



Safety Improvements:

Top Priority for the Illinois High-Speed Rail Program

The improvement of safety measures around rail crossings and operations is one of the primary goals of the Illinois High-Speed Rail project, as well as a significant priority for the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). The most visible elements of the overall safety program will consist of fencing, a new four-quadrant gate system, and pedestrian gates.

> FENCING

As part of the Illinois High-Speed rail project, right-of-way (ROW) fencing will be added within urban areas; select rural areas; and within 150 feet of all pedestrian crossing gate locations. Fencing will be placed within one foot inside the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) ROW and will be maintained by the UPRR. Ornamental fencing will be used in urban areas, and chain-link fence will be used in locations adjacent to the railroad outside of an urban area. Fencing materials will be previewed with the local communities.


Drivers and pedestrians can expect to see additional safety measures for high-speed railroad operations.



> FOUR-QUADRANT GATES

Each public grade crossing will be equipped with four-quadrant gates (i.e., gates that block off the entire roadway from traffic) and a loop detection system, which can detect the presence of a vehicle on the crossing and alert an oncoming train. Each private grade crossing will be equipped with either two- or four-quadrant gates and loop detectors; each farm to farm crossing will be equipped with a crossing device; and each pedestrian grade crossing will be equipped with a gate and escape system.

The four-quadrant gate system has been used throughout the country, with a number of existing systems not only within the State of Illinois, but also within the Chicago to St. Louis Corridor.

Researchers have demonstrated that the four-quadrant gate system, which combines technology with traditional grade crossing applications and enhanced feature elements, could be an effective and reliable means to control the movement of motorists at a highway-rail intersection. For instance, these types of systems help to eliminate vehicle violations, in which drivers move their vehicles around the closed gates. 

For additional information and business opportunities regarding the Illinois High-Speed Rail project or the Midwest Rail initiative, please visit the official high-speed rail websites:

Visit www.idothsr.org for Illinois High-Speed Rail Chicago to St. Louis project information and business opportunities.

 www.facebook.com/IllinoisHighSpeedRail

Visit www.connectthemidwest.com for Midwest Passenger Rail initiative information.

 www.facebook.com/MidwestHighSpeedRail

 twitter.com/MWHHighSpeedRail

Project Hotline:
1-855-IDOT HSR
(436-8477)



Railroad Safety Tips

- Always expect a train at each highway-rail intersection.
- Any approaching train is always closer and moving faster than you think.
- Never walk on or near railroad tracks.
- Cross train tracks only at designated locations.
- Obey all warning signs and signals posted at a railroad crossing.
- Stay alert around railroads - avoid texting, talking on the phone, or using headphones.

Higher Speeds Operation and Improvements

Higher speed service began on November 22, 2012 between Dwight and Pontiac. Work will continue to upgrade existing track and facilities in order to allow for additional service at higher speeds.

Current improvements include track and infrastructure upgrades, premium rail, stone ballast, and concrete ties between East St. Louis and Joliet; the realignment of curves; new second tracks and sidings; the installation of grade crossing warning devices; construction of grade crossings; the use of train control signaling; and the improvement of turnouts, culverts, bridges, and fencing. Construction of the infrastructure necessary for higher speed operations throughout the entire corridor is expected to be in place by 2017.



Concrete ties

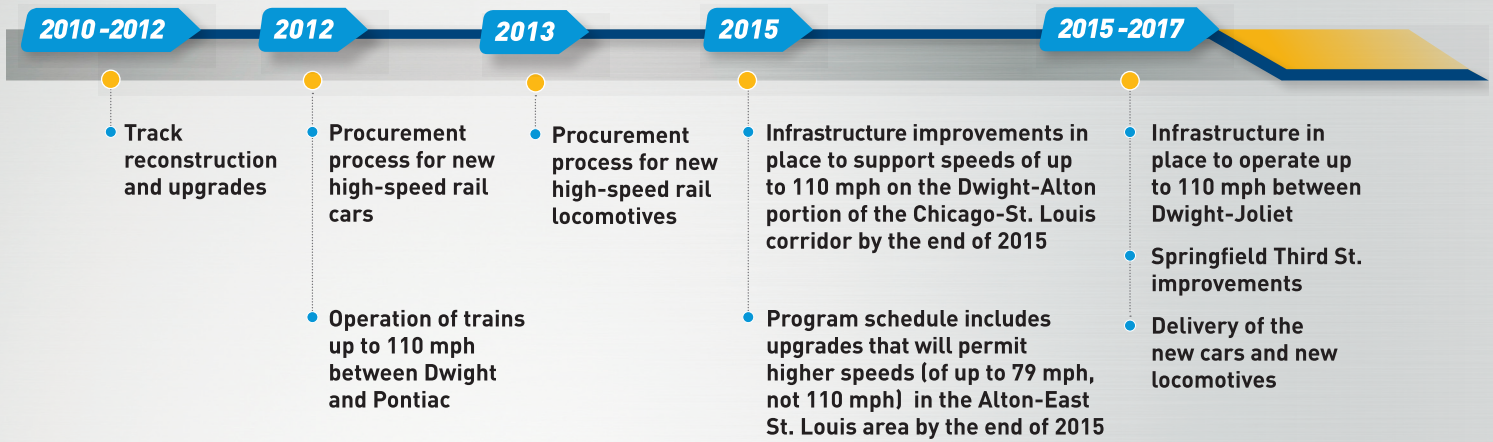
In addition to these improvements, the State of Illinois is participating in a joint procurement effort with California, Michigan, and Missouri to acquire 130 rail cars. A national request for proposals for this equipment was released in April 2012 with the State of California taking the lead. Nippon Sharyo was awarded a \$352 million contract in November 2012.



Four-Quadrant Gates



The rail cars will be manufactured at Nippon Sharyo's facility in Rochelle, Illinois. To date, they have hired 250 Illinois workers as a result of this award; additional staff will be hired when production begins. As a requirement of this award, Nippon Sharyo will comply with the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA's) "Buy America" provisions. Buy America ensures that rail projects, from trains and tracks to new stations, are built with American-made parts and supplies. ●



Station Improvements within



The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) continues to move forward with the conceptual station planning and design process for communities along the Chicago to St. Louis corridor.

> Joliet

The City received a discretionary grant from IDOT to construct a multi-modal facility and to make safety improvements at this station. The first of three construction phases is underway, while design work continues. Construction will resume when weather permits.

> Dwight

A new station is planned to be built south of the current location, on property owned by the Village. Plans are currently in the conceptual design phase.

> Pontiac

A new station is planned to be built southwest of the existing station on property owned by the City. An environmental assessment (EA) is almost complete, and plans are currently in the design phase.



Community and Safety Presentations

Over the past few years, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) (which has jurisdiction over and final approval of railroad crossings in the State of Illinois), and members of the project team have made a variety of presentations to key stakeholders and various educational and public safety organizations. Topics included project updates, safety, and the changes in operation and equipment that will be seen with the development of high-speed rail service.

If you are interested in having an IDOT representative come and speak to your organization, please contact **Janet Henderson at (630) 510-3944** or janet.henderson@imagesinc.net. In addition, the ICC has developed an Illinois Rail Crossing Safety Program in conjunction with Operation Lifesaver. To schedule a crossing safety program for your community, please contact **Chip Pew at (847) 433-3943** or cpew@icc.illinois.gov.

the High-Speed Rail Corridor

> Normal

A new multi-modal facility, funded outside of this project with a Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant received by the Town, was opened in July 2012. The High-Speed Rail project is funding a second platform and passenger grade separation; these improvements are currently in the preliminary design phase.

> Lincoln

The existing station and related facilities are planned to receive upgrades. Plans are currently in the conceptual design phase.

> Springfield

The existing station and related facilities are planned to receive upgrades. Plans are currently in the conceptual design phase.

> Carlinville

A new station is planned to be built near the current facility. Plans are currently in the conceptual design phase.

> Alton

A new station is planned to be built. An EA is underway, including a site selection alternatives analysis. The City was selected to receive TIGER grant funding for a multi-modal facility. Conceptual plans call for the integration of a new IDOT high-speed rail station and Alton's multi-modal facility.



Community Events

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and members of the project team have participated in community events to inform area residents of the changes associated with the Chicago to St. Louis Corridor, as well as to personally communicate information about safety and high-speed trains. Events are currently being scheduled for the upcoming spring and summer, including the Illinois State Fair to be held August 8th through the 18th. Check the website for upcoming events at www.idothsr.org.

Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

In December 2012, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued the Record of Decision for the Tier 1 evaluation for the Chicago to St. Louis Project. A Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analyzes the potential socio-environmental impacts along a general corridor, identifies possible alternatives, and makes a recommendation of a preferred alternative.

As part of this evaluation, the FRA selected the Rock Island Corridor as the Preferred Alternative between Joliet and Chicago; the existing Amtrak route from Joliet to St. Louis; and a consolidated route along 10th Street through Springfield. Funding to construct this project is not available at this time.

The Illinois Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the FRA, will conduct a Tier 2 analysis in order to enter the final design phase. Tier 2 environmental documents address and evaluate individual component projects of the Selected Alternative carried forward from the Tier 1 study in more detail. The analysis will be conducted for the Chicago to Joliet, the Springfield flyover, and Alton to St. Louis segments. A Tier 2 EIS was already completed for 10th Street through Springfield.

Chicago to Joliet


As part of the Chicago to Joliet Tier 2 environmental documentation, an evaluation of additional track, sidings, culvert and bridge improvements, signal improvements, commuter rail station improvements, high-speed rail station improvements, rail flyovers, rail connections, and a parallel structure across the Chicago River at 21st Street to improve capacity and reliability for identified incremental service additions will be conducted.

Springfield Flyover Study

A Tier 2 project level environmental document also will be prepared for the Springfield Flyover. Located just south of Stanford Avenue and I-72 on the south side of Springfield, this analysis will include an evaluation of new track alignment and a railway flyover structure to separate the Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern railroads at-grade crossover. This will improve capacity and reliability along the corridor.



Alton to St. Louis

The Alton to St. Louis Tier 2 documentation will include an evaluation of new double track approaches to the Mississippi River crossing, which will increase capacity to improve reliability for identified incremental service additions. It also will provide an analysis of a new double track connection to the Merchants Bridge. 

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