



GOVERNOR JB PRITZKER HAS ANNOUNCED METRA WILL OPERATE THE INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN CHICAGO AND ROCKFORD

What were the main factors in the decision to designate Metra as the operator of service?

Access: Metra owns and operates Milwaukee District West, which covers a 39-mile portion of the Chicago to Rockford corridor.

Increased Collaboration: Metra has an existing relationship with Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railroad, which dispatches the trains on the line. This existing relationship is another significant factor in ensuring the success of the new, intercity passenger rail service.

Cost efficiencies: Metra operates on half of the corridor, so the addition of the Rockford trains can be accomplished with the lowest capital costs from a systems perspective to integrate the new service.

Built relationships: Metra has existing relationships with key stakeholders including freight railroads along the corridor leading to faster operating agreements and implementation.

Approximately 90 Miles
Chicago to Rockford corridor

What is intercity passenger rail?

Intercity passenger rail service travels between cities and has fewer stops than traditional commuter service. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) supports existing service for four intercity passenger rail corridors within Illinois and continues to pursue opportunities to further improve the existing corridors as well as develop new corridors.

What is a passenger rail service operator?

Passenger rail service operators in Illinois are under contract with IDOT to provide safe and reliable transport. Metra's long history of operations in northeastern Illinois make them the right choice for Chicago to Rockford passenger rail service.

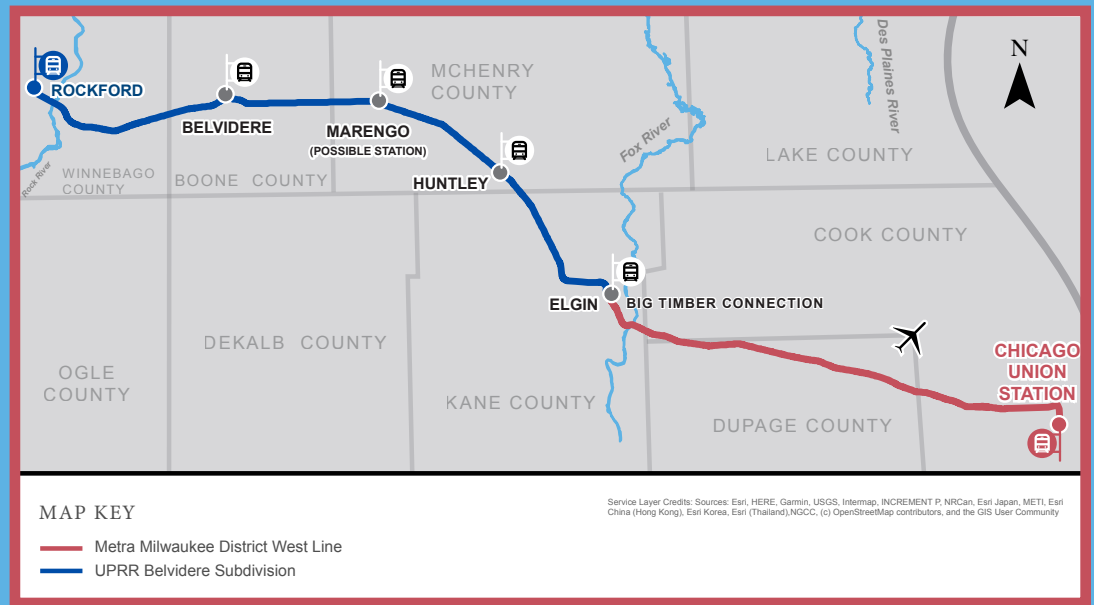
What considerations influenced the decision to use Metra as the operator?

Metra is one of the largest and most complex rail networks in North America. The Chicago to Rockford passenger service will use railroad lines, trains, and stations that are already part of this vast network. Metra is also a regional, public entity with established partnerships in their service area. Their commitment to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation make them the right operator for Chicago to Rockford passenger service.

Is this route considered a new Metra commuter route?

No. The passenger service connecting Chicago, Elgin, Huntley, Belvidere, and Rockford will be intercity passenger rail service sponsored by IDOT and managed similar to the other passenger rail corridors in Illinois.

Project Route Map



Will this route be designated as a high-speed rail route?

Chicago to Rockford passenger service will not be considered a high-speed rail route. The infrastructure improvements planned for the Chicago to Rockford corridor as part of this program will include enhancements to track, structures, signals, and at-grade crossing to allow for passenger operations up to 79 miles per hour.

Can Metra still be the operator if the route eventually extends to Dubuque?

Operating agreements between Metra and IDOT will cover the Chicago to Rockford territory. If there is an opportunity to extend service in the future, both parties would be required to revise agreements to address the extension. If favorable agreements are reached, there is nothing that would preclude having Metra as the operator of the extended service to Dubuque.

What proposed improvements are included in the Chicago to Rockford intercity passenger rail project?

- Evaluate track conditions to support increasing speeds from existing freight operations to passenger rail operations.
- Construction of connection between Metra and Union Pacific tracks at Big Timber.
- Enhance grade crossing surfaces, highway approaches, and warning devices.
- Improve bridge structures where needed, which may include the Rock River Bridge.
- Potential second siding and second main track locations, such as potential siding in Marengo and potential second main track past the Belvidere yard.
- New stations planned for the communities of Huntley, Belvidere, and Rockford. IDOT will also evaluate the potential for a station in Marengo.
- Service plans anticipate utilizing existing stations at Elgin and Chicago Union Station in coordination with Metra and Amtrak, respectively.

