



THE MIDWEST INTERSTATE PASSENGER RAIL COMMISSION is an eight-state interstate compact commission that promotes, coordinates and supports regional improvements to passenger rail service. Our member states include Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota and Wisconsin (Iowa, Nebraska, Ohio and South Dakota are also eligible to join).

Enacted in 2000, MIPRC brings together state leaders from across the region on a bipartisan basis to work towards developing and implementing a 21st century passenger rail system. Accomplishing our goal involves adding the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative network and additional state-supported corridors to the region's existing passenger rail infrastructure. MIPRC has taken a primary role in advocating for the federal government to develop an enduring collaboration with states for passenger rail development similar to the partnership it has with states for other modes of transportation. MIPRC also works to ensure that Midwestern states have the support and interstate coordination they need to move forward with the region's passenger rail improvement plans.

Passenger Rail Ridership Growth in the Midwest

Passenger rail is one of the most energy-efficient and environmentally friendly means to move people, and this transportation option is increasingly popular in the Midwest. Nationwide, Amtrak ridership was a record 32 million passengers for the pre-pandemic fiscal year that ended September 30, 2019.

Corridor Service Growth

During FY 2019, more than 2.9 million people traveled on corridor service within the Midwest, capping off ten years of impressive growth on these regional, state-supported routes.* **Between 2009 & 2019, ridership on Midwestern corridor routes had increased 14 percent and revenue grew by 33 percent.**

**States subsidize the cost of passenger rail service on routes that are less than 750 miles between endpoints (routes in red on map at right are state-supported; lines in blue indicate long-distance routes).*



Long Distance Service Growth

Between 2009 and 2019, ridership on long-distance routes that serve the Midwest grew by five percent. Eight long-distance routes serve the Midwest, all originating out of the nation's largest rail hub, Chicago. **Altogether, these routes have 80 station stops across the Midwest, many of them in rural communities not served by other forms of intercity transportation.**

Regional Multi-State Projects

Since 1996, the Midwestern states have worked together to plan and implement a 3,000-mile Chicago-hubbed system to connect the region with fast, frequent passenger rail service. When completed, about 90 percent of the Midwest's population will be within a one-hour car ride to a **Midwest Regional Rail System (MWRRS)** station and/or within 30 minutes of a feeder bus station.

In addition, **CREATE** (Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program) is a project of national economic significance that is reducing rail congestion throughout the region.

In July 2015 the Midwest was chosen – based on a statement of interest submitted by MIPRC on behalf of the Midwest – as one of two regions that the Federal Railroad Administration partnered with to develop a long-term (40-year) vision for a high-performance regional rail network. FRA and MIPRC released the **Midwest Regional Rail Plan (MWRRP) on Oct. 13, 2021.**

MIPRC and the Midwestern state DOTs will now work to refine and prioritize corridor development to ensure the MWRRP's conceptual plan is actualized, building on current plans to create a robust Midwest passenger rail network that serves urban and rural communities in all our states.

Passenger Rail Development – a State/Federal Partnership

Economic development nationwide will benefit if transportation is developed as an integrated system of all modes. **Passenger rail is generally the best option for transporting people who are traveling between 100 and 600 miles** and is also often the best transportation mode in certain types of weather and during emergencies. A weak intercity passenger rail “leg” results in congestion, lost travel time and decreased fuel-efficiency. Continual and reliable capital investments are key to the success of all transportation modes, including passenger rail.

Awarding of Passenger Rail-Related Capital Funds

Between FFY 2009 and FFY 2011, Congress appropriated more than \$10 billion in federal funding to states for passenger rail capital improvements and planning.

Under the High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program, the Midwest was awarded \$2.5 billion. The majority of funding helped improve or develop four key interstate passenger rail corridors: *Chicago-St. Louis-Kansas City; Minneapolis/St. Paul-Chicago; Chicago-Quad Cities; Detroit/Pontiac-Chicago.*

A group of Midwestern states also received \$268 million to buy Next Generation** rail cars and locomotives that are now modernizing the Midwest’s fleet, helping accommodate increased ridership, improving service reliability and reducing operating costs on eight interstate corridors.

***The state/federal Next Generation Equipment Pool Committee developed standardized specifications for passenger rail equipment and helped initiate and facilitate the first joint equipment purchases.*

In addition, Midwestern states received funding to study and plan three new routes: Kansas City to Oklahoma City via Wichita, KS; Minneapolis/St. Paul to Duluth, MN; and Chicago to Omaha via Des Moines, Iowa.

FAST Act

In December 2015, Congress laid the groundwork for developing a truly multi-modal national transportation system with passage of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. For the first time in transportation legislative history, intercity passenger rail and Amtrak reauthorization language were included as part of a comprehensive five-year surface transportation bill. Three new intercity passenger rail grant programs were established in the FAST Act, and Congress was faithful in providing funding over the course of the act’s five-year authorization totaling near the authorized level. **During those five years, \$304.4 million was awarded to a total of 17 projects in MIPRC states, with every MIPRC state awarded at least one grant.**

Surface Transportation Act of 2021

The historic Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act, signed into law on Nov. 15, 2021, provides \$66B for passenger rail development. It includes the Surface Transportation Act of 2021, which authorizes an additional \$15.25 billion over those five years for competitive grant programs, and a new grant program to help interstate rail compacts conduct regional planning, cover administrative costs, prepare federal grant applications, and promote intercity passenger rail. **MIPRC will work with our states through these programs to usher forth a new era of fast, frequent passenger rail in our region.**

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Eau Claire Area Chamber of
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Four resident members from each state that has enacted the Compact are appointed to the Commission. The governor of each state appoints two members (one as his/ her designee and the other from the private sector) and legislative leaders appoint two members (one legislator from each chamber). Leaders may also appoint alternates. Legislative appointments are for 2 years, and new appointments will be requested beginning in January 2023.

¹ **MIPRC Chair**

² **MIPRC Vice Chair**

³ **MIPRC Financial Officer**

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