

PROJECT P2: ROCK ISLAND CONNECTION

FY 2024 FSP Application

Project Narrative

LEAD APPLICANT NAME

Illinois Department of Transportation

JOINT APPLICANT NAME

Not applicable

AMOUNT OF FSP PROGRAM FUNDING REQUESTED UNDER THIS NOFO

\$ 327,706,117

AMOUNT OF PROPOSED NON-FEDERAL SHARE

\$ 81,926,530

SOURCE(S) OF PROPOSED NON-FEDERAL MATCH

Illinois Department of Transportation, Metra, Cook County - Dept. of Transportation & Highways, City of Chicago - Dept. of Transportation, Amtrak

AMOUNT OF OTHER FEDERAL FUNDING, IF APPLICABLE

N/A

OTHER SOURCES OF FEDERAL FUNDING, IF APPLICABLE

N/A

TOTAL PROJECT COST

\$409,632,647

TOTAL COST BY LIFECYCLE STAGE(S) FOR WHICH FUNDING IS REQUESTED UNDER THIS NOFO (LIST EACH LIFECYCLE STAGE AND COST SEPARATELY)

Track 1 - \$ 4,120,180
 Track 2 - \$ 28,195,586
 Track 3 - \$419,632,647

WAS A FEDERAL GRANT APPLICATION PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED FOR THIS PROJECT?

Project awarded FY 2018 INFRA funding for preliminary design costs (Track 2)

CITY(-IES), STATE(S) WHERE THE PROJECT IS LOCATED

Chicago, IL

IS THE PROJECT LOCATED IN A RURAL AREA?

No

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT(S) WHERE THE PROJECT IS LOCATED

Illinois Congressional Districts 1 & 7

GEOSPATIAL DATA FOR PROJECT LOCATION(S) IN DECIMAL DEGREES

Western limits: 41°45'28.51"N 87°38'55.92"W;
 northeastern limits are 41°45'49.07"N 87°38'4.03"W;
 and southeastern limits are 41°45'17.69"N 87°38'16.00"W

CURRENT LIFECYCLE STAGE OF PROJECT AT TIME OF APPLICATION

Track 3 - Final Design/Construction. The project is in its final design stage.

ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE OF CURRENT LIFECYCLE STAGE

If awarded FSP funding for construction, final design will be completed in Q1 2027

APPLICATION TRACK AND LIFECYCLE STAGE PROPOSED TO BE FUNDED BY THIS NOFO

Track 3 - Final Design & Construction. FSP funding will specifically go toward construction work

EXISTING INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES(S) ON ROUTES NOT MORE THAN 750 MILES BENEFITTING FROM THE PROJECT

(1) Chicago to Carbondale; (2) Chicago to Grand Rapids; (3) Chicago to Port Huron; (4) Chicago to St. Louis
 Higher-Speed Rail

EXISTING INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES(S) ON ROUTES GREATER THAN 750 MILES BENEFITTING FROM THE PROJECT

(1) Amtrak Cardinal

IF APPLICABLE, EXISTING COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE(S) BENEFITTING FROM THE PROJECT

Metra Commuter Rail - SouthWest Service

IF APPLICABLE, WHAT CORRIDOR AS IDENTIFIED IN FY 2022 CID SELECTIONS IS BENEFITTING FROM THE PROJECT

(1) Chicago to Quad Cities Service Extension Program;
 (2) Chicago, Fort Wayne, Columbus, and Pittsburgh

HOST RAILROAD/INFRASTRUCTURE OWNER(S) OF PROJECT ASSETS

Metra Commuter Rail, Belt Railroad of Chicago (BRC), Norfolk Southern (NS)

TENANT RAILROAD(S), IF APPLICABLE

(TBD)

IF APPLICABLE, IS A 49 U.S.C. 22905-COMPLIANT RAILROAD AGREEMENT EXECUTED OR PENDING?

Not applicable

LOI/PFA REQUESTED?

No

PROJECT NARRATIVE

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II. Project Summary

The Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program’s (“CREATE” or “the CREATE Program”) program’s Rock Island Connection (“P2” or “the Project,” shown in Figure 1) implements the next phase of the [75th Street Corridor Improvement Project](#) (75th St CIP). The Project includes building a flyover structure to divert 30 daily passenger trains carrying 4,000 passengers each weekday¹ from the congested south concourse of Chicago Union Station (CUS), as depicted in **Figure 1**. The flyover will connect the Metra SouthWest Service (SWS) to the Metra Rock Island District (RID) near W 75th St and S Parnell Ave. P2 will allow Metra SWS trains to access the LaSalle St Station in Chicago’s downtown instead of CUS, freeing up capacity for future increased Amtrak service. This will also ease complicated dispatching at CUS and through Amtrak’s service yards, while addressing chronic pedestrian congestion in the concourse. By addressing these issues, this project will enable better emergency response and quicker evacuation capabilities at one of the Midwest’s most critical passenger rail hubs and one of the nation’s most strategic global corporate centers. The terminal station shift will also increase capacity for the Metra SWS and put riders closer to their destinations, including the CTA “L” (rail) system in downtown. Additionally, the shift of Metra SWS trains onto the Metra RID line will reduce passenger rail conflicts with Norfolk Southern (NS) freight operations on the Chicago and Western Indiana (CWI) line north of the P2 project area. P2 builds on previous projects in the 75th St CIP that eliminate rail-rail conflicts and improve travel time, safety, and state of good repair leading to the flyover. P2, like all 75th St CIP projects, will also repair and improve streets under viaducts, including sidewalk pavement, ADA curb ramps, drainage, and lighting.

Figure 1. P2 Project Overview Map ([Exhibit 1A](#))



¹ [Regional Transportation Authority Mapping and Statistics - Metra Total Rail Ridership By Line \(2023\)](#)

III. Project Funding

The total FY 24 FSP grant request is **\$327,706,117**, 80% of the total Project cost (**\$409,632,647**). The estimated budget was developed in April 2023 through USDOT's Construction Schedule and Risk Analysis process, and updated by the CREATE partners in December 2024 for P2, which established the updated cost information and contingencies reflected in this application. Should P2 not receive the requested FSP funding and additional federal match as identified in **Table 1**, the Project would be delayed indefinitely, until funding can be secured. As indicated in [Exhibit 2A. Project Schedule](#), P2 has begun final design work, providing reliable detail for the current cost estimate. Additional detail can be found in [Exhibit 2B. Detailed Project Estimate](#), [Exhibit 2D. 75th Street CIP Annual Financial Plan](#), and [Exhibit 2E. Construction Schedule & Risk Assessment Summary Report](#).

Non-federal matching funds are committed from six sources: (1) the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is providing \$53.9 million using state bond sources; (2) Metra is providing \$25 million using Illinois PAYGO funds (state gas tax revenue); (3) Cook County Department of Transportation & Highways (DoTH) is supplying \$10 million in match, using County motor fuel tax revenues; (4) the City of Chicago is providing \$2 million through municipal capital improvement funds; and (5) Amtrak will contribute \$1 million, using in non-federal fare box revenue.

*Table 1. Project Sources Summary**

Funding Source	Total Funding for 75 th Street CIP – P2	Funding %
Federal funds requested in this application:		
FSP FY 24	\$327,706,117	80.00%
Non-Federal funds:		
State		
IDOT	\$43,926,530	10.72%
Regional / Local		
Metra	\$25,000,000	6.10%
Cook County (DoTH)	\$10,000,000	2.44%
City of Chicago (CDOT)	\$2,000,000	0.49%
Other		
Amtrak	\$1,000,000	0.25%
Grand Total:	\$409,632,647	100.00%

*Project costs are escalated to Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars. The YOE 2030.

Table 1 shows the sum of future eligible Federal and Non-Federal costs by Project cost category (derived from the [Annual Financial Plan](#)). Based on the current project phase and past CREATE experience, an overall 15% contingency and 5% Project Management Reserve (PMR) are included. Additional detail on this is provided in [Exhibit 2C. Estimate Contingency Plan](#).

*Table 2. Sources and Uses Table - Project Budget by Major Construction Activity Category**

No.	Cost Categories	FSP	%	Non-Federal	%	Total
1.0	Removals / Demolition	\$523,049	80	\$130,763	20	\$653,812
2.0	Civil - Earthwork	\$3,867,866	80	\$966,967	20	\$4,834,833
3.0	Track work	\$30,325,756	80	\$7,581,439	20	\$37,907,195
4.0	Signals & Systems	\$20,576,160	80	\$5,144,040	20	\$25,720,200
5.0	Structures	\$205,322,056	80	\$51,330,514	20	\$256,652,570
6.0	Viaducts	\$1,530,046	80	\$382,511	20	\$1,912,557
7.0	Environmental Mitigation	\$7,162,853	80	\$1,790,713	20	\$8,953,566
8.0	Miscellaneous & Temporary Facilities	\$27,722,484	80	\$6,930,621	20	\$34,653,105
9.0	Utility	\$9,293,922	80	\$2,323,481	20	\$11,617,403
10.0	ROW	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
11.0	Professional Services	\$21,381,926	80	\$5,345,481	20	\$26,727,407
	Unallocated Contingency	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Total	\$327,706,117	80%	\$81,926,530	20.0%	\$409,632,647

*Project costs are escalated to Year of Expenditure (YOE) dollars. The YOE 2030.

The Lifecycle Costs provided in **Table 3** are delineated by IDOT's three project phases. IDOT Phase I is complete, which incorporates all aspects of FRA's Lifecycle Track 1 and part of Track 2. IDOT Phase II is underway and is fully funded. FRA Track 2 and the beginning of FTA Track 3 (final design) will be fully completed in IDOT Phase II. **This FSP funding request is exclusively focused on the construction work of FRA Track 3 (i.e., IDOT Phase III).**

Table 3: Lifecycle Project Cost & Funding

Cost Categories	Federal	Non-Federal	Total
Phase I – Planning, NEPA & Preliminary Engineering	\$0	\$14,120,180	\$14,120,180
Phase II – Final Design, Utilities, Right of Way	\$7,000,000	\$21,195,586	\$28,195,586
Phase III – Construction (<i>included in FSP request</i>)	\$327,706,117	\$81,926,530	\$409,632,647
Total:	\$334,706,117	\$117,242,296	\$451,948,413

IV. Applicant Eligibility

The applicant meets the eligibility criteria identified in 49 U.S.C. 24407(b)(8). IDOT is the lead applicant, a CREATE partner and a unit of state government enabled by statute [20 ILCS 2705](#), which holds IDOT accountable and responsible for carrying out programs and policies that have been authorized and funded by the Illinois General Assembly. The IDOT's DUNS number is 1336007540000. The contact for this application is:

Jason Osborn

Director, Office of Intermodal Project Implementation, Illinois Dept. of Transportation
312-793-2116 (o), Jason.Osborn@illinois.gov

As lead applicant, IDOT will serve its traditional role as the fiduciary recipient and grant administrator for FSP funding. Each CREATE project is managed by an individual sponsor, who oversees procurement, engineering, and construction activities. *For P2, the sponsor is IDOT and the contracting entity is Metra.* P2 will continue to follow FHWA guidelines through final design and construction. As grant administrator, IDOT will coordinate closely with affected railroad owners, operators, funding partners, and Project area communities. The CREATE Program Management Office of the Association of American Railroads (AAR) will assist with project delivery and oversight, representing the interests of CREATE's member freight railroads. FHWA is CREATE's lead federal oversight agency.

V. Project Eligibility

P2 is eligible for FSP under the Category B of the FY24 NOFO (Sec. C(3)), as a *project to improve intercity passenger rail service performance*. Amtrak's Cardinal service, included in the FRA's Corridor ID program and connecting Chicago to Washington, DC, before traveling to New York via the Northeast Corridor, traverses through the Project area. Since it shares tracks with 30 Metra commuter trains and 90 freight trains daily, Cardinal service is constrained and often subject to delay. Completion of this Project to reroute Metra's 30 daily weekday SWS trains will allow for more efficient movement of Amtrak and freight rail trains on the CWI line as well as enable Amtrak to increase the frequency of trains to and from CUS in the future.

VI. Corridor Identification Program Coordination

At least seven (7) Corridor Identification (CID) projects in the Midwest are dependent on track improvements and capacity building in the "South of the Lake" vicinity for project viability.

Figure 2 documents all of the corridors in active studies for new or improved passenger rail services that will be dependent on the P2 improvements proposed in this FSP application.

Of the 69 corridors selected for the inaugural round of the FRA CID program, at least 16 could result in new and enhanced service to and from Chicago. Investments are critically needed to meet current mobility needs and to support future service traveling through CUS.² An exact number of additional daily train slots needed at CUS is not fully known (until at least CID Step 2 for each project, respectively). However, as projects are actively completing Service Development Plans (SDPs) in CID Step 2, early estimates anticipate the capacity needed for at least 29 more trains daily at CUS.³

New Conventional Service

1. *Chicago to Quad Cities Service Extension Program (Step 1)*
IDOT proposed - Chicago to Moline, new service.
2. *Midwest Connect -Chicago, Fort Wayne, Columbus, and Pittsburgh (Step 1)*
City of Fort Wayne proposed - Chicago to Pittsburgh, reinstate service.

Existing Route Extension

3. *Cardinal Service (Step 1)*

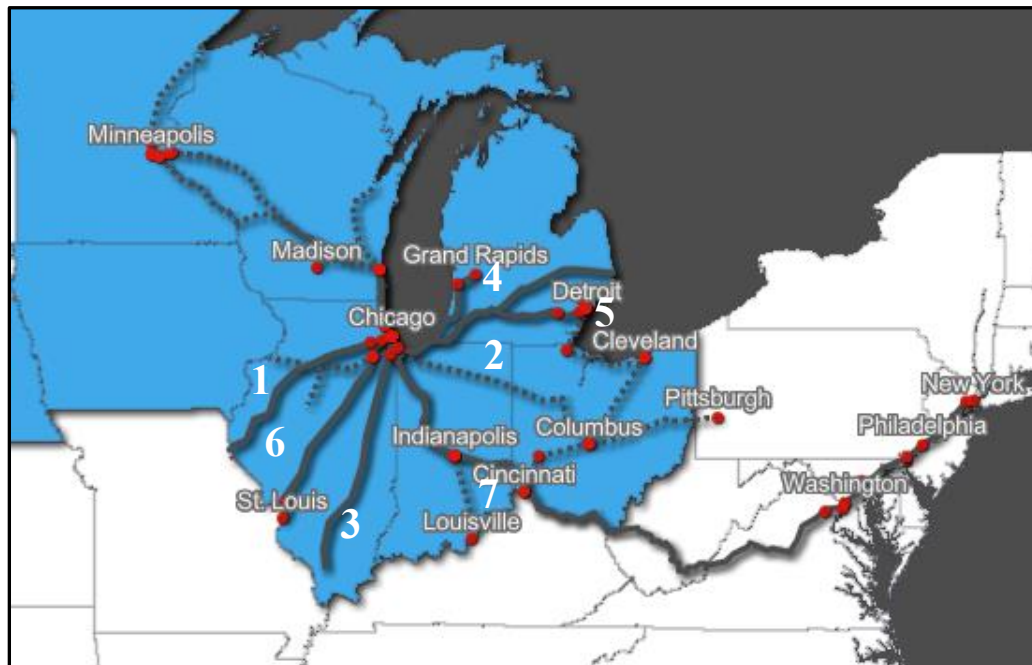
² [Amtrak Media - Amtrak and Midwest Partners Celebrate Federal Grants to Improve and Expand Passenger Rail in the Chicago Hub \(Dec 8, 2023\)](#).

³ Interview with Illinois Department of Transportation – Office of Intermodal Project Implementation (Dec 10, 2024)

Amtrak proposed New York City, to Chicago, increasing service frequency.

4. *Chicago to Carbondale Corridor (Step 1)*
IDOT proposed - Chicago to Carbondale, improve reliability.
5. *Chicago to Grand Rapids Corridor (Step 1)*
MDOT proposed - Grand Rapids to Chicago, improve reliability.
6. *Chicago to Port Huron Corridor (Step 1)*
 - MDOT proposed - Port Huron to Chicago, improving reliability.
7. *Chicago to St. Louis Higher-Speed Rail Corridor (Step 1)*
 - IDOT proposed - Chicago to St. Louis, improving reliability.

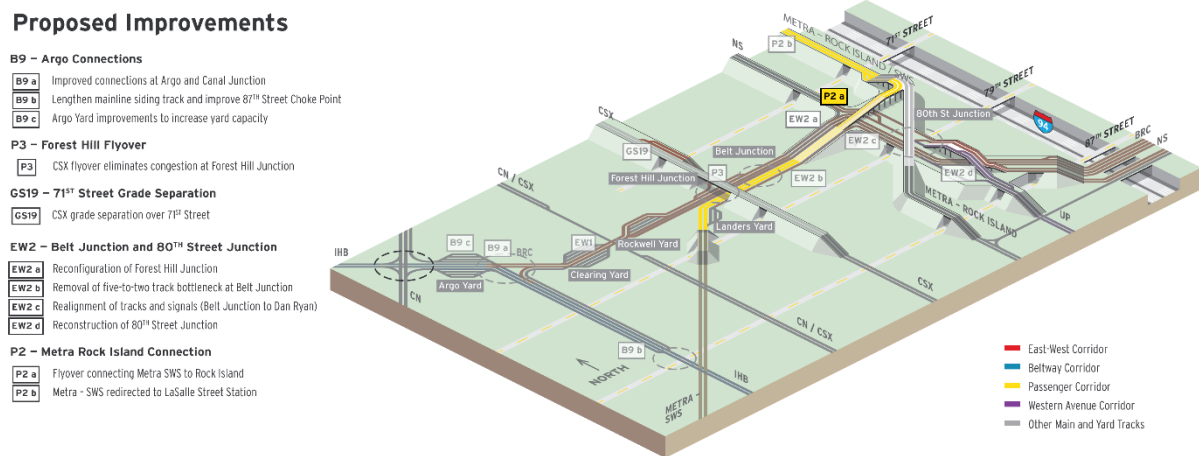
Figure 2. Corridor Identification Development Program – Midwest Region ([Exhibit 1F](#))



VII. Detailed Project Description

P2 includes building a flyover structure to connect Metra SWS to the Metra RID near W 75th St and S Parnell Ave. The P2 flyover will reroute Metra SWS trains to the LaSalle Street Station in Chicago's downtown instead of CUS, freeing up capacity at Union Station for future increased Amtrak service. Additionally, the rerouting of Metra SWS trains will reduce conflicts with NS freight operations as well as Amtrak on the CWI line north of P2. The Project also includes a second main track for Metra's SWS operations from Wrightwood Station to S Halsted St. This scope builds on the work of previous 75th St CIP project, by eliminating rail-rail conflicts and improving travel time, safety, and state of good repair along the corridor.

Figure 3. 75th St CIP Isometric Map – P2 Breakout ([Exhibit 1B](#))



7.1. Project Scope

P2 is a component of the greater 75th St CIP. P2's scope was developed to have independent utility as a standalone project, but also to enable future projects that depend on its construction. P2's scope includes the following components:

- Track Work:** East of Belt Junction, tracks will be reconfigured to six lines, split into two alignments. The first alignment group includes three BRC tracks (the northernmost tracks), while the second alignment includes two Metra tracks relocated to the south, and a NS Landers Main as the southernmost track. The two Metra tracks (Alignment 2) rise from an existing grade of 0.35% to a near 2% grade west of the Peoria St Bridge, crossing over the three BRC tracks near the existing Union Ave Bridge. The three BRC tracks (Alignment 1) remain at their current grade, as they curve to the southeast using an approximately 5-degree 45-minute curve, cross over the existing and proposed NS tracks, and connect to Metra's RID tracks using #20 turnouts. Two #20 crossovers will be installed near the connection to facilitate necessary train movements to continue to LaSalle St Station. In total, nearly 4,500 feet of double track will be constructed, along with two #20 turnouts and two #20 crossovers. A temporary shoofly will be constructed for the bridge improvements at 73rd and 74th St.
- Structures Work:** The P2 bridge structure begins at the west along the Metra SWS tracks, near Green St, rising to a maximum height over the BRC tracks, near Union Ave. From there, it descends along a curve to the northeast, where it meets the existing Metra RID tracks, near

Hamilton Park and 74th St (as depicted in **Figure 4**). Overall structure length, including retaining walls, is around 4,616 feet. Superstructures include: (1) steel deck plate girder spans with reinforced concrete decks over Peoria St and Halsted St; (2) a curved flyover structure with transverse steel floor beams and a reinforced concrete deck over the BRC tracks; (3) a steel thru plate girder span over the NS tracks; and (4) steel deck plate girder spans with reinforced concrete deck at Normal Ave. Between the steel spans are Polyester Polymer Concrete (PPC) beam spans of varying length, supported by reinforced concrete piers and abutments, built on deep foundations. Each structure end consists of cast-in-place concrete walls, built on deep foundations at the east end.

- **Signals Work:** New railroad switches, signals, and bungalows will be added at seven distinct locations on the existing and newly constructed segments along the corridor.
- **Community Mobility Improvements:** Various street improvements at six separate viaducts will be made along the corridor in the surrounding neighborhoods within one-quarter (1/4) mile of the railroad work, including: ADA ramps, LED lighting fixtures, sidewalk and pedestrian enhancements, pavement replacement, sewer upgrades, and landscaping. P2's Statement of Work (SOW) details these improvements and their implementation work plan.

Figure 4. Rendering of Proposed CREATE Project P2 Flyover Bridge (north-facing view) ([Exhibit 1E](#))



Complementary Local Neighborhood Housing and Open Space Opportunities: To construct the P2 flyover bridge, the Project must acquire 22 lots, impacting approximately 15 dwelling units in Chicago's Greater Grand Crossing community. The City of Chicago and its partner agencies are committed to ensuring improved community connectivity and new high quality housing through coordinated redevelopment of the remnant parcels. Under the new flyover bridge, the City is evaluating options for recreation space, public art, and off-street parking. This work will not be funded by the requested FSP grant, nor will it serve as match. However, upon award of the FSP grant to IDOT, the City would initiate agency and stakeholder coordination (with residents and 75th St CIP CAG members) around this remnant parcel redevelopment.

7.2. Project Schedule & Lifecycle Stage

Detailed in **Section 9.1.** (Project Readiness), P2 is already in Track 3 (Final Design & Construction). Expanded on in **Figure 5**, Track 3 will begin in Q2 2027 with bid procurement, followed by construction starting in Q2 2028 and concluding in Q2 2032. Track 1 (Project Planning) for project P2 began in 2007, with the development of the CREATE Program’s Final Feasibility Plan, which defined the costs, impacts, and development activities for all 70 projects under the program. Track 1 was completed in 2011, with the adoption of the amended Final Feasibility Plan. Track 2 (Project Development) began in 2011, delivering a combined [Environmental Impact Statement \(EIS\)](#) and [Record of Decision \(ROD\)](#) in 2014 and preliminary design approval in 2015. Funding for final design was issued for P2 in 2018, and the Track 3 stage began in 2021 with the start of final design.

Figure 5. P2 Project Schedule (See [Exhibit 2A](#) for Detailed Project Schedule)

Task, Milestone, or Deliverable	2023				2024				2025				2026				2027				2028				2029				2030				2031				2032			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Track Design																																								
Bridge Design																																								
ROW Acquisition																																								
Grant Agreement																																								
Internal Obligation Deadline																																								
Bid /Contractor Procurement																																								
Construction																																								
Community Engagement																																								

7.3. Transportation Challenges

Transportation challenges addressed by the Project include rail conflicts and recurring delays, and capacity limitations preventing intercity passenger rail expansion on seven identified rail corridors, as discussed in more detail below.

7.3.1. Eliminating Rail Conflicts and Delays

Passenger and freight rail conflict points exist along the CWI line, north of the P2 project area where NS operations to their 47th St Intermodal Yard and Ashland Yard can block Metra SWS and Amtrak trains heading north to CUS (see **Figure 6**). Freight operations are typically delayed at rail-rail conflict points, to allow for prioritized Amtrak and Metra movements, although there are also sometimes delays to passenger service resulting from these conflicts. By agreement between the passenger and freight railroads in the Chicago Terminal (the “Terminal”), the Chicago Protocol specifies that passenger trains always run first if there is a conflict with a freight train, exacerbating freight delay during both morning and evening peak commuting hours to allow Metra to maintain their frequency of operations.⁴ By allowing Metra to use of the corridor without obstructions during weekday peak hours, the actual daily freight capacity of the entire corridor is substantially reduced. Shifting Metra SWS operations to the Metra RID line from the CWI line via the P2 flyover also reduces conflicts between passenger rail and freight rail north of 75th St, including conflicts between Amtrak and Metra on the CWI line north of 47th St. Shifting SWS trains will also reduce conflicts with Amtrak, which runs three weekly Cardinal

⁴ Chicago Train Operations Protocol Guidelines (May 21, 2023)

trains on the CWI line north of 75th St, following the same path as Metra SWS to CUS. On average, interference with SWS trains is responsible for 0.6 minutes of delay per Amtrak trip.⁵

7.3.2. Increasing Intercity Passenger Rail Capacity

Metra runs 30 weekday passenger trains on the SWS line into and out of CUS. P2 shifts those Metra SWS trains onto the Metra RID line, which terminates at the LaSalle St station in Chicago's downtown instead of CUS. This frees up capacity at CUS for future expansion of Amtrak service of at least 29 daily trains per ongoing Corridor ID planning work.⁶ Comparison of the ridership potential between the Build and No Build Scenarios determines significant capacity for growth of service offerings for both Metra and Amtrak. The build scenario is a key that unlocks CUS for much more intercity passenger rail service. Growth in Amtrak intercity passenger rail services has the potential to increase by **708%** with the construction of P2.

Figure 6. Rail Conflicts along CWI Line ([Exhibit 1G](#))

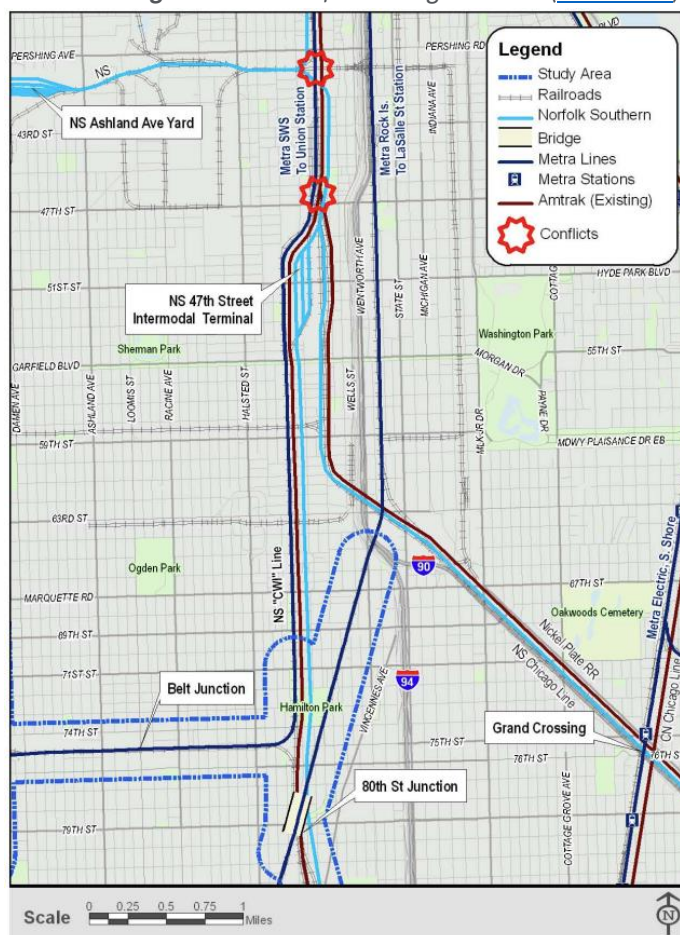


Table 4: Growth in Passenger Rail Ridership in the Chicago Terminal (2019-2060)

	No Build	Build	Growth
Overall	15,530,252	24,517,288	158%
Intercity Passenger Rail (IPR)*	978,432	6,924,288	708%
Commuter Rail (CR)**	14,551,820	17,593,000	121%

Source: Amtrak Chicago Union Station Planning Study – Draft (2023)

*IPR Growth Calculation: No Build/ Build Train Counts with Train Occupancy 224 (BCA, Table 15)

**CR Growth Calculation: Daily No/ Build Ridership Annualized (BCA, Table 4)

7.4. Current & Proposed Railroad Operations

P2 reroutes Metra's SWS onto the Metra RID line from the CWI line (owned by Metra from W 74th St to CP521). Only Metra operates on the Metra RID line (which it owns) and does not share the line with any other freight or intercity passenger rail service. Metra RID runs 80 daily

⁵ 75th St CIP FEIS Chapter 1 - Purpose and Need (p.18)

⁶ Interview with Illinois Department of Transportation – Office of Intermodal Project Implementation (Dec 10, 2024)

weekday trains in and out of LaSalle St Station, as well as 33 trains on Saturdays and 29 trains on Sundays. Metra SWS runs 30 weekday passenger trains at a maximum speed of 60 miles per hour (mph), 40/54 mph in speed restricted areas, and 25 mph at CP521. Amtrak Cardinal service runs three trains a week in and out of CUS, at a maximum speed of 60 mph on the CWI line north of W 74th St to CP521. Including Metra SWS and Amtrak Cardinal, approximately 83 trains per day currently terminate at the south concourse of CUS.⁷ NS operates two trains per day with additional unscheduled movements a few times per week on the CWI line at a maximum speed of 25 mph. Metra SWS trains run on a mix of NS, Metra, and Belt Railway Company of Chicago (BRC) tracks in the current configuration of the 75th St CIP area. Following completion of P2 and the 75th St CIP, Metra SWS will operate only on Metra tracks through the area.

7.5. Project Users & Beneficiaries

7.5.1 Direct Users

Direct users of the project area are Metra, Amtrak six Class I freight railroads (NS, CSX, UP, CN, CPKC, BNSF), and a Class III short line freight railroad (BRC). Metra currently runs 30 SWS trains daily through the corridor (serving 844,567 riders in 2023),⁸ freight operators run 90 trains through the corridor daily, and Amtrak runs 3 weekly Cardinal trains (serving 82,705 riders in 2023).⁹ Current operations include freight and Metra trains using the same tracks at the Belt Junction, per the guidelines of the Chicago Protocol.¹⁰ Passenger train movements are prioritized at the corridor's interlockings and joint operating locations. Freight trains are curtailed at least twice daily on the corridor, during peak morning and afternoon commuting periods (totaling six hours daily) and occasionally during non-peak periods, due to passenger movement prioritization. Freight travel times are increased and delays through the corridor narrow the windows of time where freight movements can occur, negatively impacting freight flows through Belt Junction, particularly to and from the adjacent NS Landers Intermodal Yard (which reported 382,329 annual lifts in 2023).¹¹ P2 is necessary to fully realize the delay reduction benefits to freight rail users of recent track additions at Belt Junction that separated Metra's 30 daily trains from freight traffic. Parallel and separate traffic from NS trains that exit and enter Landers will benefit from reduced dwell times. By shifting Metra SWS trains to the RID line, P2 will also enable the expansion of Amtrak intercity passenger rail service coming in and out of CUS and reduce travel times for Metra SWS commuters.

7.5.2 Local & Regional Beneficiaries

P2 includes improvements on elevated track structures and below on the city streets and adjacent pedestrian corridors, benefitting 50,369 residents (in 21,807 households) in the Englewood and Greater Grand Crossing neighborhoods that intersect the project corridor.¹² Travel time savings for Metra and Amtrak passengers is a primary benefit of the project P2. Between 2033-2062, P2's improvements will result in 747,099 person-hours per year of travel time savings for existing and new Metra SWS and RID riders, valued at a cost savings of over \$13.3 million (BCA, p.11-12). Additionally, increasing passenger rail capacity in the Terminal will encourage a mode shift from automobile use to regional transit, as 3,276 more Metra and 1,638 Amtrak train

⁷ Amtrak Chicago Union Station Planning Study – Draft (2023)

⁸ [Regional Transportation Authority Mapping and Statistics - Metra Total Rail Ridership By Line \(2023\)](#)

⁹ Amtrak Route Ridership (FY 23 vs. FY22)

¹⁰ Chicago Train Operations Protocol Guidelines (May 21, 2023)

¹¹ [Exhibit 3I. CMAP Facility Lift Counts](#)

¹² [Exhibit 3E. CMAP Community Profiles](#)

passenger train trips will be accommodated in the corridor after P2 is built. Detailed in the [BCA](#) (p.20), the additional cost of service created by this increased ridership is \$129.8 million is offset by the travel time savings benefits (\$205.4 million), creating a net benefit of \$75.6 million.

P2's improvements will also help sustain and grow Chicago's freight economy, a primary goal of the CREATE Program. The implementation of P2 as a component of the 75th St CIP is critical to address increasing travel times in the Terminal that will reduce the competitiveness of the regional market. Chicago's rail system handles 47% of the nation's intermodal rail containers, 28% of all rail cars, and \$641 billion of goods transported on rail annually, as it continues to be one of the primary pathways for freight movement nationally.¹³ As identified by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the region's freight cluster accounts for 190,000 jobs (2016) and over \$14 billion in personal income for the residents of northeastern Illinois, with freight railroads directly employing nearly 12,000 people and indirectly supporting an additional 26,000 jobs regionally (2014).¹⁴ The CREATE Program has strengthened regional freight activity and employment, yielding \$31.5 million in generated economic benefits and creating an estimated 44,000 job-years from its projects to date.¹⁵ Implementing P2 will enable the region to continue to capture and build upon these economic benefits, by expanding the Terminal's capacity to handle 98,177 train miles annually for Metra alone (in addition to expanding capacity for Amtrak service), addressing a pressing need to upgrade the region's infrastructure to meet the projected demand ([BCA](#), p.6).

Additionally, P2's mobility improvements at the Project area viaducts will benefit local users of the corridors below the elevated track structures. These include upgrades to streets that pass under the grade-separated structures, benefiting motorists traveling through the viaducts (totaling 52,700 daily),¹⁶ as well as transit riders on the seven CTA bus routes that operate through the area (8,31,39,49, X49,50,62) with an estimated combined annual ridership of 13,769,627 in 2023.¹⁷ These improvements also benefit bicycle and pedestrian facilities that cross the corridor, improving safety on sidewalks for pedestrians and roadway safety for bicyclists (including on Halsted St, a designated City bike route).

7.5.3 National Beneficiaries

Building capacity at CUS through construction of P2 will yield substantial national benefits for Amtrak's intercity passenger service. Allowing Metra to direct 30 SWS trains to LaSalle St Station will accommodate approximately 30 slots at CUS, making the project P2 foundational for expanding Amtrak service at CUS, and ultimately, throughout the Midwest. CUS serves as a key node in Amtrak's national network, as well as its primary hub for Midwestern regional service. Currently, Amtrak operates 17 intercity lines out of CUS, serving more than 3 million customers annually, making CUS the fourth busiest Amtrak station nationwide.¹⁸ As detailed in [AmtrakConnectsUs](#), Amtrak is targeting significant Midwest service growth, including frequency increases, route expansions, and improved speeds of 110-125 mph (p.46). Completing P2 is necessary step toward enabling CUS to handle this growth.

¹³ Annual Carloads and Value, 2017 STB Confidential Waybill Sample

¹⁴ [Regional Freight Strategic Direction](#) (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2018): p. 31

¹⁵ CREATE Economic Benefits Study (Cambridge Systematics, 2015)

¹⁶ [City of Chicago :: Average Daily Traffic Counts](#) (2006)

¹⁷ [Chicago Transit Authority Annual Ridership Report](#) (2023)

¹⁸ [Amtrak Media Relations – Union Station](#) (2023)

Efficiencies in supply chain movements are also a national benefit from constructing project P2. Specific beneficiaries are those industries that leverage rail service and depend on it for national distribution of manufactured goods and natural resources. Chicago continues to handle 67% of all east-west gateway traffic in the US, and 85% of all east-west intermodal traffic, and remains one of the Top 25 North American container ports (handling 17.9 million Twenty Foot Equivalent Units annually in 2019).¹⁹ Based on domestic, import, export traffic and its associated short tonnage that moved through the terminal from 2018 to 2022, the Chicago Terminal is ranked the 26th intermodal port in the US.²⁰

Table 5: Short Tons Moving through Chicago Terminal

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
16,866,792	10,035,669	9,091,085	10,314,969	10,054,729
56,363,244 short tons moved through the Chicago Port in the last 5 years				

Source: US DOT - Top U.S. Ports Total Tonnage (short tons): 2018-2022

7.6. Public Involvement Activities by Lifecycle Stage

Track 1 Project Planning (IDOT Phase I)

Stakeholder engagement began in 2018 (during project planning work) and is ongoing. In Phase I, two Community Advisory Groups (CAG) were established to focus on specific areas of concern, CAG West (focusing on P3 and GS19) and CAG East (focusing on EW2 and P2). CREATE has sought community input, particularly from the environmental justice areas most directly impacted by the 75th St CIP. CAG East, which oversees P2, consists of representatives from local churches, schools, community groups, businesses, emergency service providers, elected officials, and other groups. CAG members were selected to represent diverse local viewpoints within the Project corridor. As the Project corridor crosses numerous historically disadvantaged communities, ensuring that CAG members represent these communities throughout Project development has been one of the key objectives of the CREATE Program.

Track 2 Project Development (IDOT Phase II)

The Project completed a [Stakeholder Involvement Plan](#) (SIP) in August 2020, at the start of Phase II project development, and is updated annually, with the goal of guiding the collection and organization of input from all stakeholders. The SIP ensured meaningful engagement with stakeholders affected by the Project, including disadvantaged communities. The SIP is regularly updated and is informed by USDOT's "[Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making Guide](#)" to ensure that the engagement process and partnerships remain centered on equity and inclusivity.

Additional outreach for the 75th Street CIP include meetings with elected officials, impacted property owners, small groups and block clubs, media briefings, website updates, newsletters, fact sheets, meet-and-greets with construction staff, public information PowerPoint decks, and special business-to-business events like [Get On Board](#), and vendor networking sessions. More detail is provided in the [Community Benefits Fact Sheet](#).

¹⁹ [CREATE Program Overview \(April 2021\)](#)

²⁰ [US DOT- Top U.S. Ports Total Tonnage \(short tons\): 2018-2022](#)

Track 3 Final Design & Construction (IDOT Phase III)

Input from CAG members is a critical element for delivering key project elements, including environmental commitments; community mobility improvements; education, local jobs, and contracting initiatives (delivered in coordination with local union chapters); project re-evaluations; assessing construction activities and impacts; and maintaining quality of life in communities during construction. The CAG will be actively involved in Project P2 during final design and construction, participating in charettes and receiving key updates on project progress. The CREATE Program has strong relationships with the local aldermen that represent communities within the 75th Street CIP footprint and CREATE will continue to leverage these relationships to keep their constituents informed.

7.7. Project Outcomes

Project P2 supports growth in passenger and freight movements, as there is a pressing need to upgrade the region's infrastructure to meet the projected growing demand. Total annual train miles in the Terminal are expected to increase by 1.3 million between 2022 and 2047.²¹ Increasing Terminal capacity is necessary for accomodating this growth. P2's anticipated outcomes under the Build and No Build scenarios are summarized in **Table 6** and **Table 7**:

Table 6: Passenger Train & Ridership Counts in the P2 Project Area (Projected 2033)

Ridership Counts in the Project Area		
Metric	No Build Scenario	Build Scenario
Total Annual Ridership	12,447,200	17,159,624
Annual Intercity Passenger Rail (IPR*) Ridership	1,584,128	3,995,264
Annual Commuter Passenger Rail (CR**) Ridership (if applicable)	10,863,072	13,164,360
*IPR Ridership Calculation: No Build/ Build Train Counts with Train Occupancy 224 (BCA, Table 15) ** STOPS ridership projection (BCA, Table 4)		
Train Counts in the Project Area		
Metric	No Build Scenario	Build Scenario
Total Weekly Trains	671	973
Weekly Intercity Passenger Rail (IPR) Trains	136	343
Weekly Commuter Rail (CR) Trains (if applicable)	535	633
Weekly Freight Trains (if applicable)	Not calculated	Not calculated

Table 7: Operating Speeds in the Length of Track Improvement Area

Operating Speeds in the Length of Track Improvement Area						
	No Build Scenario, IPR	Build Scenario, IPR	No Build Scenario, CR	Build Scenario, CR	No Build Scenario, Freight	Build Scenario, Freight
Average Operating Speed (mph)	Not Reported	Not Reported	28mph- RI 27mph- SWS	29 mph- RI 34 mph- SWS	Not Reported	Not Reported

²¹ [Exhibit 3B. RTC Model Outputs – Train Miles](#)

Operating Speeds in the Length of Track Improvement Area						
Highest Maximum Authorized Speed (mph)	60mph <i>W 74th-CP521</i> 25mph <i>CP518-Cermak</i>	Not Reported	60mph <i>Metra RID</i> 60mph <i>W74th-CP521</i> 25mph <i>CP518-Cermak</i>	Not Reported	25mph <i>CP518-Cermak</i>	Not Reported
Lowest Maximum Authorized Speed (mph)	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
Average Scheduled Travel Time (Time/Trip)	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported

*Commuter Rail (CR); Intercity Passenger Rail (IPR); Freight Rail (Freight)

7.8. Performance Measures

Provided below in **Table 8** are the “baseline” and “post-project” performance measures for P2.

Table 8. Performance Measurement Information

Goal	Objective	Performance Measure	Description of Measure	Measurement	Reporting
Goal 1 Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation	Future Growth in Train Volumes	Weekly Passenger Train Counts	Total number of trains operating daily between mile posts CP521 - Cermak	Pre-Project (Baseline) Performance as of: 2022: 83 Expected Post-Project Performance: 2065: 309.5	Frequency: Annual Duration: 2022-2065
	Metra Passenger Time Savings	New and Existing Metra Passenger Time Savings	Time savings through new service and mode-shift	Pre-Project (Baseline) Performance as of: 2022: 686,144 person hours/ year Expected Post-Project Performance: 2065: 961,208 person hours/ year	Frequency: Annual Duration: 2022-2065

Goal	Objective	Performance Measure	Description of Measure	Measurement	Reporting
	Equity in Contracting	Total Contract Dollars Awarded to DBE's	Total contract dollars	Pre-Project (Baseline) Performance as of: 2024: N/A Expected Post-Project Performance: To be determined at procurement	Frequency: Annual Duration: 2024-2065

VIII. Project Location

P2 is located in the Chicago IL–IN 2020 Census Designated Urban Area, in three Chicago communities: Auburn Gresham, Englewood, and Greater Grand Crossing. P2 is located in Illinois US congressional districts 1 and 7. Coordinates for P2's western limits are 41°45'28.51"N 87°38'55.92"W; northeastern limits are 41°45'49.07"N 87°38'4.03"W; and southeastern limits are 41°45'17.69"N 87°38'16.00"W. The Project is entirely grade separated.

IX. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

9.1. Project Readiness

As shown in **Figure 5**, P2 is currently in its final design stage, which began in 2021 and will be completed in Q2 2026. If the Project is selected for FSP funding, execution of the Project's grant agreement would occur by Q2 2026, contractor procurement would be completed by Q1 2028, and construction work would begin in Q2 2028 and end in 2032. Train movements through existing segments of the corridor will be accommodated during construction. Easements as required from private property owners will be secured during final design. Summarized in Exhibit 2F, all ROW acquisition and work to secure easements is underway and expected to be completed by Q4 2025. Planning, conceptual design, preliminary engineering and environmental clearance are complete. Public involvement will be ongoing throughout Project construction.

9.1.1. Environmental Readiness

The Project's environmental review process was completed in 2014, when FHWA approved the 75th St CIP's [EIS](#) and [ROD](#), which provided a federal environmental clearance for P3, GS19, EW2, and P2 as environmentally linked projects. Due to the cost and phasing constraints of the entire 75th St CIP, it has been over ten years since the original EIS approval. As part of the final design process, certain environmental documents developed in the EIS phase will need to be reevaluated and updated, such as the environmental class of action determination (ECAD) technical memorandum and other studies. These documents will be updated for approval by FHWA in advance of the completion of the final design report and start of construction. Critical prior project phase milestones include:

- **September 2014:** 75th St CIP – Combined EIS & ROD
- **February 2015:** 75th St CIP Phase I Project Report & Preliminary Design Approval

- **December 2018:** FY 2017 & 2018 INFRA Grant Agreement, which funded final design for entire 75th St CIP and construction of Projects P3 and GS19
- **August 2020:** 75th St CIP – Phase II & III Stakeholder Involvement Plan
- **January 2021:** Project EW2 and P2 begins final design
- **December 2022:** Projects P3 and GS19 begin construction
- **September 2024:** EW2 Segment A is awarded construction funding

9.1.2. Status & Timeline of Agreements

CREATE projects are governed by a Joint Statement of Understanding, executed in 2003 by the partners, and amended in 2018 (see [Exhibit 2J](#)). The CREATE Program Partnerships and Management Practices Guidelines ([Exhibit 2I](#)) have been developed to ensure that Terminal capacity and access is not hindered by any construction activities. For P2, Metra will oversee the design and construction, with partner railroads (BRC, CSX, and NS) providing review support and concurrence, and IDOT and City of Chicago providing project oversight and permitting coordination. Interagency coordination around ROW acquisition is also captured in [Exhibit 2H](#).

9.1.3 Lifecycle Stage Summary

P2 is in the Track 3 lifecycle stage (Final Design and Construction). Track 1 (Systems and Project Planning) began in 2007 with the completion of the program-wide feasibility study, which defined the scope, objectives, and benefits of the four projects of the 75th St CIP, including P2. The Project completed its Track 2 phase with the development and approval of the [75th St CIP's \(EIS\)](#) and ([ROD](#)) in 2014, and the preliminary engineering report approval in 2015. P2's final design work began in January 2021 and is planned to conclude by Spring 2026, contingent on the award of FSP funding to initiate construction.

9.1.4. Project & Partner Coordination

CREATE is a partnership between all six North American Class I railroads, short line railroads, and various agencies, including Amtrak, Metra, IDOT, the City of Chicago, and Cook County. CREATE Program partners regularly coordinate with FHWA and FRA around the development of the 75th St CIP (including P2) and have ensured its inclusion in relevant state and local plans (like CMAP's Transportation Improvement Program or "TIP"). CREATE also updated the 75th St CIP's [Stakeholder Involvement Plan \(SIP\)](#) in May 2024, with the goal of guiding the collection and organization of input from all stakeholders. To date, P2 has secured over [42 support letters](#) from elected officials, agencies, organizations, and community stakeholders.

9.2. Technical Merit

9.2.1. Scope of Work

The proposed tasks and subtasks are appropriate and in accordance with CREATE's best practices for construction projects of similar size and scope. CREATE projects are developed through a rigorous process of design and review to assure that they are designed to the highest engineering standards, are in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations, and are delivered in a manner that is accountable and responsible. As discussed in **Section 9.1.1.** (p.16), the P2 project's preliminary design has been approved, with the final design nearing completion.

9.2.2 Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel

CREATE partners have extensive experience completing projects with a similar scope. CREATE has administered 16 federal grants awarded to Program projects over the last 20 years, totaling \$750 million. Each project is managed by an organization sponsor that leads procurement, engineering, and construction activities. For P2, IDOT serves as the sponsor and assumes its

traditional role of financial management, partner coordination, and oversight of the environmental review. Metra will oversee the design and construction, with partner railroads providing review support and concurrence. The Chicago Transportation Coordination Office (CTCO) will oversee continued rail operations through the corridor during the Project, with IDOT and City of Chicago providing project oversight and permitting coordination. The personnel responsible for P2's delivery have a strong and successful track record of similar project completion under the Program:

Amtrak: Joe Shacter (Director, Program Management). Mr. Shacter holds over 14 years of leadership experience at Amtrak and IDOT and will assist with agency coordination.

Association of American Railroads: Bill Thompson (Chief Engineer), Rebecca Wingate (CREATE Program Manager). With over 40 years of experience in heavy haul rail operations, design and research, Mr. Thompson has been a CREATE partner since 2005. Ms. Wingate is a civil engineer with 17 years of railroad engineering, construction, and transportation planning experience. Both will support IDOT as project sponsor, and Metra.

Belt Railway Company of Chicago: Christopher Steinway (General Counsel), Adam Brock (Chief Mechanical & Engineering Officer). Mr. Steinway has 15 years of legal counsel experience at BRC. Mr. Brock has a total 12 years of mechanical engineering and maintenance experience at BRC and UP. Both will provide review support.

City of Chicago: Jeff Sriver (Dir. of Transportation Planning & Programming). Mr. Sriver has led planning and engineering at CDOT for 15 years, has been a CREATE partner since 2003, and will provide oversight and permitting assistance.

Cook County: Jesse Elam (Dir. of Strategic Planning & Policy), Tara Orbon (Asst. Superintendent). Mr. Elam is a planner with 18 years of agency experience at Cook County and CMAP. Ms. Orbon is a transportation engineer with 25 years of experience, including 8 years of leadership at Cook County. Both will assist with oversight and agency coordination.

CSX: Brett Guarino (Project Manager), Tom Livingston (VP, Government Affairs), John Parker (Manager, Network Planning). Ms. Guarino is a construction engineer and project manager with 14 years of experience at CSX and will provide review support. Mr. Livingston has 21 years of government relations experience at CSX and will assist with agency coordination. Mr. Parker holds 25 years of network operations experience at CSX and serves as head of the Chicago Transportation Coordination Office, he will support project oversight.

HNTB (IDOT PMO): David Zarowny (Project Manager). Mr. Zarowny serves as the CREATE project manager, holding over 40 years of experience in railroad operations.

IDOT (Project Sponsor): Velicia Goode-Moore (Freight Rail Section Chief) Jason Osborn (Dir., Office of Intermodal Project Implementation). Ms. Goode-Moore has 24 years of IDOT engineering experience and serves as the CREATE Program Manager. Mr. Osborn has 24 years of transportation and government administration experience at IDOT and Metra. Both will oversee project management, grant administration, procurement, and coordination.

Metra (Design and Construction Lead): David Kralik (Director, Planning & Programming), Paul Bobby (Operations Engineer). Mr. Kralik oversees transportation planning at Metra, with 22 years of experience at the agency. Mr. Bobby is an engineer with 24 years of experience at Metra. Both will provide final design and construction oversight.

NS (Partner Railroad): *Jacob Watson (Planning Engineer), Herbert Smith (Regional VP, Government Affairs).* With 12 years of railroad engineering experience at NS, Mr. Watson will provide oversight of project implementation. With 15 years of government relations experience at NS, Mr. Smith will assist with agency coordination and public engagement.

Union Pacific: *Katie Novak (General Director – Interline Operations).* Ms. Novak holds 18 years of public affairs and railroad operations experience at UP, will assist with coordination.

WSP (IDOT Corridor Management Consultant): *Chris Ferguson (Project Manager).* A supervising signal engineer with 20 years of experience in private consulting and at NS, Mr. Ferguson will assist IDOT with project management, coordination, and railroad oversight.

9.2.3. Private Sector Participation

Project P2 is noteworthy for its private sector cooperation. Led by the key personnel listed in Section 9.2.2., private sector railroads have been key partners in P2's development since its Track 1 stage. Partnership around the delivery of P2's scope will leverage the private railroad partners' ongoing investments in the maintenance and state of good repair of the improvements in the Terminal, totaling over \$400 million since 1998.

9.2.4. Legal, Financial, and Technical Capacity

IDOT is the project sponsor and lead applicant for P2 and has the legal, financial, and technical capacity to oversee its successful implementation. Funding and delivery of P2 will be supported by the other CREATE partners (described in **Section 9.2.2**, p.16-17), and in its role as grant administrator, IDOT will work closely with affected railroad operators and funding partners. A core capability and day-to-day responsibility of each of the CREATE partners is the development and execution of complex transportation infrastructure capital projects.

9.2.5. Innovation

P2 incorporates innovative and effective technology, approaches to project delivery, and funding and financing solutions. The technologies used in the Project - including modern bridge design, centralized traffic control, and updated PTC-capable rail traffic signals - are established industry solutions but represent significant upgrades on the corridor. P2 also advances and supports the protection of the corridor's assets and operations through its innovative cybersecurity framework, overseen by AAR and the participating railroads, who comprise the CREATE Rail Information Security Committee (RISC).

P2 was also developed through CREATE's project segmentation method, which separates larger projects into successive distinct phases that strategically maximize public and private partner priorities at each stage. To that end, P2 will meaningfully deliver public-oriented improvements to safety and mobility as well as critical upgrades to the track and signal infrastructure, benefitting all operators. These improvements are designed to be minimally disruptive to train operations and lay the groundwork for additional major future improvements (like project P2). The procurement process for P2's contracted portion will request that bidders propose methods for maximizing the efficiency of the construction work and minimizing interruptions both to rail traffic and to motorized and non-motorized traffic under the viaducts.

9.2.6. Consistency with Planning Guidance & Documents

This Project is subject to local approvals through the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and is included in the federal fiscal year 2022-2026 TIP. The TIP ID number for this Project is [01-07-0001](#). Projects in the TIP are

consistent with CMAP's [ON TO 2050 Comprehensive Regional Plan](#), where it is emphasized that "the CREATE Program has greatly improved rail movement in the region and nationwide, [but that] the effort requires continued investment with a focus on public benefits." The 2050 Plan also highlights the 75th St CIP as the "largest, most complex, and most significant remaining component of the CREATE program," making it a regionally and nationally significant infrastructure investment. The CMAP TIP is included in the [Illinois Statewide Transportation Improvement Program \(STIP\)](#). The Project's IDOT State Job Number is D-20-002-20. The CREATE Program is featured prominently in the current versions of the [Illinois State Rail Plan](#), the [State Freight Plan](#) and the [Long Range Transportation Plan](#). Documented above, the Project has been included in metropolitan and State planning documents ([TIP](#) and [STIP](#)) as required.

9.3. Project Benefits

P2 creates \$760.2 million in net benefits, by increasing fluidity and reducing congestion on the freight and passenger rail system, improving safety and state of good repair, and reducing emissions related to a service outage on the corridor. These improvements will encourage optimization and continued usage of the rail system and will help avoid the potential diversion of passenger trips from rail to automobile, as well as freight shipments from rail to truck. This will lead to reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on the highway and subsequent benefits to:

- A. *Effects on system and service performance*
- B. *Effects on safety, competitiveness, reliability, trip or transit time, and resilience*
- C. *Positive economic and employment impacts*
- D. *Efficiencies from improved integration with other modes*
- E. *Ability to meet existing or anticipated demand*
- F. *Servicing historically unconnected or under-connected communities*

The BCA was prepared according to current USDOT guidance. With a total project cost of approximately \$755 million, the **P2 benefit-cost ratio is 1.01**. BCA results are summarized in **Table 9**, and detail on the analysis is provided in the BCA Calculations and [BCA Tech Memo](#).

Table 9: Monetized Benefits and Primary Selection Criteria Comparison

	Benefit Categories	Monetized Benefits (mil.)	FSP Selection Criteria
1a	Metra Passenger Travel Time Savings resulting from Service Improvements	\$205.4	A, B, D
1b	O&M Cost Disbenefit resulting from Increased Maintenance	-\$129.8	A, B, D, E
2a	Avoided Delay resulting from Typical Operations	\$70.7	A, B, C, D
2b	Avoided Passenger Rail Cost resulting from Reduced Idling	\$0.9	A, C, D
3	Passenger Travel Cost Savings resulting from Mode Shift	\$361.4	A, B, C, D
4	Crash Cost Savings resulting from Mode Shift	\$64.5	B
5	Emissions Damage Savings resulting from Mode Shift	\$6.8	A, B, D
6	Reduced Crashes resulting from Lighting and Sidewalk Improvements	\$2.9	B
7	Reduced Crime resulting from Lighting and Sidewalk Improvements	\$0.1	B

Assumptions: P2 Build Scenario benefits versus the No Build Scenario outcomes. P2 service years 2033 - 2065.

Acronyms: Commuter Rail (CR); Intercity Passenger Rail (IPR); Freight Rail (Freight)

Benefit 1a: Metra Passenger Travel Time Savings from Service Improvements. Metra will be able to improve their service offerings along the SWS and RID corridors due to the new P2 flyover and second main track. This benefit will amount to 747,099 person-hours per year of time savings for existing and new riders ([BCA](#), p.11-12).

Benefit 1b: Incremental O&M Cost Increase resulting from Increased Operations. Changes in Metra's service plans and increased operations will result in increased incremental operations and maintenance costs. Although this is a monetary disbenefit to the project, it will support the additional capacity for 3,276 more Metra and 1,638 Amtrak train trips in the Terminal. This will also divert the additional Metra trains to the LaSalle St Station, creating the much-needed national benefit of more IPR capacity at CUS ([BCA](#), p.12).

Benefit 2a: Avoided Rail Delay Under Typical Operations. Freight trains will have a reduced delay time due to the project. This is a benefit amounts to 2,739 hours per year of avoided delay for freight trains in the terminal. P2 will also result in 71 hours per year of avoided delay for passenger trains in the terminal ([BCA](#), p.13).

Benefit 2b: Avoided Passenger Rail Costs Resulting from Train Delay. Passenger rail providers will realize cost savings resulting from a reduction in idling time. This benefit amounts to \$299 in avoided costs per train/hour for Metra and \$747 in avoided costs per train/hour for Amtrak ([BCA](#), p.14).

Benefit 3: Passenger Travel Cost Savings from Mode Shift. A mode shift of passengers from automobile to passenger train will result from improved Metra operations, diverting SWS trains to the LaSalle St Station versus CUS, via the RID line, yielding a benefit of over \$19.1 million in passenger cost savings annually ([BCA](#), p.15).

Benefit 4: Crash Cost Savings resulting from Mode Shift. Mode shift from automobile to rail will result in the reduced crash exposure for the affected population. The Project serves to reduce crash-related fatalities to 0.29 persons per year, crash-related injuries to 15.26 persons per year, and a reduction in crash-related damaged vehicles to 79.92 vehicles per year through passenger mode shifts ([BCA](#), p.16).

Benefit 5: Emissions Damage Savings resulting from Mode Shift. The reduction of VMT will decrease emissions from vehicles and yields emissions damage savings. The total value of these avoided damages amounts to a benefit of over \$3.4 million annually in 2022 dollars ([BCA](#), p.17).

Benefit 6: Reduced Crashes. Improved lighting under viaducts and on roadway segments will reduce crashes on community streets below the project area rail structures. This benefit reduces crash-related injuries to .72 persons per year and crash related damaged property to 5.82 vehicles per year. through additional lighting in the area ([BCA](#), p.18).

Benefit 7: Reduced Crime. Improved lighting under viaducts and on roadway segments will reduce crime in the project area on community streets below the elevated rail structures, yielding a 4% reduction in crime incidents per year within the project footprint ([BCA](#), p.19).

9.4.Selection Criteria

9.4.1.Improvements to Accessibility

Through the CREATE community mobility improvements scope, P2 enhances safety for streets passing under the grade-separated rail structures. In the Project's [EIS](#), the City of Chicago

identified numerous critical upgrades to the lighting, pavement, pedestrian accessibility, and drainage on these roadways, to bring them to a state of good repair and to reduce accidents and crime. Through these improvements (shown in [Exhibit 2K. Environmental Commitments](#)), P2 will enhance connectivity between neighborhoods for all roadway users.

9.4.2. Application Partnership

The CREATE program is a unique public-private partnership involving the USDOT, the State of Illinois, Cook County, the City of Chicago, Metra, Amtrak, and the nation's Class I freight railroads. This collaborative effort ensures that Amtrak or any other agency or railroad is not sole applicant for this project. By leveraging the strengths and resources of these diverse partners, the CREATE program aims to enhance the efficiency and reliability of the region's rail infrastructure, benefiting both passenger rail and freight rail.

9.4.3. Improving Financial Performance, Reliability, Service Frequency, and State of Good Repair of an Amtrak Route

P2 will augment existing passenger rail capacity for Amtrak and Metra (in the near- and long-term), reduce train delays, and reduce delays for roadway motorists. The Project will make Amtrak routes more attractive to passengers, support economic growth, and ensure a sustainable and efficient rail system. These improvements are summarized below:

Financial Performance:

- P2 increases efficiency of Amtrak routes traveling through the Terminal, by reducing congestion and delay. CREATE projects are developed in coordination with Amtrak with a focus on lowering operating costs, yielding better financial performance as trains can adhere to schedules more reliably, reducing the need for costly overtime and fuel consumption.
- Economic growth through improved rail infrastructure is an IPR goal of P2. The project will help the terminal attract more passengers, boosting ticket sales and revenue. Additionally, enhanced freight movement supports local economies, indirectly benefiting Amtrak.

Reliability:

- Infrastructure upgrades planned for P2 focus on critical infrastructure, which reduces the likelihood of breakdowns and delays in the corridor.
- Bottleneck reduction in the Terminal can be achieved by addressing the current shared track arrangement through Belt Junction and CWI, moving into CUS. P2 will create the necessary capacity to support more predictable train operations and improved overall reliability.

Service Frequency:

- Capacity expansion is the primary goal for the P2 project, through adding track and a flyover bridge. This will create 30 additional slots for passenger service at CUS, enabling Amtrak to increase service frequency at a critical intercity passenger rail hub.
- There are seven identified Corridor ID projects with a demonstrated need to access the Terminal if they are to be feasibly implemented. P2 will allow for new routes and increased frequencies on existing routes, enabling the implementation of these seven projects.

State of Good Repair:

- Maintenance and modernization are core to the CREATE Program's mission. CREATE's ongoing capital asset planning and management ensures that rail infrastructure remains in good condition, reducing the backlog of repairs and extending the lifespan of assets.

- With all CREATE projects, safety enhancements are made alongside capacity improvements, such as improved signaling and grade crossing protections, contributing to a safer and more reliable rail network for Amtrak IPR service.

9.4.4. Consistency with Corridor Identification and Development Program

The CID Program helps guide IPR development throughout the country and creates a pipeline of intercity passenger rail projects ready for implementation. CREATE project P2 provides capacity for improved existing rail service and additional service accessing the Terminal. The project specifically will create 30 additional slots for passenger service in CUS, capacity improvements that are supportive of CID project proposals as of 2024.

9.4.5. Alignment with Administration Priorities

P2 advances the following USDOT administration priorities as defined in the NOFO:

Safety

The streets under the project area viaducts and structures are anticipated to have a reduction in crashes resulting from the improved lighting and other community mobility improvements. As detailed in the [BCA](#) (p.18), P2's improvements will reduce future crashes and auto-related injuries by 30% from 2033-2062.

Climate Change and Sustainability

P2 will eliminate a bottleneck that impacts 83 passenger trains weekly and reduces freight operator track access 6 hours daily. Less idling time on the tracks will mitigate current emissions levels in the Terminal and result in over \$3.4 million in avoided emissions damages annually, due to a mode shift from cars and passenger trains ([BCA](#), p.17). This will also reduce 4 metric tons of CO₂ annually between 2033-2062, by alleviating railway congestion and preventing a shift to automobiles for passenger trips ([BCA](#), p.13). The reduction in emission levels in the Terminal is consistent with the goals of the [City of Chicago - Climate Action Plan \(CAP\)](#), which outlines strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for climate change's impacts. As detailed in the [CAP](#), the City's carbon reduction goal of 62% by 2040 is heavily driven by reducing on-street transportation and railway emissions, which accounts for 1/6th of that total reduction goal (p.16-17). In turn, by preventing emissions increases due to rail congestion and passenger trip diversions, P2 encourages a shift to low or no emission modes, serving to support the City's climate action goals.

The CREATE Program and P2 are consistent with the findings and goals of [“The US National Blueprint for Transportation Decarbonization - A Joint Strategy to Transform Transportation”](#):

- *Rail transport is responsible for 2% of GHG emissions:* P2 creates more opportunities to use rail for passenger and freight transport to reduce GHG emissions created by the highway system, through mode shift.
- *2030 - Invest in rail, public transportation, and active transportation infrastructure to provide the option to use more affordable and energy-efficient forms of transportation:* P2 invests over \$409 million in rail transit as an affordable and energy-efficient approach.
- *2040 to 2050 - Fully leverage the system-wide potential for efficient travel modes like rail, transit, and shared multimodal mobility and maximize vehicle efficiency:* P2 provides capacity for future multimodal mobility that can maximize vehicle efficiency.

Equity & Justice⁴⁰

Aligning with the [Justice40 Initiative](#), P2 advances equity, multimodal options, and quality of life within communities on Chicago's South Side. The Project invests over \$409 million in the two Chicago neighborhoods (Englewood and Greater Grand Crossing). P2 will add improved commuter rail service for communities along the Metra SWS in Cook County and Will County. The population in the five census tracts that overlap with the project area are over 96% African American,²² with median household income levels below the county and regional average.²³ Shown in [Exhibit 3F](#), the project area's five census tracts rank from the 82nd to 97th percentiles nationally for concentration of low-income populations. Per USDOT's Equitable Transportation Community tool, all P2's 5 census tracts are considered "transportation disadvantaged." P2 addresses these "transportation cost burden" challenges by increasing capacity for more passenger rail services and eliminating conflict points with freight rail operators. Additionally, as 2 hospitals, 10 fire stations, 4 police stations and 127 schools exist within 2 miles of the Project area,²⁴ P2 will preserve and enhance access for emergency vehicles and critical services through the corridor by improving road conditions at the viaducts, benefitting a population of 50,369 residents and 21,807 households within Project's overlapping community areas.²⁵

Workforce Development, Job Quality, and Wealth Creation

P2 advances USDOT's workforce development, job quality, and wealth creation priorities, through the CREATE program's ongoing commitment to fostering DBE entrepreneurship; including under-represented vendors in the contracted work; partnering with regional training programs; investing in education; and delivering projects in partnership with trade unions. P2 incorporates the CREATE Program's Community Partnership, which emphasizes inclusion of DBEs in its design and construction work. The contracted work element of P2 will include outreach to support local hiring in the surrounding communities, conducted in partnership with City Colleges, community organizations, and elected officials. IDOT data from 2022 showed that of CREATE's ten most recent general rail construction projects, the Program achieved a DBE participation goal of 23%, exceeding its 21% target, representing \$39 million in completed awards. An additional \$30 million in DBE contract award value is planned through 2028. To date, 19 of the 26 subconsultants and contractors hired for P3 and GS19 construction have been DBEs. CREATE also maintains a mentor-protégé program that advances participation and experience development for under-represented vendors.

High quality job creation is also advanced through CREATE's numerous workforce development and training partnerships. CREATE provides funding for construction industry qualifications trainings, and for on-the-job training on 75th St CIP projects, involving entry-level individuals who have graduated from IDOT's Highway Construction Careers Training Program (HCCTP), offered through Chicago area community colleges. CREATE Partners have funded STEAM programs in 75th St CIP communities since 2019, including over \$200,000 from NS to Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Public Library Foundation.

As with all CREATE projects, contractor-led work will be carried out by 100% union labor - including skilled and semi-skilled laborers, equipment operators, and specialty craftspeople -

²² [Exhibit 3H. CEJST Outputs](#)

²³ [Exhibit 3E. CMAP Community Profiles](#)

²⁴ [Exhibit 3G. P2 Community Institutions](#)

²⁵ [Exhibit 3E. CMAP Community Profiles](#)

represented by Laborers, Steel Workers, Electrical Workers, Heavy Equipment Operators, Brotherhood of Railroad Signalman, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees unions, and others. All contract employees will be covered by Davis-Bacon Act (23 USC 113) requiring payment of prevailing wage rates. Additionally, the 75th CIP's projects are fully supported by the Chicago Federation of Labor.

X. Project Implementation and Management

10.1. Project Oversight and Contracting

CREATE projects are managed by an individual sponsor that leads procurement, engineering, and construction activities. All projects follow federal standards through preliminary engineering, NEPA, and final design, to ensure federal funding eligibility. As grant administrator, IDOT will coordinate closely with affected railroad operators and funding partners.

P2 will follow established CREATE processes and procedures for engineering, design, and procurement work. The project requires significant coordination to ensure that network capacity and access is not hindered for extended periods of time. Partners will release all construction bid packages using established federally approved processes. Much of the work, including track and signal construction, is force account and will be performed directly by the railroads, under union agreements. P2's construction work will adhere to FRA, partner agency, and railroad standards, as well as [CREATE Partnerships and Management Practices \(Exhibit 2I\)](#). Lastly, portions of the work will be made available for bid by qualified local and DBE firms. Described in **Section 9.4.5** (p.23), CREATE has established procedures for securing DBE participation in projects.

10.1.1. Project Management Experience

Among its public and private partners, the CREATE Program has extensive experience completing large and complex projects, having administered 16 federal grants over the last 20 years, totaling \$750 million. Each CREATE project is managed by an individual organization sponsor that leads procurement, engineering, and construction activities. For this Project, IDOT will serve as the sponsor, and assume its traditional role related to financial management, partner coordination, and oversight of the environmental assessment process. Metra (as the lead railroad) will oversee the design and construction process, with NS and BRC providing support. IDOT and City of Chicago will assist with project oversight and permitting coordination.

10.1.2. Qualifications and Experience of Key Personnel

Qualification descriptions and experience of key personnel are found in **Section 9.2.2.** (p.16-17).

10.2. Implementing the Project Management Plan

CREATE developed a [Project Management Plan \(Exhibit 2L\)](#) for the entire 75th St CIP in July 2020, including P2. It includes construction phase plans, pertaining to procurement, organizational management, controls, communication, documentation, reporting, and closeout.

10.3. Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Project risks and mitigation strategies are detailed in [Exhibit 2G. 75th St CIP Risk Register](#), and include ROW acquisition, unanticipated environmental issues, necessary design revisions, cost increases, material supply delays, labor shortages, unidentified utilities, and local permitting. Described in [Exhibit 2H](#), property acquisition and both permanent and temporary easements are required, which could present a minor schedule risk. Detailed in the [EIS](#), the Project also requires partners to deliver mitigation strategies to various environmental concerns. These are illustrated

in [Exhibit 2L. Environmental Commitments](#). Partners also mitigate project cost risks that arise during implementation, in accordance with the [Estimates and Contingency Plan \(Exhibit 2C\)](#).

10.4. Project Progress Reporting

IDOT and CREATE will comply with all USDOT reporting requirements, detailed in 2 CFR 200.301 and 49 U.S.C. 24407(f), including quarterly progress reports and federal financial reports, interim and final performance reports, and all applicable auditing, monitoring, and close out requirements. Included in the reporting will be performance measures mutually agreed upon by USDOT and CREATE. **Section 7.8** (p.14) provides proposed performance measures for P2.

10.5. Small Business Participation

Detailed in **Section 9.4.5** (p.23), CREATE maintains strong DBE goals and a mentor-protégé program, which increases participation and experience development for under-represented vendors. CREATE has awarded \$39 million to DBEs from the ten most recent general rail construction projects, and the Program's mentor-protégé program is ongoing.

XI. Other Information

11.1. Environmental Compliance Documentation

P2's environmental compliance documents include the combined [EIS](#) and [ROD](#) for the 75th St CIP and P2's environmental commitments ([Exhibit 2L](#)). The Project will also require securing various permits from numerous state and local agencies, and while the final list of required permits will be determined in the final design process, the permitting requirements for Projects P3 and GS19 (included as [Exhibit 2F. Potential Required Permits](#)) illustrate the potential needs:

- **City of Chicago:** Office of Utility Coordination (OUC), Department of Water Management (DWM), Department of Transportation (CDOT), Bureau of Forestry
- **State of Illinois:** Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA), Historic Preservation Agency, Bureau of Design & Environment (BDE), Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)

11.2. Final Agreements, per 49 U.S.C. 22905(c)(1)

The [CREATE - Joint Statement of Understandings \(Exhibit 2J\)](#) details the established programmatic agreement between partner agencies and organizations (including rail operators and owners) that dictate all of the planning, design and construction activities in the program.

11.3. Letters of Support & Funding Commitments

P2 support letters are provided on the [application website](#) and included in this submission. A signed letters of funding commitment has also been provided by IDOT, City of Chicago, AAR (representing participating private railroads), and Metra, included with this submission, provided on the [application website](#).

11.4. Exhibits

Exhibits are included in this submission and on the [application website](#), organized under these categories: (1) Maps, Graphics & Engineering Drawings; (2) Project Management Documents; (3) Data Outputs.