



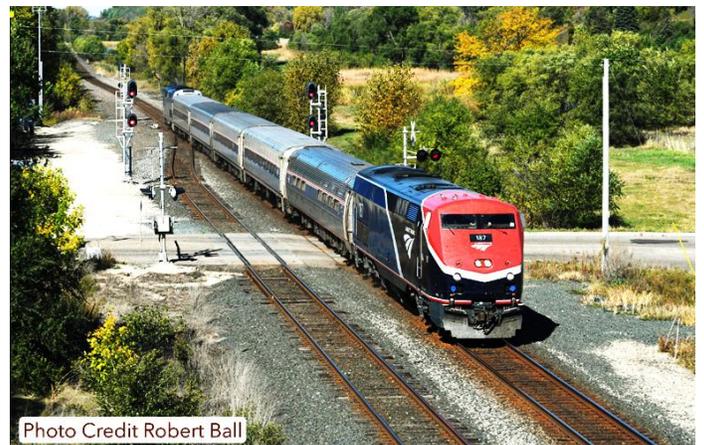
## HF3176 / SF2887 - Bills to study new passenger rail corridors in Minnesota

**Bills provide direction from the legislature to MnDOT to submit Corridor I.D. grant applications to the Federal Railroad Administration for:**

- 1) New daytime passenger rail service between Saint Paul and Fargo/Moorhead.** One option for this corridor would be on the same route as the Empire Builder with additional stops – potentially Wadena, Little Falls, and Anoka; and
- 2) New passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Kansas City.** The route connects the Twin Cities, southern Minnesota communities, plus Des Moines, and Kansas City. It also connects with Amtrak long distance trains to the south and southwest U.S. Freight rail infrastructure on this route is in good condition (Class 1).

**Why action now:** Submittal of applications to the Federal Railroad Administration in 2026 is critical as this is likely the final funding round. The last round of funding was in 2022.

No state match is needed to submit these applications. In a future year, if the Federal Railroad Administration approves these projects to advance into Phase 2 planning, the FRA would require a state match of \$500,000 per corridor. Phase 2 funding would pay for planning beyond the initial scope in Phase 1.



Borealis near Minnesota City in route from Saint Paul to Chicago. The train often sells out.

## Why invest in more passenger rail in Minnesota?

- Demand is there. Ridership on Amtrak's new Borealis service has exceeded projections by 50 percent. Trains are often sold out. Intercity passenger rail is very different than commuter rail.
- For communities served by passenger rail, the economic benefits and tourism impact is enormous - with returns three to four times the investment made. In addition, Amtrak purchased \$62 million in goods and services in Minnesota in FY2024.
- Many people either don't want or cannot drive or fly - students, families with kids, elderly, and disabled. Many Minnesota cities are not conveniently served by air or bus.
- Traveling by train is good for the environment and takes vehicle trips off congested roads. And traveling by train is safer than traveling by passenger vehicle.
- Investment in passenger rail also benefits freight rail and the movement of goods.
- Other states in the Midwest - Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, and Ohio - are investing in new and improved passenger rail service because people want it and the federal government supports it. The Federal Railroad Administration has a competitive program and grants not going to Minnesota will go to other states.



# RESOLUTIONS AND LETTERS OF SUPPORT

## Bills HF3176 / SF2887

*Resolutions compiled by All Aboard Minnesota*

*Priority Corridors are highlighted in white*



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**THE CHAMBER**  
FARGO MOORHEAD WEST FARGO

Friday, January 30, 2025

Dear Chair Dibble, Co-Chair Koznick, and Co-Chair Tabke,

My name is Cale Dunwoody, and I have the pleasure of serving as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (FMWF Chamber). On behalf of our over 1,700 members, I respectfully offer this letter of support for H.F. 3176 and S.F. 2887.

The mission of the FMWF Chamber is to protect and promote business, inspire individuals, cultivate communities, and influence action. Establishing a new daytime passenger rail service between Fargo-Moorhead and St. Paul embodies our mission by promoting economic growth for our region while providing a convenient, affordable, and comfortable transportation option for all residents and visitors. The benefits of passenger rail services are clear, and many station cities have seen significant economic value, often finding that returns are three to four times greater than the initial investment.

As the fastest growing county outside of the Twin Cities metro, a consistent and accessible connection between Fargo-Moorhead and St. Paul will bolster regional tourism, increase citizen mobility and connect communities statewide. With an estimated annual ridership of 220,000 travelers, this service will allow community members, including college students, the elderly, families with children, and those who are mobility impaired, to travel more easily and support local economies. This proposed service is not only crucial to the Fargo-Moorhead area, but communities throughout Greater Minnesota.

To help strengthen our regional economy, increase mobility and connect communities across Minnesota, we urge you to support H.F. 3176 and S.F. 2887.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your commitment to Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Cale Dunwoody  
Vice President of Public Policy  
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce





## RESOLUTION 2026-0126-I

### Resolution to Approve Support for a New Passenger Rail Service between the Twin Cities and Fargo/Moorhead

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor is a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's 2025 State Rail Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead route is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study; and

WHEREAS, the entire Fargo-Moorhead region would benefit from this transportation option, and Moorhead's student, senior, and transit-dependent populations would especially benefit; and

WHEREAS, this growing and congested corridor has strong ridership potential, estimated at 220,000 or greater in a recent MnDOT study; and

WHEREAS, new rail service in this corridor would have a convenient daytime schedule — as compared to the Empire Builder that arrives and departs Fargo at approximately 3 AM and serves other Minnesota cities during inconvenient overnight hours; and

WHEREAS, new rail service in this corridor will connect communities to each other and provide an affordable travel alternative to driving, flying, and busing.

WHEREAS, Amtrak brings jobs and investment to Minnesota - Amtrak spent an estimated \$62.9 million on goods, services, and wages in Minnesota in 2024; and

WHEREAS, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Moorhead that it hereby supports new passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Fargo/Moorhead and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration for this corridor.

PASSED: January 26, 2026 by the City Council of the City of Moorhead.

APPROVED BY:

  
 MICHELLE (SHELLY) A. CARLSON, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
 CHRISTINA RUST, City Clerk





January 29, 2026

**To Whom It May Concern,**

On behalf of the Detroit Lakes Regional Chamber of Commerce board of directors and the regional business community, I write in strong support of new state-supported intercity passenger rail service between Saint Paul, Minnesota and Fargo/Moorhead, North Dakota. This corridor is a priority in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's 2025 State Rail Plan and is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study. These designations underscore the growing demand for expanded, reliable transportation options connecting regional economies across Minnesota and North Dakota.

Communities along this corridor—including Detroit Lakes—have a long history of passenger rail service and remain well positioned to benefit from renewed investment. While Amtrak's Empire Builder continues to provide important connectivity, its overnight schedule limits accessibility for business travel, workforce mobility, and tourism. A new state-supported daytime service would better meet the needs of residents, employers, visitors, and students while offering a convenient and affordable alternative to driving, air travel, and intercity bus service.

From an economic perspective, the benefits are compelling. A recent MnDOT study estimates ridership of 220,000 or more, reflecting strong demand in a growing and increasingly congested corridor. Expanded passenger rail service would enhance workforce access, support tourism, strengthen regional business connections, and contribute to long-term economic vitality. Investments required for passenger rail would also improve freight rail infrastructure—benefiting safety, efficiency, and overall rail capacity.

Recent success with the Borealis service between Saint Paul and Chicago demonstrates the value of state-supported passenger rail. In its first year, the Borealis exceeded expectations, carrying more than 223,000 riders and delivering meaningful economic and tourism benefits to communities along the route. Similar outcomes are achievable between the Twin Cities and Fargo/Moorhead.

As communities across the Midwest and nation invest in passenger rail to support economic growth and quality of life, we believe Minnesota is well positioned to advance this corridor. We respectfully urge the Minnesota Legislature to direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration to move this effort forward.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. The Detroit Lakes Regional Chamber of Commerce stands ready to support initiatives that strengthen connectivity, commerce, and community across our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Buboltz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jackie Buboltz**  
President & CEO  
Detroit Lakes Regional Chamber of Commerce

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# **City of Detroit Lakes**

1025 ROOSEVELT AVE. DETROIT LAKES, MN 56501

## **RESOLUTION NO. 2026-0113G**

### **SUPPORTING NEW STATE-SUPPORTED PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA AND FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA**

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor is a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Rail Plan (2025); and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead route is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor hosted six eastbound and six westbound passenger rail trains each day into the late 1960's, four of which served St. Cloud;

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak's Empire Builder currently serves Saint Paul, St. Cloud, Staples, Detroit Lakes, and Fargo, a new state supported daily train could also serve Little Falls, Wadena, and a northern suburb such as Anoka; and

**WHEREAS**, this growing and congested corridor has strong ridership potential, estimated at 220,000 or greater in a recent MnDOT study; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service in this corridor would have a convenient daytime schedule – as compared to the Empire Builder that arrives and departs Fargo at approximately 3 AM and serves other Minnesota cities during inconvenient overnight hours; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service in this corridor will connect communities to each other and provide an affordable travel alternative to driving, airlines, and intercity bus.

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak brings jobs and investment to Minnesota - Amtrak spent an estimated \$62.9 million on goods, services, and wages in Minnesota in 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, the new Borealis between Saint Paul and Chicago has been extremely successful, carrying 223,000 riders in its first year and enhancing economic development and tourism opportunities for corridor communities, and

**WHEREAS**, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and

**WHEREAS**, many states in the Midwest and around the country are investing in expanded passenger rail service for the economic and mobility benefits. Some of these states

include but are not limited to: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine, and North Carolina.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the City Council of the City of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, that it hereby supports new passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Fargo/Moorhead and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration for this corridor.

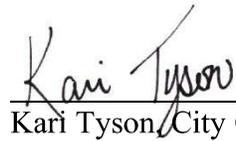
Passed and adopted this 13<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

Approved this 13<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.




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Matt Brenk, Mayor




---

Kari Tyson, City Clerk



RESOLUTION 2026-001

Supporting a New State-Supported Passenger Rail Service  
Between Saint Paul, Minnesota and Fargo, North Dakota

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor is identified as a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Rail Plan (2025); and

**WHEREAS**, this corridor is also recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor historically hosted multiple daily passenger trains, demonstrating long-standing demand for rail travel through central Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak's Empire Builder currently serves Saint Paul, Saint Cloud, Staples, Detroit Lakes, and Fargo, and a new state-supported daily train could expand service to additional communities, including Little Falls, Wadena, and a northern Twin Cities suburb such as Anoka; and

**WHEREAS**, recent MnDOT analysis shows strong ridership potential — estimated at 220,000 or more annually — for a daytime passenger rail service along this corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, a daytime schedule would provide significantly improved travel convenience compared to the current Empire Builder, which serves many Minnesota communities during overnight hours; and

**WHEREAS**, expanded passenger rail service would increase transportation options for Wadena residents, including those who do not drive or fly, and would improve access to medical services, employment, education, and regional destinations; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service would strengthen connections between communities, support tourism, and provide an affordable alternative to driving, airlines, and intercity bus travel; and

**WHEREAS**, increased passenger activity in Wadena would directly benefit local businesses — including restaurants, retail stores, lodging, and service providers — by bringing more visitors into our community and increasing opportunities for commerce; and

**WHEREAS**, passenger rail investment has been shown to stimulate economic development, attract new businesses, and support workforce mobility in communities along rail corridors; and

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak and passenger rail expansion bring jobs and economic activity to Minnesota, with Amtrak alone contributing an estimated \$62.9 million in goods, services, and wages in 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, many states across the Midwest and the nation are expanding passenger rail service to strengthen local economies, improve mobility, and enhance regional connectivity;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Wadena Area Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the development of a new state-supported passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Fargo/Moorhead, and encourages the Minnesota Legislature to direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration for this corridor.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Wadena Area Chamber of Commerce recognizes the significant economic benefits this service would bring to Wadena's business community and stands ready to support efforts that advance this project.

Adopted by the Wadena Area Chamber of Commerce, Wadena, Minnesota this 12<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026.

  
Tina Bartels, Executive Director

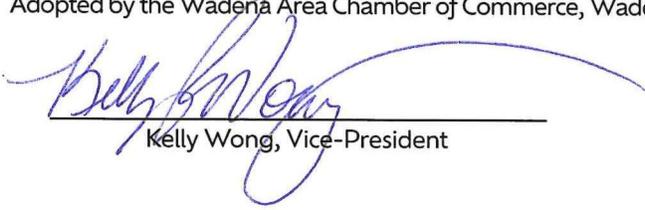
  
Raye Ludovissie, Chamber President



RESOLUTION 2026-001

Supporting a New State-Supported Passenger Rail Service  
Between Saint Paul, Minnesota and Fargo, North Dakota

Adopted by the Wadena Area Chamber of Commerce, Wadena, Minnesota this 12 th day of February 2026.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Wong, Vice-President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Gina Harrison, Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Katie Condon, Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Duke Harrison, Board Member

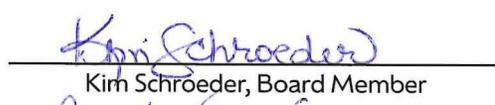
\_\_\_\_\_  
Zack Kelderman, Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela Klimek, Board Member

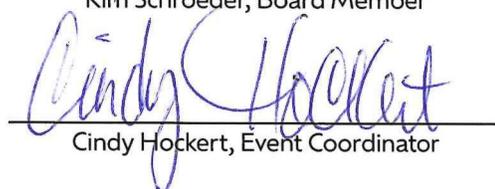
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wade Miller, Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ashley Reinitz, Board Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeremy Sanders, Board Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kim Schroeder, Board Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Silvers, Board Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy Hockert, Event Coordinator



**Legislative History**

Agenda date: January 13, 2026  
 Action: Adopted  
 Vote: Unanimous

Yes:	No:	Absent:
Deiss		
Harrison		
Lunde		
Miller		
Nelson		

**CITY OF WADENA, MINNESOTA**

**Resolution No. 2026-12**  
**Supporting a New State-Supported Passenger Rail Service Between**  
**Saint Paul, Minnesota and Fargo, North Dakota**

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor is a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s State Rail Plan (2025); and

**WHEREAS**, Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead route is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration’s Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor hosted six eastbound and six westbound passenger rail trains each day into the late 1960’s, four of which served St. Cloud; and

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak’s Empire Builder currently serves Saint Paul, St. Cloud, Staples, Detroit Lakes, and Fargo, a new state supported daily train could also serve Little Falls, Wadena, and a northern suburb such as Anoka; and

**WHEREAS**, this growing and congested corridor has strong ridership potential, estimated at 220,000 or greater in a recent MnDOT study; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service in this corridor would have a convenient daytime schedule, as compared to the Empire Builder that arrives and departs Fargo at approximately 3 AM and serves other Minnesota cities during inconvenient overnight hours; and

**WHEREAS**, Wadena residents are reliant upon highways for travel, and more passenger rail service would expand transportation options to the east and west of our city for residents who cannot or don’t drive or fly; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service in this corridor will connect communities to each other and provide an affordable travel alternative to driving, airlines, and intercity bus; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service can provide alternative options for individuals needing medical care to Wadena’s Astera Health Clinic, Hospital, and new 2025 CentraCare Cancer Center; and

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak brings jobs and investment to Minnesota - Amtrak spent an estimated \$62.9 million on goods, services, and wages in Minnesota in 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, the new Borealis between Saint Paul and Chicago has been extremely successful, carrying 223,000 riders in its first year and enhancing economic development and tourism opportunities for corridor communities, and

**WHEREAS**, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and

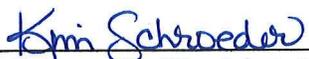
**WHEREAS**, many states in the Midwest and around the country are investing in expanded passenger rail service for the economic and mobility benefits. Some of these states include but are not limited to: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine, and North Carolina.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the City Council of the City of Wadena Minnesota, that it hereby supports new passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Fargo/Moorhead and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration for this corridor.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Wadena, Minnesota this 13<sup>th</sup> day of January 2026.



George Deiss, Mayor



Kim Schroeder, City Administrator

(Seal)



**Resolution Supporting State-Supported Passenger Rail Service  
Between Saint Paul, Minnesota and Fargo/Moorhead, North Dakota**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2025-\_\_**

**WHEREAS**, safe, reliable, and affordable transportation infrastructure is essential to economic development, workforce mobility, tourism, and quality of life for communities across Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, All Aboard Minnesota has recommended the initiation of a new daily, state-supported daytime passenger rail service between Saint Paul, Minnesota and Fargo/Moorhead, North Dakota; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed route includes potential station stops in Saint Paul, Anoka, St. Cloud, Little Falls, Staples, Wadena, Detroit Lakes, and Fargo/Moorhead; and

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota State Rail Plan identifies this corridor as the fastest-growing rail corridor in the state, with estimated ridership of approximately 220,000 passengers annually; and

**WHEREAS**, investments in passenger rail support tourism, workforce access, freight efficiency, and safety; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Staples Area Chamber of Commerce supports the planning, funding, and implementation of a state-supported daytime passenger rail service between Saint Paul, Minnesota and Fargo/Moorhead, North Dakota.

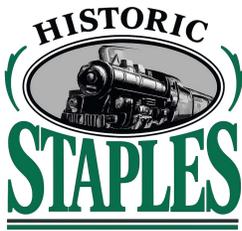
**ADOPTED** this 18th day of December, 2025.

**Marlo Corona**

President

Staples Area Chamber of Commerce

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CITY OF STAPLES  
RESOLUTION NO. 2014

**SUPPORTING NEW STATE-SUPPORTED PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE  
BETWEEN SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA AND FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA**

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor is a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Rail Plan {2025}; and

**WHEREAS** the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead route is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor hosted six eastbound and six westbound passenger rail trains each day into the late 1960's, four of which served St. Cloud;

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak's Empire Builder currently serves Saint Paul, St. Cloud, Staples, Detroit Lakes, and Fargo, a new state supported daily train could also serve Little Falls, Wadena, and a northern suburb such as Anoka; and

**WHEREAS**, this growing and congested corridor has strong ridership potential, estimated at 220,000 or greater in a recent MnDOT study; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service in this corridor would have a convenient daytime schedule - as compared to the Empire Builder that arrives and departs Fargo at approximately 3 AM and serves other Minnesota cities during inconvenient overnight hours; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service in this corridor will connect communities to each other and provide an affordable travel alternative to driving, airlines, and intercity bus.

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak brings jobs and investment to Minnesota - Amtrak spent an estimated \$62.9 million on goods, services, and wages in Minnesota in 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, the new Borealis between Saint Paul and Chicago has been extremely successful, carrying 223,000 riders in its first year and enhancing economic development and tourism opportunities for corridor communities, and

**WHEREAS**, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and

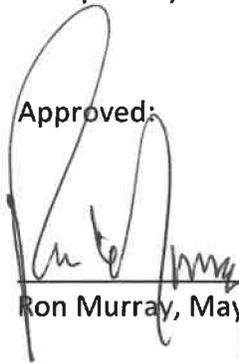
**WHEREAS**, many states in the Midwest and around the country are investing in expanded passenger rail service for the economic and mobility benefits. Some of these states include

but are not limited to: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine, and North Carolina.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the City Council of the City of Staples, Minnesota, that it hereby supports new passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Fargo/Moorhead and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration for this corridor.

Adopted by the Council on this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of December 2025

Approved:



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Ron Murray, Mayor

Attest:



---

Jerel Nelsen, City Administrator



200 1<sup>st</sup> Street NW, Little Falls MN 56345

[Assistance@littlefallsmn.com](mailto:Assistance@littlefallsmn.com)

320-632-5155

[www.littlefallsmnchamber.com](http://www.littlefallsmnchamber.com)

01/22/2026

On behalf of the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, I am writing to express our support for the efforts to advance passenger rail service between Saint Paul and Fargo. We encourage federal leaders to approve the funding needed to move this important project forward.

The mission of our organization is to create a vibrant place for our community to work, live, and play—while also attracting visitors and supporting a strong, resilient regional economy. We believe this proposed passenger rail service directly supports that mission.

For communities such as ours, improved rail service has the potential to increase tourism, and enhance access to regional amenities. By making travel to and through our region easier, passenger rail can bring more people into our community, benefiting local businesses and supporting long-term economic vitality.

For these reasons, the Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism fully supports the project to advance rail service between St. Paul and Fargo and for federal leaders to approve funding to advance passenger rail service between Saint Paul and Fargo and potentially consider Little Falls MN to be a stop. We appreciate your leadership and consideration of this important initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Purva Watten". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name.

**Purva Watten**

President/CEO

Little Falls Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism

[purva@littlefallsmn.com](mailto:purva@littlefallsmn.com)

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2015 First Avenue, Anoka MN 55303  
 Phone: (763) 576-2700 Website: [www.anokaminnesota.com](http://www.anokaminnesota.com)

**CITY OF ANOKA, MINNESOTA  
 RESOLUTION**

**RES-2026-010**

**CITY OF ANOKA SUPPORTING A NEW STATE-SUPPORTED RAIL SERVICE  
 BETWEEN SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA AND FARGO, NORTH DAKOTA**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Anoka has a long history of supporting rail transportation dating back to the 1850s, rooted in Anoka's historic industrial past; and

**WHEREAS**, the Anoka City Council believes that passenger rail service generates economic growth, reduces highway costs and congestion, and provides efficient and reliable mobility options; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Fargo/Moorhead corridor is identified as a priority intercity passenger rail corridor in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's *State Rail Plan (2025)*; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities-to-Fargo/Moorhead route is also recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's *Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study*; and

**WHEREAS**, Amtrak's Empire Builder currently serves Saint Paul, St. Cloud, Staples, Detroit Lakes, and Fargo, and a new state-supported daily train could additionally serve Little Falls, Wadena, and a northern metro suburb such as the City of Anoka; and

**WHEREAS**, new rail service in this corridor will strengthen connections between communities and provide an affordable alternative to driving, air travel, and intercity bus service; and

**WHEREAS**, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investments required for new passenger service, including improvements that support higher train speeds, reduce rail congestion, and enhance safety at rail crossings; and

**WHEREAS**, many states in the Midwest and across the country including Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine, and North Carolina are investing in expanded passenger rail service for its economic and mobility benefits; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Anoka continues to support passenger rail transportation and further supports continued use and passenger rail activity at the existing Anoka rail station, to serve area residents and businesses in the northwest metro area;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Anoka City Council hereby supports new passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Fargo/Moorhead and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant application to the Federal Railroad Administration for this corridor.

Adopted by the Anoka City Council on January 20, 2026.

ATTEST:



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Amy T. Oehlers, Assistant City Manager



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Erik Skogquist, Mayor



January 14, 2026

To whom it may concern,

The Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce—one of the oldest and largest chambers in Minnesota—strongly supports the inclusion of an Amtrak stop at the Anoka Rail Station. Anoka has long been a destination for visitors from the Twin Cities and communities across Greater Minnesota, and we know firsthand how access and connectivity fuel that momentum.

Transportation is part of Anoka's story. For generations, our community has served as a hub for bus and rail travel, connecting people to opportunity, commerce, and each other. A passenger rail stop in Anoka is a natural extension of that legacy and a smart, strategic investment in our region's future.

An Amtrak stop at the Anoka Rail Station would be well utilized and would serve as a meaningful economic driver for the local businesses and communities we represent. Increased access brings increased foot traffic, stronger tourism, workforce connectivity, and long-term growth—benefits that extend well beyond our city limits.

In short, this is an opportunity to build on Anoka's strengths, support regional economic vitality, and create greater access for residents, visitors, and businesses alike. The Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce welcomes the opportunity to walk alongside partners and decision-makers to help make this vision a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nikki Kalvin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nikki Kalvin  
President  
Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce

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January 14, 2026

To Whom It May Concern

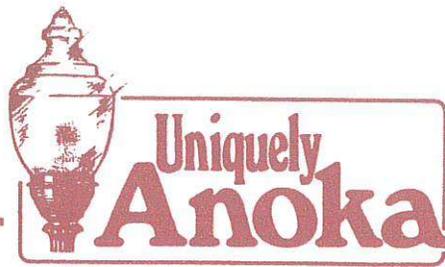
Discover Anoka is an organization dedicated to advancing the commercial well-being of businesses within the central business district. Its mission centers on promoting downtown Anoka and implementing marketing programs specifically designed to attract visitors to the area.

In pursuit of these goals, Discover Anoka is aligned with the Anoka Business and Landowners Association as well as the Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce. Together, these organizations express unified support for the establishment of an Amtrak stop in Anoka, recognizing the potential benefits such a stop would bring to downtown businesses and the broader community.

Sincerely,

Liz McFarland  
President  
Discover Anoka

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January 12, 2026

To whom it may concern,

The Anoka Business & Landowners Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to the success of the historic central business district of the City of Anoka. The organization knows that Anoka has long been a destination spot for people from the Twin Cities area and Minnesota as a whole.

Anoka has a history as a transportation hub whether that be rail or bus. The association supported an Amtrak stop in Anoka back in May of 2022 and that support continues to this day. The association sees a passenger rail stop at the Anoka Rail Station as an important stop that would be utilized by many people and as an economic growth generator for our businesses.

At their January 6, 2026 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Anoka Business & Landowners Association unanimously approved a motion to support new passenger rail service at the Anoka Rail Station.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Turok', is written over a light blue circular stamp or watermark.

Peter Turok

President

Anoka Business & Landowners Association

**Anoka Business and Landowners Association**  
2006 First Avenue North, Suite B10 • Anoka, MN 55303 • (763) 242-8237

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# SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA

File #: RES 26-168 Version: 1

Type:	Resolution	Status:	Passed
		In control:	<a href="#">City Council</a>
		Final action:	2/4/2026

Title: **Supporting the study of new passenger rail service between Saint Paul and Fargo/Moorhead and Saint Paul and Kansas City, Missouri.**

Sponsors: Rebecca Noecker

Title: Supporting the study of new passenger rail service between Saint Paul and Fargo/Moorhead and Saint Paul and Kansas City, Missouri.

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul to Kansas City (TC to KC) rail corridor and the Saint Paul to Fargo/Moorhead rail corridor are priority corridors for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s Minnesota State Rail Plan; and

WHEREAS both corridors are recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration’s Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study (2025) including an extension of the route to Texas; and

WHEREAS the Federal Railroad Administration will open a new grant application round for its Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program in 2026 [“The Corridor ID program is a comprehensive intercity passenger rail planning and development program that will help guide intercity passenger rail development throughout the country and create a pipeline of intercity passenger rail projects ready for implementation”]; and

WHEREAS, these two proposed new corridors, if implemented, would increase activity at Saint Paul’s Union Depot and in downtown Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul to Fargo/Moorhead corridor has strong potential for ridership as it would provide a second daily train on a convenient daytime schedule to supplement

Amtrak's long-distance train the Empire Builder and connect cities in Minnesota to each other and the Twin Cities metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul to Kansas City corridor has strong ridership potential as it:

- Serves the major population centers of Des Moines, IA, (pop. 740,000), Kansas City region (pop. 2.2 million), and Twin Cities region (pop. 3.7 million).
- Connects Minnesota to Amtrak routes that serve Denver, San Francisco, Phoenix, Los Angeles and many stops in between.

WHEREAS, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and

WHEREAS, the state-supported Borealis between Saint Paul and Chicago has been extremely successful, with first year ridership exceeding projections by an average of 50 percent; and

WHEREAS, many states in the Midwest and around the country are investing in expanded passenger rail service for the economic and mobility benefits. Some of these states include but are not limited to: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine, and North Carolina.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Saint Paul City Council, that it hereby supports new passenger rail service between Saint Paul and Fargo/Moorhead and Saint Paul and Kansas City, Missouri and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant Application to the Federal Railroad Administration.

February 2, 2026

Representative Brad Tabke, Co-Chair  
House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Centennial Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF3176 and SF2887 directing the Commissioner of Transportation apply for federal funding and study two intercity passenger rail corridors from Saint Paul, MN to Fargo, ND and to Kansas City, MO.

Dear Representative Tabke,

On behalf of the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, I am writing in support of HF3176 and SF2887 that direct the Commissioner of Transportation to apply to the Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program for planning and development of two intercity passenger rail corridors from Saint Paul, MN to Fargo, ND and to Kansas City, MO. Daytime and evening service between Saint Paul and Fargo would provide an affordable travel alternative to residents and students travelling in the I-94 corridor. A route from Saint Paul to Kansas City would improve north-south travel options and statewide connectivity.

Ramsey County recognizes the value of the Corridor ID Program. We are engaged with the Chippewa St. Croix Passenger Rail Commission in their Corridor ID study to develop new service between Eau Claire and Saint Paul, as well as the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation in their Corridor ID study to develop a second Borealis route. While these studies have been ongoing for more than a year and are a high priority for Ramsey County, we see value in studying additional passenger rail routes.

Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority owns and operates Union Depot, a major multimodal transportation hub, in downtown Saint Paul. As we work to expand passenger rail routes, we support the study of passenger rail routes in the Midwest.

On behalf of the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, I respectfully request that HF3176 and SF2887 be given full and thoughtful consideration during the 2026 legislative session.

Sincerely,



Rafael E. Ortega  
Chair, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

Cc: Nancy Daubenberger, Commissioner of Transportation  
Barb Thoman, Board Chair, All Aboard Minnesota

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**RE: Letter of Support for MnDOT Corridor Identification Application – Twin Cities to Kansas City Passenger Rail Corridor**

On behalf of the **Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism**, we write to express our strong support for the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s (MnDOT) application to the Federal Railroad Administration’s Corridor Identification and Development Program for the establishment of intercity passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Kansas City.

The proposed corridor would serve the **Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, Albert Lea, Des Moines, and Kansas City**, providing a vital transportation link for southern Minnesota and the broader Midwest region. This line would restore a historic passenger connection once served by the *Twin Star Rocket* and *Kansas City Rocket* trains, creating modern, sustainable travel options for our growing communities.

The **FRA’s 2025 Long-Distance Service Study** identifies a *San Antonio–Minneapolis/St. Paul* route—including this corridor—as a preferred option with strong national priority. Furthermore, the **Minnesota Legislature** has urged MnDOT to apply for Corridor ID funding to advance planning and development for this corridor.

The **economic, environmental, and community benefits** of this investment are significant:

- **Economic Vitality & Workforce Development:** Passenger rail would strengthen Greater Minnesota’s ability to attract and retain a skilled workforce, draw new businesses and investors to underserved communities, and make efficient use of existing rail infrastructure.
- **Quality of Life & Growth Management:** Passenger rail offers a sustainable alternative to highway expansion, alleviates congestion on I-35, and supports walkable, connected communities like Northfield.
- **Sustainability & Climate Action:** Rail travel reduces carbon emissions, improves air quality, and supports Minnesota’s climate and clean energy goals.
- **Equity & Accessibility:** It expands mobility options for residents without vehicle access, seniors, and students, ensuring year-round, affordable, and reliable transportation.
- **Educational Access & Student Mobility:** Northfield is home to **Carleton College** and **St. Olaf College**, serving over 5,000 students who would directly benefit from passenger rail connections to the Twin Cities and beyond.

The corridor also provides substantial **regional benefits** by connecting three major population centers—**Des Moines (population 740,000), Kansas City (2.2 million), and the Twin Cities (3.7 million)**—and linking smaller communities across Minnesota and Iowa to major Amtrak routes serving Denver, San Francisco, Phoenix, Los Angeles, and more. With an estimated ridership potential exceeding **190,000 passengers per year**, the line would be among the most promising in the Midwest.

Minnesota’s recent success with the **Borealis** service between Saint Paul and Chicago, which exceeded first-year ridership projections by 50 percent, underscores the growing demand for intercity passenger rail. Similar success can be expected for this new Twin Cities–Kansas City corridor.

**OUR MISSION:** *To lead in the creation, promotion and enhancement of a healthy business environment for the Northfield area.*



The **Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism** firmly believes that establishing this passenger rail corridor is a strategic investment in the economic competitiveness, sustainability, and livability of our region. We urge the Federal Railroad Administration to approve MnDOT's Corridor ID application and advance the Twin Cities–Kansas City Passenger Rail Corridor into the next phase of development.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to building a modern, connected national rail network that benefits communities like ours.

Sincerely,

Jane Bartho

President & CEO

Alex T. Baraniak

Chairman of the Board of Directors

Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism  
19 Bridge Square  
Northfield, MN 55057  
[info@visitingnorthfield.com](mailto:info@visitingnorthfield.com) | 507-645-5604

**OUR MISSION:** *To lead in the creation, promotion and enhancement of a healthy business environment for the Northfield area.*

19 Bridge Square | Northfield, MN 55057 | [NorthfieldChamber.com](http://NorthfieldChamber.com) | 507-645-5604



CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MN  
 CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2025-107  
 SUPPORTING A NEW PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN THE TWIN  
 CITIES IN MINNESOTA AND KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

- WHEREAS, the Twin Cities to Kansas City (TC to KC) corridor is a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s State Rail Plan; and
- WHEREAS, the Twin Cities to Kansas City route is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration’s Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study including an extension of the route to Texas; and
- WHEREAS, this 500-mile corridor would serve the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, Albert Lea, Des Moines and Kansas City; and
- WHEREAS, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for this new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and
- WHEREAS, the Twin Cities to Kansas City corridor once hosted two passenger rail trains each day – the Twin Star Rocket and the Kansas City Rocket; and
- WHEREAS, new service on the Borealis between Saint Paul and Chicago has been extremely successful, with first year ridership exceeding projections by an average of 50 percent; and
- WHEREAS, this corridor has one of greatest ridership potentials of passenger rail routes in the Midwest, estimated at over 190,000 riders per year. It:
- Serves the three major population centers of Des Moines, IA, (pop. 740,000), Kansas City region (pop. 2.2 million), and Twin Cities region (pop. 3.7 million);
  - Connects Minnesota to Amtrak routes that serve Denver, San Francisco, Phoenix, Los Angeles and many stops in between;
  - Connects smaller communities in Minnesota and Iowa to each other and the Twin Cities metropolitan area, the largest urban center between Chicago and the West Coast; and
- WHEREAS, many states in the Midwest and around the country are investing in expanded passenger rail service for the economic and mobility benefits. Some of these states include but are not limited to: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine, and North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northfield recognizes that advancing passenger rail service in the region aligns closely with its broader goals for a sustainable, inclusive, and connected community; and

WHEREAS, the City values a balanced approach to economy, environment, and equity in transportation and land use planning—seeing regional rail not only as a catalyst for economic vitality and access to jobs and education, but also as a tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support compact, transit-oriented growth; and

WHEREAS, the Northfield Transit Hub, co-located with the historic Northfield Depot, serves as a transfer center for local and regional buses and connect to future passenger rail routes as a way to not only help people get around within Northfield, but also between Northfield and other parts of the region; and

WHEREAS, by linking an external passenger rail connection to Northfield’s internal transit goals, such as improved multimodal options, walkability, and equitable access for residents across income levels and neighborhoods, the city views rail investment as a key part of achieving a resilient and accessible transportation system that supports long-term community well-being; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THAT:

The Northfield City Council hereby supports new passenger rail service between Twin Cities and Kansas City, Missouri and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant to the Federal Railroad Administration.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Northfield on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2025.

ATTEST

  
City Clerk

  
Mayor

VOTE: Y ZWEIFEL Y BEUMER Y DAHLEN Y HOLMES  
Y NESS absent PETERSON WHITE Y SOKUP



204 3rd Street West  
P.O. Box 486  
Northfield, MN 55057

Email: [info@northfielddepot.org](mailto:info@northfielddepot.org)  
Web: [northfielddepot.org](http://northfielddepot.org)

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## **Board Resolution: Supporting MnDOT Corridor ID Application for Twin Cities-Kansas City Passenger Rail Line**

We encourage support for the advancement and development of an intercity passenger rail service corridor connecting the Twin Cities, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, Albert Lea, Des Moines, and Kansas City. This corridor would provide a vital transportation link for Northfield, southern Minnesota, and the broader Midwest region, serving as a crucial connection in building a robust national passenger rail network.

We note that:

- The Federal Railroad Administration's 2025 Long-Distance Service Study identifies a San Antonio – Minneapolis/St. Paul corridor as a selected preferred route option, with a solid mid-level national priority rating.
- The Minnesota Legislature has recently introduced bills urging MnDOT to apply for federal Corridor Identification funding for the St. Paul – Kansas City corridor.

Establishing this passenger rail service:

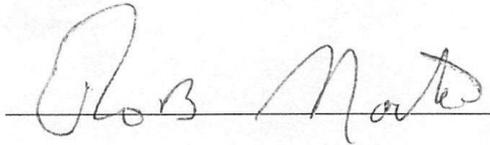
- Strengthens regional economic competitiveness by attracting employees, businesses, and investors to southern Minnesota communities currently underserved by passenger rail, while serving as a ridership multiplier for local transit options.
- Supports Minnesota's environmental health and clean air goals by reducing vehicular pollution and highway congestion, while decreasing roadway maintenance costs.
- Makes efficient use of existing rail infrastructure and depot investments to accommodate population growth more sustainably than highway expansion alone.
- Would provide safe, reliable, year-round travel for residents of all ages, students, and visitors—connecting them to education, employment, medical care, and tourism destinations across the corridor.
- Complements the Northfield Depot's mission as a multimodal hub and community gateway connecting local and regional transit services.

THEREFORE, the Northfield Depot Board **strongly supports MnDOT's application to the Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor ID Program for the St. Paul – Kansas City passenger-rail corridor**, as an essential step toward restoring passenger service along this historic route.

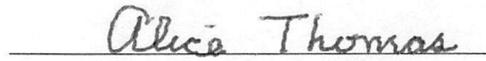
The Board further encourages local, regional, and state partners to collaborate on planning, funding, and advocacy efforts to ensure Northfield's inclusion as a designated station and active community partner in this corridor development process.

Approved by the Board of directors of the Northfield Depot this 15<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2025.

Signatures:

Handwritten signature of Rob Marten in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.

Rob Marten, Chair

Handwritten signature of Alice Thomas in cursive script, written over a horizontal line.

Alice Thomas, Secretary



October 31, 2025

**RE: Letter of Support for MnDOT Corridor Identification Application – Twin Cities to Kansas City Passenger Rail Corridor**

On behalf of the **Northfield Area Tourism Office**, I am pleased to offer our enthusiastic support for the **Minnesota Department of Transportation’s (MnDOT) application to the Federal Railroad Administration’s Corridor Identification and Development Program** for the establishment of intercity passenger rail service connecting the **Twin Cities and Kansas City**.

This proposed corridor—which would serve the **Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, Albert Lea, Des Moines, and Kansas City**—represents a transformational investment in regional connectivity, visitor access, and sustainable transportation. For Northfield and southern Minnesota, the return of passenger rail service would reconnect our communities to a broader Midwest travel network and help strengthen the tourism economy that is vital to our region’s prosperity.

The **FRA’s 2025 Long-Distance Service Study** identifies the *San Antonio–Minneapolis/St. Paul* route, which includes this corridor, as a preferred option with strong national significance. In addition, the **Minnesota Legislature** has formally encouraged MnDOT to apply for Corridor ID funding to advance planning and development.

From a tourism and destination development perspective, the benefits are clear:

- **Expanded Visitor Access:** Passenger rail would make Northfield and southern Minnesota more accessible to visitors traveling from the Twin Cities, Iowa, Missouri, and beyond—encouraging weekend tourism, special events, and regional exploration without the need for a car.
- **Economic Growth for Local Businesses:** Increased visitor traffic would directly benefit downtown shops, restaurants, hotels, and cultural attractions. The restored Northfield Depot and surrounding area could serve as a welcoming multimodal gateway to our community.
- **Cultural and Educational Tourism:** Northfield is home to **Carleton College** and **St. Olaf College**, two nationally recognized liberal arts institutions that draw thousands of students, families, and visitors each year. Reliable rail service would enhance access to campus events, conferences, and performances year-round.

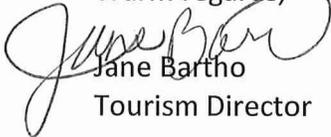
- **Sustainable Travel and Environmental Stewardship:** As travelers increasingly seek eco-friendly options, passenger rail offers a low-emission, high-efficiency alternative to highway travel—aligning with Minnesota’s clean air and carbon reduction goals.
- **Regional Collaboration:** This 500-mile corridor would connect three major metropolitan regions—**Twin Cities (3.7 million), Des Moines (740,000), and Kansas City (2.2 million)**—and link smaller communities along the way, fostering multi-state tourism partnerships and cross-promotion opportunities.

Minnesota’s experience with the **Borealis** service between Saint Paul and Chicago demonstrates the strong demand for intercity rail, with first-year ridership exceeding expectations by 50 percent. Similar success can be expected for the Twin Cities–Kansas City corridor, which has an estimated annual ridership potential of more than **190,000 passengers**.

The **Northfield Area Tourism Office** believes that reestablishing passenger rail service along this corridor would enhance our region’s accessibility, strengthen the visitor economy, and reinforce Northfield’s identity as a welcoming, connected, and sustainable destination. We wholeheartedly support MnDOT’s Corridor Identification application and urge the Federal Railroad Administration to advance this corridor into the next phase of development.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to building a modern national rail network that connects communities, supports tourism, and strengthens regional economies.

Warm regards,



Jane Bartho  
Tourism Director



Brad Ness  
Board Chair

Northfield Area Tourism Office  
19 Bridge Square  
Northfield, MN 55057  
[info@visitingnorthfield.com](mailto:info@visitingnorthfield.com) | 507-645-5604

State of Minnesota  
County of Rice



## **CITY OF FARIBAULT**

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### **RESOLUTION #2025-257**

#### **SUPPORT A NEW PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN THE TWIN CITIES IN MINNESOTA AND KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI**

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Kansas City (TC to KC) corridor is a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Rail Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the TC to KC route is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study, including an extension of the route to Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, this 500-mile corridor would serve the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, Albert Lea, Des Moines and Kansas City; and

**WHEREAS**, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for this new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and

**WHEREAS**, new service on the Borealis between Saint Paul and Chicago has been extremely successful, with first year ridership exceeding projections by an average of 50 percent; and

**WHEREAS**, this corridor has one of the greatest ridership potentials of passenger rail routes in the Midwest, estimated at over 190,000 riders per year; and

**WHEREAS**, many states in the Midwest and around the country are investing in expanded passenger rail service for the economic and mobility benefits, including Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine and North Carolina.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City of Faribault hereby supports new passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Kansas City, Missouri; and

**ALSO, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the City of Faribault hereby requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant to the Federal Railroad Administration.

**Date Adopted:** October 14, 2025

**Faribault City Council**

Signed by:  
*Thomas J. Spooner*  
342D06F4FDA4427  
**Thomas J. Spooner, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

Signed by:  
*Jessica L. Kinser*  
E4D6D00D130042C...  
**Jessica L. Kinser, City Administrator**

**Sara Folsted**  
*County Administrator*  
 (507) 332-6121



**Shari Noll**  
*Administrative Coordinator*  
 (507) 332-6099

## ADMINISTRATION

320 Third Street NW • Faribault, MN 55021  
 (507) 332-6101 • Fax (507) 333-3848  
[www.co.rice.mn.us](http://www.co.rice.mn.us)

Toll Free from Northfield  
 (507) 645-4723

Toll free from Lonsdale  
 (507) 744-5185

TDD (507) 332-6248

To Whom it may Concern:

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RICE COUNTY, MINNESOTA

#### RESOLUTION 26-010

### A RESOLUTION OF THE RICE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SUPPORTING A NEW PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN THE TWIN CITIES IN MINNESOTA AND KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Kansas City corridor is a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Rail Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Kansas City route is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study, including an extension of the route to Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, this 500-mile corridor would serve the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, Albert Lea, Des Moines, and Kansas City; and

**WHEREAS**, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for this new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities to Kansas City corridor once hosted two passenger rail trains each day — the Twin Star Rocket and the Kansas City Rocket; and

**WHEREAS**, new service on the Borealis between Saint Paul and Chicago has been extremely successful, with first-year ridership exceeding projections by an average of 50 percent; and

**WHEREAS**, this corridor has one of the highest passenger rail ridership potentials in the Midwest, estimated at over 190,000 riders per year. It serves the three major population centers of Des Moines, IA, (pop. 740, 000), Kansas City region (pop. 2. 2 million), and Twin Cities region (pop. 3. 7 million); Connects Minnesota to Amtrak routes that serve Denver, San Francisco, Phoenix, Los Angeles and many stops in between; Connects smaller communities in Minnesota and Iowa to each other and the Twin Cities metropolitan area, the largest urban center between Chicago and the West Coast; and

**WHEREAS**, many states in the Midwest and around the country are investing in expanded passenger rail service for the economic and mobility benefits. Some of these states include, but are not limited to: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine, and North Carolina; and

**WHEREAS**, Rice County recognizes that advancing passenger rail service in the region aligns closely with its broader goals for a sustainable, inclusive, and connected community; and

**WHEREAS**, the County values a balanced approach to economy, environment, and equity in transportation and land use planning — seeing regional rail not only as a catalyst for economic vitality and access to jobs and education, but also as a tool to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support compact, transit-oriented growth; and

**WHEREAS**, by linking an external passenger rail connection to Rice County’s internal transit goals, such as improved multimodal options, walkability, and equitable access for residents across income levels and neighborhoods, the county views rail investment as a key part of achieving a resilient and accessible transportation system that supports long-term community well-being.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHAIR AND BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**, that:

1. The Rice County Board of Commissioners hereby supports new passenger rail service between the Twin Cities and Kansas City, Missouri, and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant to the Federal Railroad Administration.

**PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED** this 17<sup>th</sup> day of February 2026 by the Rice County Board of Commissioners.

**RICE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**



Charlie Peters, Chairperson

**ATTEST:**



Sara Folsted, County Administrator



RESOLUTION 25-142

Introduced by Councilor Baker

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING NEW PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE BETWEEN THE TWIN CITIES IN MINNESOTA AND KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities to Kansas City (TC to KC) corridor is a priority corridor for intercity passenger rail in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Rail Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities to Kansas City route is recommended in the Federal Railroad Administration's Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study including an extension of the route to Texas; and

WHEREAS, this 500-mile corridor would serve in Minnesota the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, Albert Lea, and Des Moines, IA and Kansas City, MO; and

WHEREAS, freight railroads will benefit from the capital investment required for this new passenger service, enabling greater train speeds, reduced railroad congestion, and rail crossings that are safer for all users; and

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities to Kansas City corridor once hosted two passenger rail trains each day—the Twin Star Rocket and Kansas City Rocket; and

WHEREAS, new service on the Borealis between Saint Paul, MN and Chicago, IL has been extremely successful, with first year ridership exceeding projections by an average of 50 percent; and

WHEREAS, this corridor has one of the greatest ridership potentials of passenger rail routes in the Midwest, estimated at over 190,000 riders per year. It also:

- Serves three major populations centers of Des Moines IA, Kansas City region and Twin Cities.
- Connects Minnesota to Amtrak routes that serve Denver, San Francisco, Phoenix, Los Angeles and many stops in between.
- Connects smaller communities in Minnesota and Iowa to each other and the Twin Cities metropolitan area, the largest urban center between Chicago and the West Coast; and

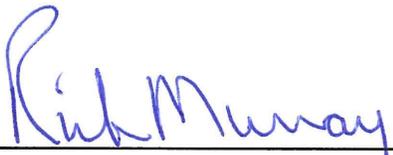
WHEREAS, many states in the Midwest and around the country are investing in expanded passenger rail service for the economic and mobility benefits. Some of these states include but are not limited to: Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Virginia, California, Oregon, Maine and North Carolina.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALBERT LEA, MINNESOTA: that it hereby supports new passenger rail service between Twin Cities and Kansas City, Missouri and requests that the Minnesota Legislature direct MnDOT to submit a Corridor Identification Grant to the Federal Railroad Administration.

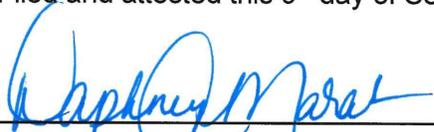
That the motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Councilor Anderson, and upon a vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Councilors Christensen, Baker, Howland, Olson, Van Beek, Anderson, and Mayor Murray;

And the following voted against the same: None. Mayor Murray declared the resolution passed.

Introduced and passed this 8<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2025

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Rich Murray

Filed and attested this 9<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2025

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of the Council



# RESOLUTION

## **ALBERT LEA–FREEBORN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

### **Supporting MnDOT's Application to the Federal Railroad Administration Corridor ID Program for the Twin Cities–Kansas City Corridor and Requesting Legislative Action on HF3176 / SF2887**

**WHEREAS**, the Albert Lea–Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce represents employers, entrepreneurs, and business leaders committed to advancing economic development, workforce mobility, and regional connectivity in southern Minnesota; and

**WHEREAS**, passenger rail has historically played a significant role in the economic health of Greater Minnesota, supporting tourism, workforce access, local spending, and long-range business development; and

**WHEREAS**, the Twin Cities–Kansas City rail corridor runs directly through the Albert Lea region, creating a unique opportunity for increased transportation options, business travel, freight complementarity, and regional economic growth; and

**WHEREAS**, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has been invited by local governments and regional economic leaders to apply to the Federal Railroad Administration's *Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID)* Program for the Twin Cities–Kansas City corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, the Cities of Albert Lea, Faribault, and Northfield have already passed resolutions of support, with Owatonna and other communities in process, demonstrating broad regional alignment; and

**WHEREAS**, HF3176 and SF2887 were introduced during the 2024 legislative session to direct MnDOT to study both the Twin Cities–Kansas City and Twin Cities–Fargo corridors, and passage of these bills would support ongoing analysis and planning needed to advance rail projects statewide; and

**WHEREAS**, the proponents of these corridors—including All Aboard Minnesota—have indicated that no funding is required for this initial Phase I application, reducing financial burden on the State and local governments; and

**WHEREAS**, improved regional transportation options directly benefit business attraction, retention, tourism, workforce access, college and career mobility, and the overall competitiveness of Freeborn County and southern Minnesota;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors of the Albert Lea–Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce hereby expresses its support for:

1. **MnDOT applying to the Federal Railroad Administration’s Corridor ID Program for the Twin Cities–Kansas City corridor**, which includes Albert Lea as a key regional connection; and
2. **State legislative action on HF3176 / SF2887** to support continued study and planning of both the Twin Cities–Kansas City and Twin Cities–Fargo corridors; and
3. **Continued dialogue with regional partners, civic leaders, and business stakeholders**, including All Aboard Minnesota, local governments, and transportation advocates, to evaluate economic and workforce implications for Freeborn County; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that upon approval, this resolution shall be shared with:

- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- The legislative authors of HF3176 / SF2887
- All Aboard Minnesota
- Local, county, and regional government partners

Adopted this 20th day of November, 2025, by the Albert Lea–Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

**Albert Lea-Freeborn County Chamber of Commerce**

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