



*Promoting an expanded passenger rail network in the Upper Midwest*

**Legislative priorities for 2026 session – Passage of HF2887 / SF 3176**

- 1) **Initiation of new daytime passenger rail service between Saint Paul and Fargo/Moorhead** on existing track through St. Cloud on the Empire Builder route. It is possible that existing equipment could be used. There is significant support in the communities and towns along this route for this service. **Action needed:** Legislative direction to MnDOT to study this corridor so that an FRA Corridor I.D. grant application can be submitted during the next round of federal funding.
- 2) **Initiation of new passenger rail service between Saint Paul/Minneapolis and Kansas City** connecting with Amtrak long distance network trains to the south and southwest United States on track already in place and in good condition. **Action needed:** Legislative direction to MnDOT to study this corridor so that an FRA Corridor I.D. grant application can be submitted during the next round of federal funding.

The bill would allocate \$1 million from the state general fund in FY 2026 for planning, data collection, and grants to political subdivisions and as a state match as required for federal funding. If necessary, state funding could be delayed and instead allocated in FY 2027.

**Why more passenger rail service in Minnesota?**

- Demand is already there. The new Borealis service between Saint Paul and Chicago is extremely popular. Ridership has exceeded projections by 50 percent.
- Extending the Borealis to Fargo and implanting service on a Twin Cities to Kansas City route would serve approximately 70% of the Minnesota's population (in a radius of 50 miles).
- The economic benefit to communities served by passenger rail is enormous - with returns three to four times the investment made.
- People ride trains because they don't have a car available, or they don't drive due to age (too young or old) or a disability. Some people simply prefer the comfort of traveling by train. Many Minnesota cities are not conveniently served by air travel.
- Traveling by train is good for the environment and takes vehicle trips off congested roads. And train travel is safer than travel in passenger vehicles.
- Federal law encourages investment in passenger rail. Minnesota wants to continue to apply for competitive federal grants for planning and capital. If we don't, awards will go to other states.

**Contact** your elected officials and leave a message.

*Names and phone numbers are on the back side of this sheet.* 

**Contact** your elected officials and leave a message

Governor Tim Walz - Phone 651-201-3400

Sen. Scott Dibble, Chair, Senate Transportation Committee - 651-296-4191

Sen. John Jasinski, Lead Republican, Senate Transportation Committee - 651-296-0284

Sen. Erin Murphy, Majority Leader – 651-296- 5931

Rep. Jon Koznick, Co-Chair, House Transportation Committee – 651-296-6926

Rep. Erin Koegel, Co-Chair, House Transportation Committee - 651-296-5369

Rep. Lisa Demuth, Majority leader of the Minnesota House - 651-296-4373

Your MN legislators – link to legislative web site - <https://www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/>



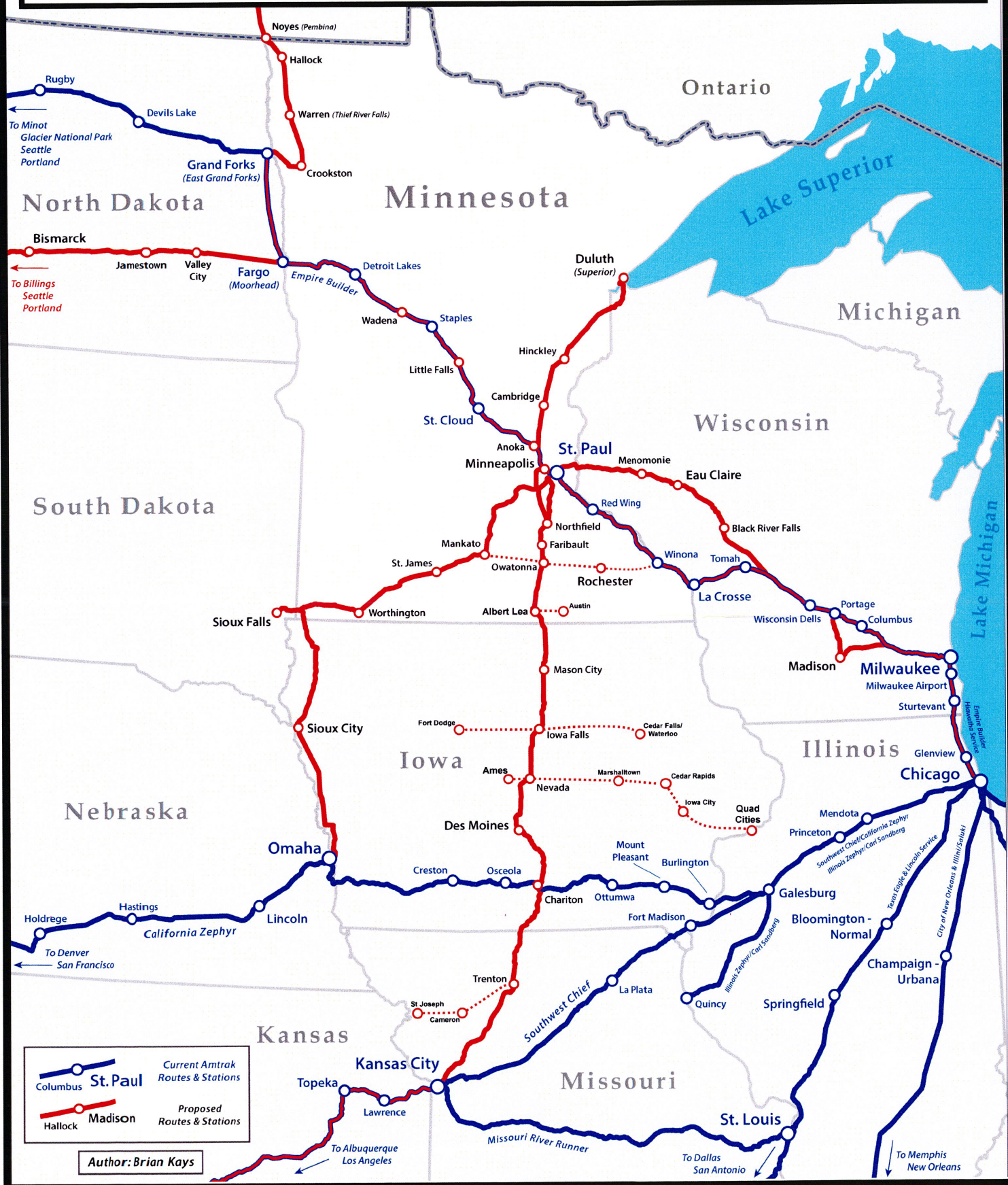
Prepared by **All Aboard Minnesota** - <https://www.allaboardmn.org/> August 11, 2025

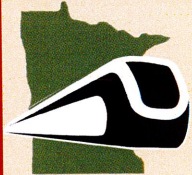




# ALL ABOARD MINNESOTA

## Existing and Proposed Passenger Rail Network





# ALL ABOARD MINNESOTA

## Twin Cities—Kansas City Corridor

*Existing and Proposed Rail and Connecting Bus Routes*



# ***BENEFITS OF A NEW PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE***

## **Twin Cities - Des Moines - Kansas City**

***All Aboard Minnesota proposes a new passenger rail service between the Twin Cities metro and Kansas City serving Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, Albert Lea, and Des Moines.***

- **Projected ridership** on this corridor is the highest of any midwestern passenger rail route, estimated at over 190,000 per year.\* The corridor:
  - 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 serving Denver, San Francisco, Phoenix, and Los Angeles.
- **Schedule and service:** AAMN proposes an eight-to-nine-hour schedule including all intermediate stops. The train could depart mid-to-late morning and arrive early to mid-evening both northbound and southbound. The train would feature coaches with comfortable roomy seating, a business class option, and baggage service.
- **Rail passenger service provides a needed travel alternative.** The corridor serves small and mid-sized cities that are not well served by airlines, connecting them to each other and major metro areas. Intercity bus service is limited in this corridor. People who don't drive or fly or don't have a personal vehicle available would have a new travel option.
- **Capacity for rail passenger service:** Union Pacific railroad owns this line and operates a modest amount of freight rail traffic on the route today. AAMN estimates Union Pacific has spent over \$300 million on this corridor in recent years. With affordable upgrades to signals, sidings, etc., this corridor could host passenger trains traveling up to 79 mph.
- **Des Moines and Kansas City are ideal distances for passenger rail service.** This corridor is approximately 500 miles from end-to-end with Des Moines in the middle. It's an attractive distance to shift trips from driving to trains or to encourage trips not made today. It would reduce traffic congestion and vehicle emissions and provide a safer alternative than driving.
- **Benefits to freight rail.** Infrastructure spending to enable passenger train service reduces freight bottlenecks, speeds up the delivery of goods and services, and enhances grade crossing safety.

*\*Ridership methodology based upon historical data for the route and comparing boarding statistics for similar midwestern communities, and other Amtrak ridership service. All information is sourced from the "Twin Cities-Des Moines-Kansas City Route Study" written by AAMN Board Director Robert Moen.*

Aug 8, 2025



All Aboard Minnesota is a 501 C (3) non-profit advocating and educating for more rail passenger service in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest. More information can be found at our site: [www.allaboardmn.org](http://www.allaboardmn.org)



# Proposed Schedule

## Twin Cities - Des Moines - Kansas City

### Twin Cities - Kansas City

| Read Down                            |                        | Stations                                    | Miles | Read Up                |                                     |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Connections                          | Twin Star (Southbound) |                                             |       | Twin Star (Northbound) | Connections                         |
| Empire Builder (East)<br>Ar 7:43am   | Lv 11:30am             | St. Paul, MN                                | 0     | Ar 6:20pm              | Empire Builder (West)<br>Lv 10:20pm |
|                                      | 12:01pm                | Minneapolis                                 | 11    | 5:49pm                 |                                     |
|                                      | 12:35pm                | Burnsville                                  | 34    | 5:15pm                 |                                     |
|                                      | 1:05pm                 | Northfield                                  | 56    | 4:44pm                 |                                     |
|                                      | 1:20pm                 | Faribault                                   | 69    | 4:29pm                 |                                     |
|                                      | 1:36pm                 | Owatonna                                    | 85    | 4:13pm                 |                                     |
| Minnesota                            | 2:03pm                 | (Rochester, Mankato)<br>Albert Lea (Austin) | 116   | 3:46pm                 | Minnesota 130 miles                 |
|                                      |                        | State Line                                  | 130   |                        |                                     |
| Iowa                                 | 2:38pm                 | Mason City, IA                              | 153   | 3:11pm                 | Iowa 231 miles                      |
|                                      | 3:16pm                 | Iowa Falls (Waterloo)                       | 198   | 2:33pm                 |                                     |
|                                      | 3:52pm                 | Nevada                                      | 239   | 1:57pm                 |                                     |
|                                      | 4:30pm                 | (Ames, Cedar Rapids)<br>Des Moines          | 274   | 1:19pm                 |                                     |
|                                      |                        | (Quad Cities)                               |       |                        |                                     |
| California Zephyr (West)<br>7:40pm   | 5:22pm                 | Chariton                                    | 326   | 12:16pm                | California Zephyr (East)<br>6:53am  |
| Iowa                                 |                        |                                             |       |                        | Iowa 231 miles                      |
|                                      |                        | State Line                                  | 361   |                        |                                     |
| Missouri                             | 6:28pm                 | Trenton, MO                                 | 400   | 11:10am                | Missouri 132 miles                  |
|                                      | 7:31pm                 | (St. Joseph)<br>Excelsior Springs           | 466   | 10:06am                |                                     |
| Southwest Chief (West)<br>Lv 10:42pm | Ar 8:05pm              | Kansas City, MO                             | 493   | Lv 9:30am              | Southwest Chief (East)<br>Ar 6:53am |

California Zephyr Connects at Chariton to Omaha, Denver, Salt Lake City and San Francisco.

Southwest Chief Connects at Kansas City to Albuquerque, Grand Canyon, Phoenix and Los Angeles.

Empire Builder Connects at St. Paul to Fargo, Glacier Park, Spokane, Portland and Seattle.



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# JOIN US TODAY!

## We want better options too!

Membership is for the calendar year from the date you join. Membership includes newsletters and alerts published as well as access to our membership meetings. AAMN is a 501(c)(3) organization so your contributions are fully tax deductible.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Options for 1 year

Individuals \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Seniors \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

~~ADD \$5 FOR PRINTED NEWSLETTERS~~

Go to [www.allboardmn.org/join/](http://www.allboardmn.org/join/)

OR

Fill in the information panel, tear off, and mail to us at:

**All Aboard Minnesota**  
**P.O. Box 4212**  
**Saint Paul, Minnesota**  
**55104**

OR

Use your Credit Card or PayPal  
and join us online

**[allboardmn.org](http://allboardmn.org)**



**MORE PASSENGER TRAINS  
TO MORE CITIES!**

# TAKE ACTION!

## Join Us Today

We are an active, professionally organized, not for profit group that is getting the word about about more passenger train service. Trains are a transportation option that Minnesotans want and need. We need your help!

## Here is what we are doing

- Publishing position papers on key routes such as additional service between St. Paul and Chicago
- Holding meetings with state and federal legislators
- Established relationship with MNDOT State Rail Passenger office
- Executing communication and outreach plans for greater Minnesota
- Exhibiting and attending events such as National Train Day
- Establishing proactive relationships with other advocacy groups

## What can you do?

- Contact your state legislators and Governor
- Urge Congress to provide more funding for passenger rail service
- Visit our website to learn more!



**[allboardmn.org](http://allboardmn.org)**

# WANT BETTER TRAVEL OPTIONS?



Photo by Benjamin Dziechowski

**CHICAGO  
DULUTH  
FARGO**



Photo by Robert Ba

**MILWAUKEE  
DES MOINES  
KANSAS CITY**

## ALL ABOARD MINNESOTA PROPOSED ROUTES



## The Case for more Trains:

- We believe modern passenger trains are vital to our region's economic future and increased mobility
- They provide superior passenger comfort, convenience
- They are 30% more fuel efficient than cars, 20% more fuel efficient than planes
- Decades of public investment in road and air transportation have created an unbalanced transportation system which is no longer sustainable
- We believe that given a real choice of fast, frequent trains to multiple destinations, Minnesotans would embrace rail travel
- Illinois recently doubled train service between Chicago and St. Louis and saw the trains fill up overnight
- Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan and Missouri are all investing in their Amtrak train networks. We can do this in Minnesota too

**ALL ABOARD**  
MINNESOTA

