



Minneapolis/St. Paul - Milwaukee High-Speed Rail Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) published in the Federal Register on November 30, 2018, a [notice](#) to advise the public that FRA is rescinding the Notice of Intent (NOI) for the Minneapolis/St. Paul - Milwaukee High-Speed Rail Corridor. The project sponsor and FRA have agreed to rescind the NOI; however, the associated alternatives analysis and service development plan may be used for further environmental reviews where necessary.

*****Below is archived web content regarding this project.***

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has approved the release of the Final Alternatives Selection Report by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), which describes the methodology and analysis that was conducted to identify "reasonable and feasible passenger rail alternative(s)." The report identifies one route (Route 1, the existing Amtrak route from Milwaukee-Watertown-Portage-Tomah-La Crosse-Winona-Hastings-St. Paul-Minneapolis) as the most reasonable and feasible passenger rail alternative. The route provides an opportunity to incrementally use a reduction in travel time and increase train frequency by phasing the build-out of the route, according to the report. This phased approach recognizes the constraints associated with funding requirements for major infrastructure improvements and is consistent with the [Minnesota Statewide Rail Plan](#).

- [Final Alternatives Selection Report - Executive Summary](#)
- [Final Alternatives Selection Report](#)

The FRA in cooperation with MnDOT is in the process of preparing a Tier 1 Service Level Environmental Impact Statement for improved passenger rail service from the Twin Cities to Milwaukee and the [Notice of Intent](#) to initiate the environmental study was published in 2013.

The environmental impact statement (EIS) of the Twin Cities to Milwaukee High-Speed Rail Corridor to Chicago will analyze improvements required for the implementation of regional intercity passenger rail service in the Minneapolis-St. Paul to Milwaukee corridor. The proposed improvements will help complete the [Midwest Regional Rail Initiative](#) (MWRRI) vision for developing an improved and expanded passenger rail system in the Midwest. The proposed service will eventually link to the existing [Amtrak Hiawatha service](#) between Milwaukee and Chicago. This study will be a major step in advancing passenger rail service in this highly populated corridor and extending service from Chicago to the Twin Cities.

The Tier 1 EIS document will evaluate one or more service scenarios of the reasonable and feasible passenger rail alternative and a no build alternative. The evaluation will be based on:

- Conceptual Engineering
- Track Concepts
- Capital Cost Estimate



- Station Location Analysis
- Environmental Analysis
- Ridership
- Operating Costs
- Assessment of Benefits

Next Steps

Upon the conclusion of the Tier 1 study a detailed environmental analysis of the corridor and individual projects along the corridor will be identified to be studied in Tier 2 (Preliminary Engineering - PE phase) study.

Permitting Dashboard

The U.S. Permitting Dashboard is an online tool for Federal agencies, project sponsors, and interested members of the public to track the Federal government's environmental review and authorization processes for large or complex infrastructure projects. The Dashboard is part of a government-wide effort to improve coordination, transparency, and accountability. A link to this project's page on the Dashboard is below.

- [Permitting Dashboard Link](#)