

CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MN
CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2025-117

**SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE THROUGH NORTHFIELD VIA THE
BIG SKY NORTH COAST CORRIDOR ROUTE ANALYSIS**

WHEREAS, in the Amtrak Daily Long-Distance Service Study Final Report to Congress (January 2025), the Big Sky North Coast Corridor (former North Coast Hiawatha Route) is one of fifteen routes identified by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as “preferred” for restoration or establishment; and

WHEREAS, the Big Sky North Coast Corridor is the only new long-distance route in the nation included in the FRA’s Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP); and

WHEREAS, the Big Sky North Coast Corridor crosses eight states, including Minnesota, and will provide transportation options for those seeking healthcare services, traveling for business or leisure, and will serve as a catalyst for economic development and community revitalization across the region; and

WHEREAS, the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority, sponsor of the Big Sky North Coast Corridor, will begin Step 2 (Service Development Planning) of the CIDP in late 2025 or early 2026, which includes analysis of alternative routes within the overall corridor; and

WHEREAS, multiple studies indicate that passenger rail is typically seventeen to eighteen times safer than motor vehicle travel, and even more so in winter weather, making passenger rail a preferred means of strengthening patient access to Rochester; and

WHEREAS, the proposed route alternative would use existing rail right-of-way from St. Paul, Minnesota through Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna, and Rochester to Winona, Minnesota, and could serve multiple colleges, university facilities, and other post-secondary institutions as well as significant civic, cultural, and recreational resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THAT:

The City of Northfield supports the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority and the Federal Railroad Administration including in their route analyses an alternative alignment that passes through Northfield.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Northfield on this 18th day of November 2025.

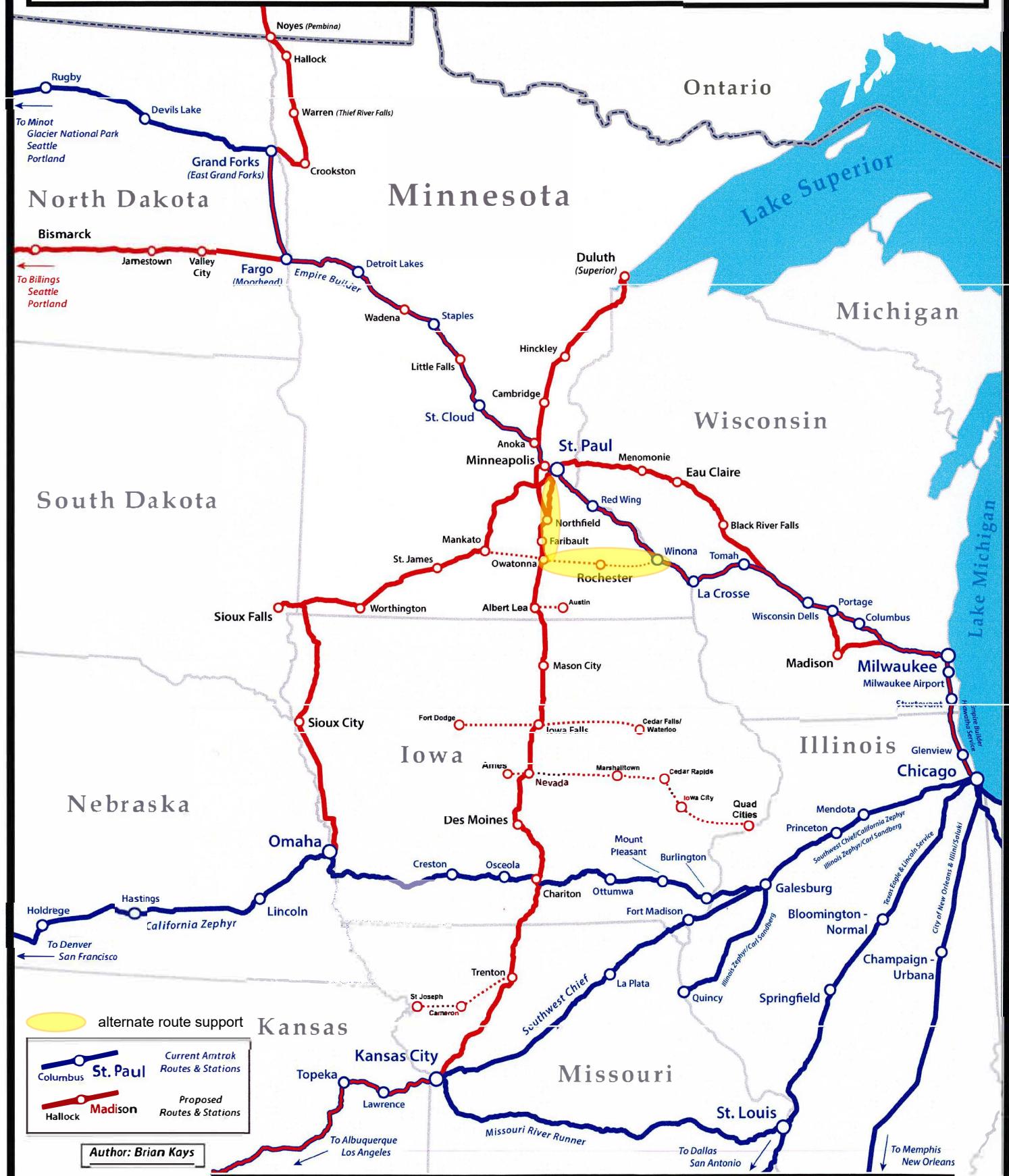
ATTEST

City Clerk

Mayor

VOTE: ZWEIFEL BEUMER DAHLEN HOLMES
 NESS PETERSON WHITE SOKUP

Existing and Proposed Passenger Rail Network





Twin Cities—Kansas City Corridor

Existing and Proposed Rail and Connecting Bus Routes

