to Chicago's  
railroad infrastructure opens  
possibilities for enhancements**



QUESTIONS?

