



TCMC SECOND TRAIN RECEIVES \$31.8 MILLION FEDERAL CAPITAL GRANT

On Sept. 23, 2020, the US Secretary of Transportation announced a \$31.8 million grant through the Federal Railroad Administration for Wisconsin and Minnesota to be used for final design and construction of freight rail track and signal improvements in and around Winona MN, La Crescent MN, and La Crosse WI. The improvements will accommodate the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) Second Train, a daily round trip passenger train between the Twin Cities and Chicago along the existing Amtrak Empire Builder route. This leaves the state of Minnesota as the only uncommitted partner in making the project a reality.

TCMC CAPITAL BUDGET - MN	TCMC CAPITAL BUDGET - WI	TOTAL
\$26.9M Federal (COMMITTED)	\$4.9M Federal (COMMITTED)	\$31.8M Federal
\$10M Minnesota (NOT COMMITTED)	\$6.2M Wisconsin (COMMITTED)	\$16.2M Local
\$3.8M Amtrak (COMMITTED)	\$1.2M Amtrak (COMMITTED)	\$5M Amtrak
\$40.7M Minnesota Project Cost	\$12.3M Wisconsin Project Cost	\$53M Total

Additional support: Federal Railroad Administration awarded \$12.569 million to the project for startup operating costs, Amtrak has committed to capital upgrade of the Winona station platform, Canadian Pacific Railway fully supported the federal grant application for rail infrastructure improvements.

Legislative Bonding Request

\$10 million is requested of the Minnesota Legislature. The state will receive, in return, more than \$40 million in track and signal improvements in Winona and La Crescent, Minnesota that will benefit both freight and passenger rail. This request is urgent as the FRA expects Second Train project managers to secure matching funds and execute the grant agreement by September 30, 2021.

Project Benefits

- Create jobs and generate economic growth
- Provide safe, reliable, relaxing, productive, affordable alternative to driving or flying
- Improve access to tourism, colleges, events, and more!
- Improve freight train speed and efficiency
- Improve safety at roadway crossings

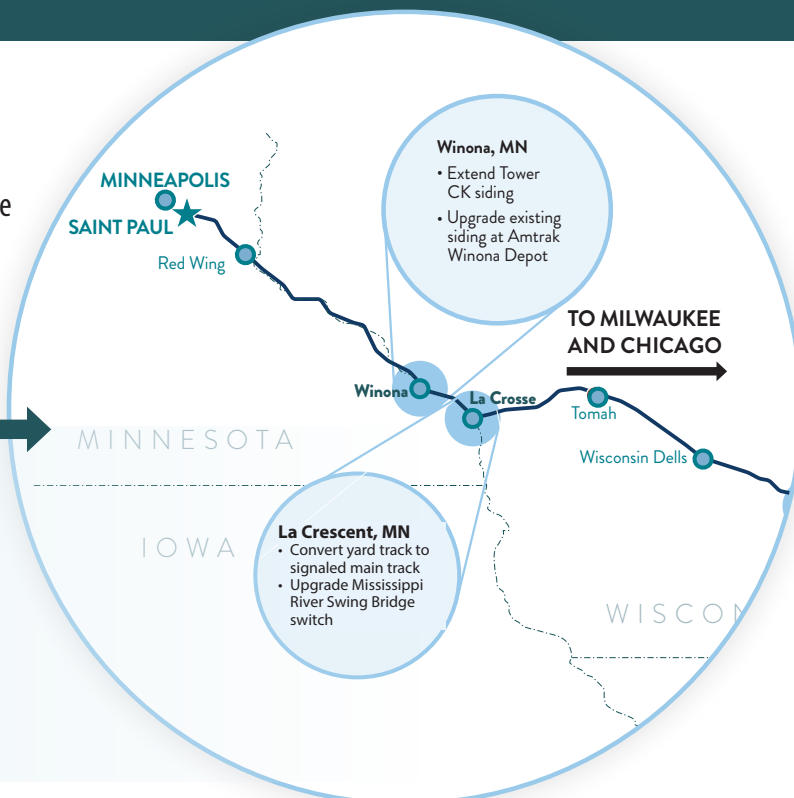
MINNESOTA IMPROVEMENTS

\$19.3 million in siding track and station access improvements in Winona

\$15.8 million for track and switch improvements in River Junction in La Crescent

\$5.0 million for special track work on the Mississippi Swing Bridge near La Crescent

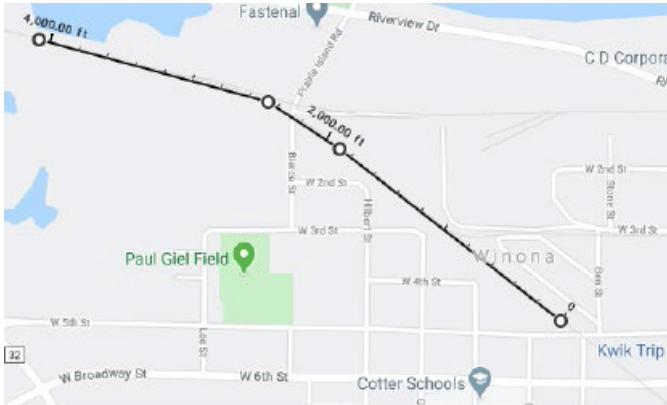
\$0.5 million for improvements to the Midway Facility in St. Paul





TCMC Second Train Improvements in Minnesota Improve Speed, Efficiency and Safety

Project Location: Tower CK in Winona, Minnesota

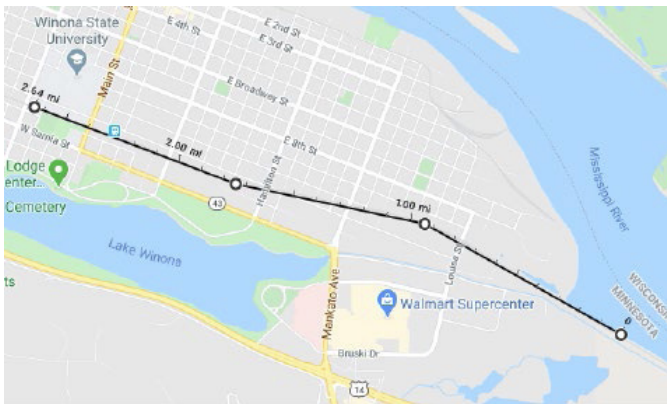


Construct new siding track connecting the main track to the CP Waseca Subdivision over ½ mile east, with power switches and signals, to alleviate congestion west of the Winona Depot.

Construct 3,260 feet of new track, reconstruct at grade crossing with Bierce Street and install four new turnouts, railroad signals and communications.

Estimated cost in 2020 dollars: \$9.1 million

Project Location: Winona Siding in Winona, Minnesota

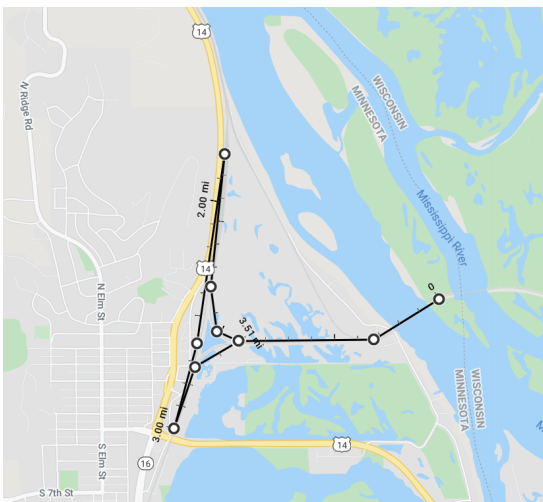


Upgrade an existing siding track with power switches and signals to allow more efficient train meets and the ability to clear the main track more quickly and efficiently; improve safety for passengers who can board the train from the track adjacent to the platform instead of walking across tracks. Note: The Winona Station platform will be improved by Amtrak through a separate project.

Rehabilitate 11,862 feet of existing siding track, install two new turnouts, railroad signals and communications.

Estimated cost in 2020 dollars: \$10.2 million

Project Location: River Junction in La Crescent, Minnesota



Convert an un-signalized yard track to a signalized second main track. Power switches would be installed at the junction with the Marquette Subdivision. The alignment of the Bridge Switch would be modified to allow for increased train speeds through the switch, and the new main track speeds would be increased from 10 mph to 25 mph. Realign track approaches and replace special bridge track work at moveable points to increase freight speed on the Mississippi River Swing Bridge from 10 mph to 15 mph.

Construct 5,612 feet of new mainline track, 2,162 feet of new wye connection track, and upgrade 1,470 feet of yard track and 1,500 feet of special track work. Install 14 new turnouts, railroad signals and communications.

Estimated cost in 2020 dollars: \$20.8 million

TCMC Second
Train:
Moving Freight,
Moving People



TCMC Second Train Project At A Glance

TCMC SECOND TRAIN



Overview

- The Twin Cities- Milwaukee-Chicago Intercity City Passenger Rail Service (TCMC Second Train project) is a proposal to add a daily round trip passenger train between the Twin Cities and Chicago.
- The Second Train is expected to carry 124,000 trips annually, and would complement existing Amtrak® Empire Builder service, which typically provides 123,000 trips each year

Project Benefits

- Create jobs and generate economic growth
- Provide safe, reliable, relaxing, productive, affordable alternative to driving or flying
- Improve access to tourism, colleges, events, and more.
- Improve freight train speed and efficiency
- Improve safety at railroad crossing





Service Frequency

1 round trip per day to complement existing Empire Builder service.



Anticipated Schedule

About **4-6 hours difference** from the departure/arrival times of the Empire Builder service.



Speed

79 mph (maximum) on existing tracks



Travel Time

Faster than *Empire Builder* service - about **7.5 hours** between St. Paul and Chicago.



Stations

3 in Minnesota - 13 total - including stations in Wisconsin served by the Hiawatha service.



Ridership

124,000 trips on TCMC, **123,000 trips** on current Empire Builder – **247,000 total trips** annually



Capital Cost

Entire project: Approximately \$53 million. Approximately \$40 million for track and station improvements in Minnesota.



Capital Funding

Federal: \$32m
Amtrak: \$5m
Wisconsin: \$6m
Minnesota: \$10m



Operating Cost

Estimated \$6.8 million shared by three states.



Service Start

2023 depending on the availability of funding.

TCMC Second Train Details

- The TCMC Second Train project will refurbish the former Amtrak Midway Station in Saint Paul so it can be used as a layover and maintenance facility.
- Amtrak has committed to improving the station platform at Winona to make it ADA compliant with improvements from the TCMC Second Train.
- The TCMC Second Train project has received 41 letters of support from local governments, universities, and chambers of commerce, including Canadian Pacific Railway.



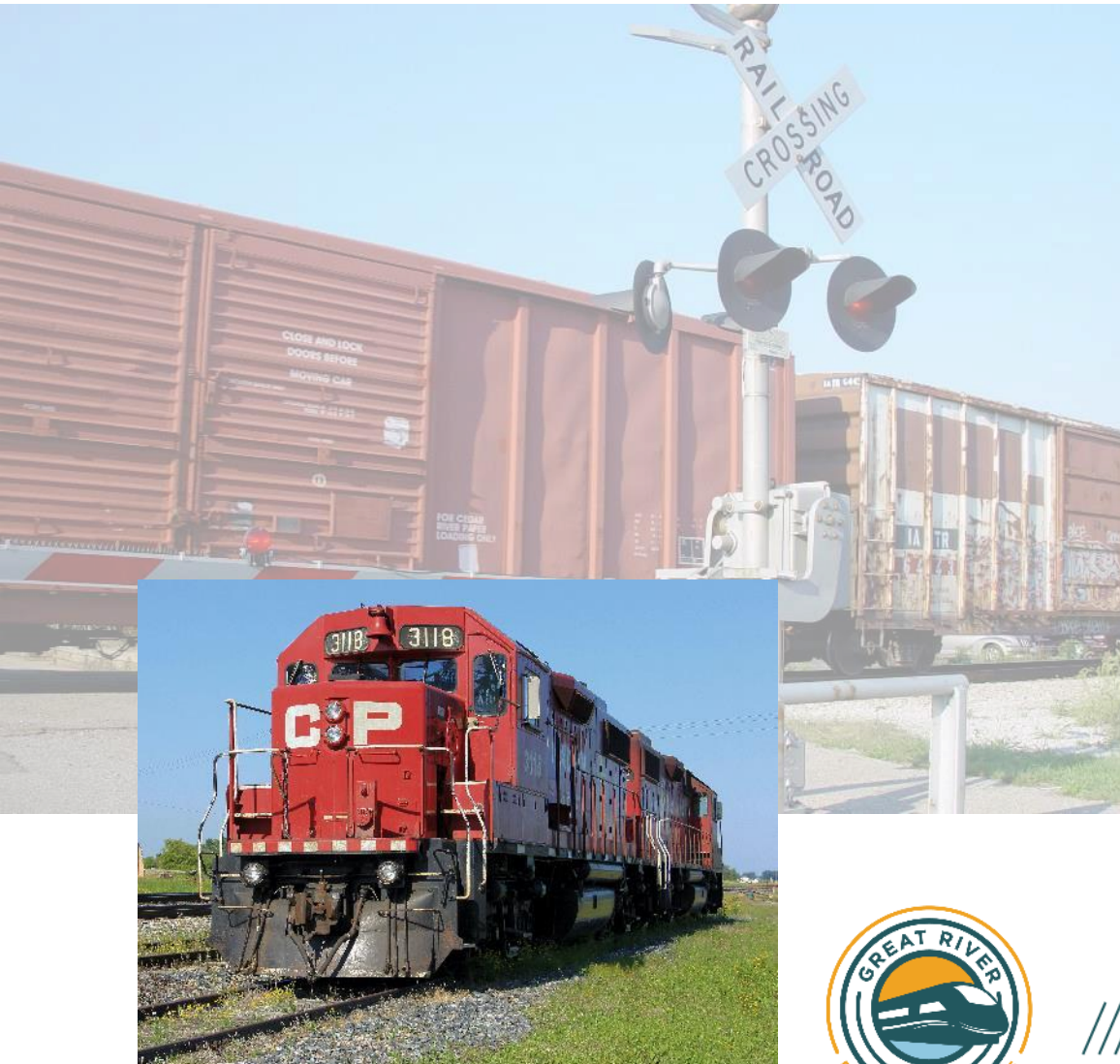
TCMC Second Train Benefits – ROI and Impact



- **Great ROI.** The return on investment for every \$1 spent is \$2.44 in economic, environmental, safety, and time savings benefits in the corridor.
- **Regional and statewide economies** benefit from jobs created, increase in freight shipping capacity, tourism, and Minnesota businesses who sold \$71 million in goods and services to Amtrak in 2019.



TCMC Second Train Benefits - Freight Shipping



- **Freight shippers** will realize more than \$34 million annually in freight operating and inventory cost savings due to track and signal improvements required for the TCMC Second Train.
- **\$10 million investment by State results in \$40 million in track and signal improvements.**



TCMC Second Train Benefits - Colleges

SURVEY SAYS

41%

of college students at
Winona State University
and St. Mary's University
have taken the train
to/from school.

57%

say they would take the
train if more frequent
service was available.

Trains Benefit Universities

"Higher education competition for students and faculty is fierce across the country. We feel we are at a disadvantage when students compare alternative transportation options for getting to and from school in Minnesota versus other states.

Trains are a sales tool for recruitment."

Scott Olson,
President of Winona State University



TCMC Second Train Benefits - Tourism



TOURISM

TCMC will support tourism growth in Minnesota cities along the River Route, bringing visitors to major sporting events, small town festivals and our beautiful natural attractions.



- Attractions across the region stand to benefit from increased tourism capacity
- **The TCMC Second Train would result in \$4 million of tourist spending annually**
 - About 46% of Amtrak riders are tourists, and the average tourists spends over \$200 in Minnesota.
 - June 2020 CRISI Grant Application forecasted 124,000 annual trips on the TCMC Second Train with 39,750 annual trips to MN (Winona- 3,600, Red Wing - 3,000, Saint Paul - 33,150)



TCMC Second Train Benefits – Business Travelers



- By choosing the train over their car, **business travelers gain more than \$64 million in productive time annually.**
- Business riders use 75% of their train trip time being productive.



TCMC Second Train Benefits – Environment and Safety

- **The environment** benefits from avoided annual vehicle emissions, valued at \$6.75 million when people choose the TCMC Second Train over driving a car.
- **Trains are safe.** In 2019, 96% of travel fatalities occurred on roads, while 2% were on trains and 1% on planes.
- Thanks to safety improvements and education initiatives, **train/motor vehicle collisions declined** from roughly 12,000 in 1972 to 2,200 in 2018.
- Amtrak and host railroads have further strengthened safety by implementing **Positive Train Control**



Project Funding

Project Costs

- \$53 million capital cost for track and signal improvements (\$40 million of work in Minnesota)
- \$12 million operating cost for first year split between farebox (40%), federal government, and MN, WI, IL

Funding Request

- \$10 million in bonding from the state of Minnesota



Questions?



Contact Us

info@greatriversrail.org

Kevin Roggenbuck – 651-266-2790

kevin.roggenbuck@ramseycounty.us

www.greatriversrail.org





January 27, 2021

Mark Vaughan
Chair, Great River Rail Commission
15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Suite 210
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Mr. Vaughan,

I am writing this letter in support of the Great River Rail Commission's work to pursue grant funding for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train that would improve the overall railway system and flow of freight trains through Winona, Minnesota, and other communities along the rail line.

The railroad is an embedded transportation system in our community and region and there are many benefits of this, however, there are also concerns and issues. As the CEO of our local community healthcare system, I want to express the potential concern that the current length of time to move freight trains through the community has on our ability to transport patients in need of emergency care quickly. The Winona Area Ambulance Service sits on one side of the tracks and the hospital emergency room on the other. Ensuring that patients in need of emergency care are transported directly to the hospital is of paramount concern. We have skilled staff and providers and have been lucky to date, but it is best not to bet on luck.

At various times of the day the freight trains halt traffic for extended periods of time (I have personally experienced 10- and 15-minute wait times). While waiting may be an inconvenience for me, for someone in an ambulance or a car being transported to the hospital this can have far more serious consequences. Attempts have been made to mitigate this risk for patients, however, it would be ideal to design more and better interventions that support the health and wellbeing of our community members relative to seeking needed medical care in emergency situations.

Please accept this letter of support to advance requests for grants and any other funding resources that can move this important initiative forward. There is no doubt we need the rail system and improving it will serve many constituencies. With appropriate grant funding and well-designed plans all stakeholders can benefit from these improvements.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachelle H. Schultz'.

Rachelle H. Schultz, Ed.D.
President/CEO

Top 100 Rural & Community Hospital

Winona Health Services

Winona Senior Services

Winona Clinic Pharmacy

Winona Health Foundation

PO Box 5600 • 855 Mankato Avenue • Winona, MN 55987 • 507.454.3650 • 800.944.3960 • winonahealth.org

Resolution No. 7613

A Resolution of Support for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Service Project ("TCMC Passenger Rail Project")

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train Passenger Rail Study completed the alternatives analysis, modelling and environmental documentation for introducing a second daily passenger train between the Twin Cities, Milwaukee and Chicago that would serve approximately 124,000 passengers annually; and

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train would run at a top speed of 79 miles per hour and utilize the existing Amtrak Empire Builder corridor from Saint Paul, Minnesota to Chicago, Illinois with Minnesota station stops at Union Depot in Saint Paul, Red Wing and Winona; and

WHEREAS, a second round-trip passenger train from the Twin Cities to Chicago will benefit Minnesota's economy by creating new jobs and supporting existing businesses, increasing tourism, providing better access to colleges and universities, providing a more economical travel choice and reducing carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, the capital improvements needed for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train will benefit freight railroads and the businesses they serve, and will make auto and truck travel safer; and

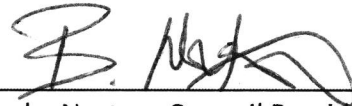
WHEREAS, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Wisconsin Department of Transportation have received a federal grant in the amount of \$31.8 million to construct track, signal and communication improvements in and around La Crosse, Wisconsin, La Crescent, Minnesota and Winona, Minnesota to accommodate the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train, and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin has \$6.2 million in bonding authority and Amtrak has committed \$5 million toward the local match for the federal grant, and

WHEREAS, Minnesota needs to provide \$10 million to apply as matching funds to the federal grant, making it possible to access the federal funds and begin building the improvements

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of Red Wing, that it hereby supports funding for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train, and requests that the Minnesota Legislature and Governor Walz approve this \$10 million request during the 2021 legislative session.

Adopted by the City Council this 8th day of February, 2021.



Becky Norton, Council President

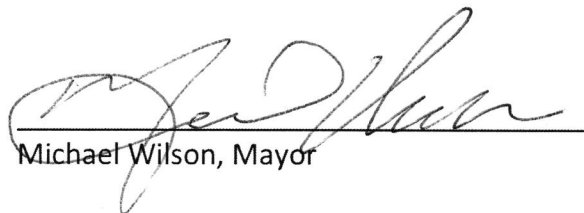
ATTEST:



Teri L. Swanson, MCMC
City Clerk

(seal)

Presented to the Mayor at 2:30 p.m. on this 9 day of February, 2021. Approved this 9 day of February, 2021.



Michael Wilson, Mayor



Paul Drotos
County Commissioner, District 5
Goodhue County

509 W. Fifth St.
Red Wing, MN 55066
Office (651) 385.3001
February 16, 2021

The Honorable Tim Walz
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Walz:

As a member of the Great River Rail Commission and a proud Goodhue County Commissioner, I am writing to ask you to include Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) Second Train in your 2021 bonding proposal. Project partners are requesting \$10 million in state bonding, to be managed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, to construct \$40 million in track and signal improvements in Winona and La Crescent, Minnesota. This project will benefit Goodhue County and all of Minnesota.

The TCMC Second Train project is expected to generate \$4 million in annual tourism revenue. Red Wing has a thriving tourism industry from the historic Sheldon Theater to Treasure Island Resort and Casino, owned and operated by the Prairie Island Indian Community. The beautifully restored train station is perfectly located for visitors to access such popular and diverse destinations as the central business district, the historic St. James Hotel, and the scenic Cannon Valley Trail.

Freight shippers will realize more than \$34 million annually in freight operating and inventory cost savings due to track and signal improvements required for the TCMC Second Train. Red Wing is a hub for businesses of all types that use freight rail, such as Ag Partners and ADM.

The TCMC Second Train is expected to reduce more than 17.3 million vehicle miles of travel, as people choose to take the train instead of driving. The reduction in automobile travel will reduce automobile emissions and the number of annual automobile crashes.

Support for the TCMC Second Train extends well beyond the Minnesota communities along the route.

- The Federal Railroad Administration has awarded more than \$31 million for final design and construction and more than \$12 million for startup operating costs through two grants programs.
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has over \$6 million in bonding authority to apply as matching funds to the federal grant.
- Amtrak has committed \$5 million in matching funds and has committed to a capital upgrade of the Winona station platform.
- Canadian Pacific Railway, the host railroad, fully supported the federal grant application for rail infrastructure improvements and has announced full support of the overall project.

The only capital investment funding partner missing is the state of Minnesota. We cannot express our appreciation strongly enough for your inclusion of the TCMC Second Train in your 2020 bonding proposal. We are excited that you may consider including our project in your 2021 bonding proposal.

Sincerely,

Paul Drotos

Paul Drotos

Cc: Jim Schowalter, Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget
Kevin Roggenbuck

GOODHUE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

LINDA FLANDERS
1st District
1121 West 4th Street
Red Wing, MN 55066

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2nd District
10679 375TH St. Way
Cannon Falls, MN 55009

TODD GRESETH
3rd District
46804 Hwy 57 Blvd
Wanamingo, MN 55983

JASON MAJERUS
4th District
39111 Co. 2 Blvd
Goodhue, MN 55027

PAUL DROTOS
5th District
1825 Twin Bluff Rd
Red Wing, MN 55066

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Wabasha County Board of Commissioners

Resolution No.: 2020-265

Whereas, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train Passenger Rail Study completed the alternatives analysis, modelling and environmental documentation for introducing a second daily passenger train between the Twin Cities, Milwaukee and Chicago that would serve approximately 124,000 passengers annually; and

Whereas, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train would run at a top speed of 79 miles per hour and utilize the existing Amtrak Empire Builder corridor from Saint Paul, Minnesota to Chicago, Illinois with Minnesota station stops at Union Depot in Saint Paul, Red Wing and Winona; and

Whereas, a second round-trip passenger train from the Twin Cities to Chicago will benefit Minnesota's economy by creating new jobs and supporting existing businesses, increasing tourism, providing better access to colleges and universities, providing a more economical travel choice and reducing carbon emissions; and

Whereas, the capital improvements needed for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train will benefit freight railroads and the businesses they serve, and will make auto and truck travel safer; and


Whereas, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Wisconsin Department of Transportation have received a federal grant in the amount of \$31.8 million to construct track, signal and communication improvements in and around La Crosse, Wisconsin, La Crescent, Minnesota and Winona, Minnesota to accommodate the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train, and

Whereas, Wisconsin has \$6.2 million in bonding authority and Amtrak has committed \$5 million toward the local match for the federal grant, and

Whereas, Minnesota needs to provide \$10 million to apply as matching funds to the federal grant, making it possible to access the federal funds and begin building the improvements, Now Therefore Be It

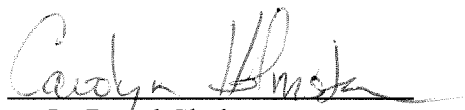
Now Therefore be it Resolved by the Wabasha County Board of Commissioners that, it hereby supports funding for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train, and requests that the Minnesota Legislature and Governor Walz approve this \$10 million request during the 2021 legislative session.

Adopted this 29th day of December, 2020 by the Wabasha County Board of Commissioners.



By: _____
Its Board Chair

Attest:

By: 
Its Board Clerk



City of Saint Paul

Signature Copy

Resolution: RES 21-24

City Hall and Court
House
15 West Kellogg
Boulevard
Phone: 651-266-8560

File Number: RES 21-24

Supporting the second daily train to Chicago.

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train Passenger Rail Study completed the alternatives analysis, modelling and environmental documentation for introducing a second daily passenger train between Saint Paul Union Depot, Milwaukee and Chicago that would serve approximately 124,000 passengers annually; and

WHEREAS, the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train would run at a top speed of 79 miles per hour and utilize the existing Amtrak Empire Builder corridor from Saint Paul, Minnesota to Chicago, Illinois with Minnesota station stops at Union Depot in Saint Paul, Red Wing and Winona; and

WHEREAS, a second round-trip passenger train from the Twin Cities to Chicago will benefit Minnesota's economy by creating new jobs and supporting existing businesses, increasing tourism, providing better access to colleges and universities, providing a more economical travel choice and reducing carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, the capital improvements needed for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train will benefit freight railroads and the businesses they serve, and will make auto and truck travel safer; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Wisconsin Department of Transportation have received a federal grant in the amount of \$31.8 million to construct track, signal and communication improvements in and around La Crosse, Wisconsin, La Crescent, Minnesota and Winona, Minnesota to accommodate the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin has \$6.2 million in bonding authority and Amtrak has committed \$5 million toward the local match for the federal grant; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota needs to provide \$10 million to apply as matching funds to the federal grant, making it possible to access the federal funds and begin building the improvements; and


WHEREAS, Saint Paul most recently supported the Second Daily Train to Chicago by passing Res 19-489 on March 20, 2019, Now Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, by the City Council of Saint Paul, that it hereby renews its support for funding for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago Second Train, and requests that the Minnesota Legislature and Governor Walz approve this \$10 million request during the 2021 legislative session.

At a meeting of the City Council on 1/13/2021, this Resolution was Passed.

Yea: 7 Councilmember Brendmoen, Councilmember Thao, Councilmember Tolbert, Councilmember Noecker, Councilmember Prince, Councilmember Jalali, and Councilmember Yang

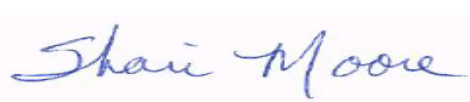
Nay: 0

Vote Attested by 
Council Secretary Trudy Moloney

Date 1/13/2021

Approved by the Mayor 
Melvin Carter III

Date 1/21/2021

Clerk 
Shari Moore

Date _____

Test Signature 
Shari Moore

Date _____



February 17, 2021

The Honorable Tim Walz
130 State Capitol
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Governor Walz:

As a member of the Great River Rail Commission and a Washington County Commissioner, I am writing to ask you to include Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) Second Train in your 2021 bonding proposal. Project partners are requesting \$10 million in state bonding, to be managed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, to construct \$40 million in track and signal improvements in Winona and La Crescent, Minnesota.

Washington County will benefit from the track and signal improvements to make the TCMC Second Train a reality. In addition to those benefits, rail freight shippers will realize more than \$34 million annually in freight operating and inventory cost savings and the TCMC Second Train will provide a safe, comfortable and productive travel alternative for senior citizens, college students, business travelers, and others who cannot or do not wish to drive.

Support for the TCMC Second Train extends well beyond the Minnesota communities along the route.

- The Federal Railroad Administration has awarded more than \$31 million for final design and construction and more than \$12 million for startup operating costs through two grants programs.
- The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has over \$6 million in bonding authority to apply as matching funds to the federal grant.
- Amtrak has committed \$5 million in matching funds and has committed to a capital upgrade of the Winona station platform.
- Canadian Pacific Railway, the host railroad, fully supported the federal grant application for rail infrastructure improvements and has announced full support of the overall project.

Thank you for including the TCMC Second Train in your 2020 bonding proposal. Minnesota is an important capital investment funding partner and we request that you include our project in your 2021 bonding proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wayne A. Johnson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Wayne A. Johnson
District 4
Washington County Commissioner

Cc: Jim Schowalter, Commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget
Kevin Roggenbuck

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January 12, 2021

Mark Vaughan, Chair
Great River Rail Commission
15 W. Kellogg Boulevard, Suite 210
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Chair Vaughan,

I am writing this letter to express the continued support of the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority for \$10 million in state funding for the Twin Cities-Milwaukee-Chicago (TCMC) Second Train. Funding for the TCMC Second Train is included in Ramsey County's legislative platform as a support item.

A second round-trip passenger train from the Twin Cities to Chicago will benefit Minnesota's economy by creating new jobs and supporting existing businesses, increasing tourism, providing better access to colleges and universities, providing a more economical travel choice and reducing carbon emissions. The capital improvements needed for the TCMC Second Train will benefit freight railroads and the businesses they serve, reduce the time streets in Winona are blocked by freight trains and will make auto and truck travel safer by improving crossings.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation and Wisconsin Department of Transportation have received a federal grant in the amount of \$31.8 million to construct track, signal and communication improvements in and around La Crosse, Wisconsin, La Crescent, Minnesota and Winona, Minnesota to accommodate the TCMC Second Train. Wisconsin has \$6.2 million in bonding authority and Amtrak has committed \$5 million toward the local match for the federal grant. Minnesota needs to provide \$10 million to apply as matching funds to the federal grant, making it possible to access the federal funds and begin building the improvements.

Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority looks forward to this legislative session and the prospects of securing \$10 million in state funding to make the TCMC Second Train a reality.

Sincerely,



Rafael E. Ortega, Chair
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority