



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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June 1, 2026

The Honorable David Fink, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Fink:

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) supports the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) application to the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grant program on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. CREATE is a public-private partnership between six Class I railroads, Amtrak, Metra, the State of Illinois, Cook County, and the City of Chicago. This grant would fund construction of CREATE project P2, the Rock Island Connection. P2 involves constructing a flyover between Belt Junction and Metra's Rock Island District (RID) line, where 30 Metra and 90 freight trains cross each day. This flyover will alleviate a national freight-rail bottleneck.

As the comprehensive regional planning organization for northeastern Illinois, CMAP supports reduced congestion, enhanced mobility, improved safety, and a strengthened rail network. P2 enables Metra to shift Southwest Service trains to the RID line, terminating at LaSalle Street Station, reducing congestion at Belt Junction and Union Station. P2 is a key part of CREATE's 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project, which was identified by the region's transportation implementers as [one of the highest priority projects](#) for discretionary funding in a process facilitated by CMAP.

Again, CMAP is pleased to support IDOT's application to CRISI on behalf of the CREATE program. This project represents a transformative investment in our region's rail network, addressing long-standing congestion challenges, enhancing passenger and freight rail efficiency, and improving safety for communities throughout northeastern Illinois.

Sincerely,

Erin Aleman
Executive Director
EA:CR

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