

Iowa Connections

Get on Board with
passenger rail!



Iowa Connections



Get on Board

Iowa Connections

A visioning plan for passenger rail



Iowa Connections

A visioning plan for passenger rail

Iowa's rail network offers a great opportunity for passenger rail service, connecting Iowa's largest urban areas to Chicago and potential other Midwest metropolitan centers. The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), working with the state of Illinois, Iowa cities, planning organizations, and advocacy groups, has created a bold new vision called **Iowa Connections**.

The vision will create a passenger rail network that connects Iowans to each other and the country, and makes Iowa a more attractive place to live, work and visit.



Iowa Connections views passenger rail as a means to larger national and regional goals. The vision seeks to integrate passenger rail into the broader multimodal transportation system and make it a significant contributor to improved mobility, economic competitiveness, community revitalization, and reduced fuel use and emissions. It is a vision where travel by train is comfortable, efficient and reliable, and leaves a light footprint on the environmental landscape.

The vision uses an incremental approach to implementation – to increase service over time, based on market demand, operational feasibility, and funding.

Passenger rail can benefit Iowans

“Passenger rail trains will provide fast, efficient service to Chicago for Iowans who ride them and good jobs for the Iowans who build, upgrade and maintain them.”

-State Senator Daryl Beall



Passenger rail can benefit lowans

lowans reap benefits in multiple ways when passenger rail is expanded.

Sustainable transportation alternatives result in:

- Energy efficiency that promotes energy independence.
- Fewer greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for healthier lowans and a better environment.

Economic vitality and development mean:

- A business environment that will create and attract new and retain existing jobs.
- More travel options for both business and leisure.
- Enhanced business and university recruitment.

Quality of life is enhanced with:

- Access to travel for those who do not or cannot drive.
- A comfortable, convenient travel option.

Efficiencies are achieved through:

- Speedy and straightforward boarding.
- Productive travel time through use of laptops and cell phones en route.

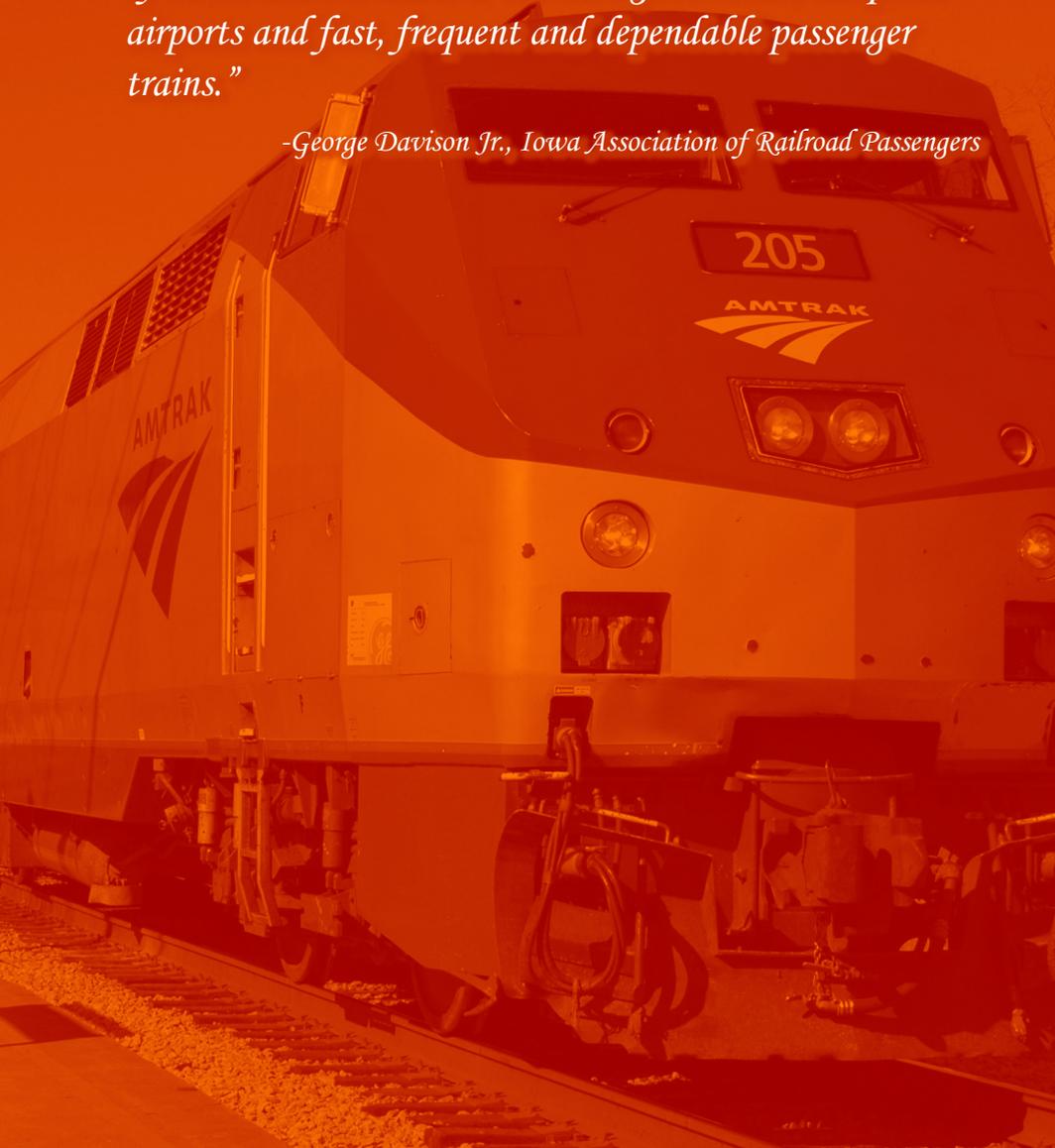
Freight rail enhancements benefit:

- Freight rail service from infrastructure improvements to support passenger rail.

Passenger rail connections

“We need a balanced transportation system in the state of Iowa and the nation. We need good roads, adequate airports and fast, frequent and dependable passenger trains.”

-George Davison Jr., Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers



Passenger rail connections

Iowa currently has the benefit of two national passenger rail lines that run from Chicago to the West Coast crossing the southern part of the state. However, Iowa's largest communities do not have convenient connections to passenger rail alternatives to Chicago, Omaha, Minneapolis, and Kansas City. Existing freight rail lines in Iowa make this achievable.

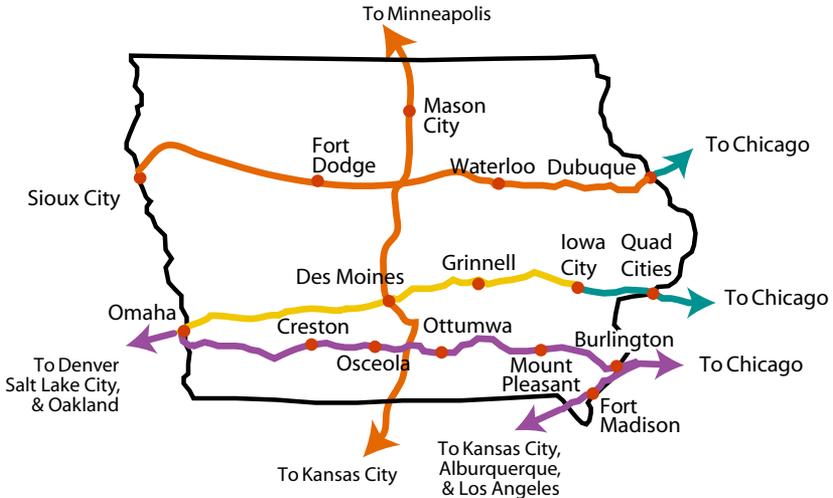
When Illinois developed a plan to bring passenger rail to Iowa's borders at the Quad Cities and Dubuque, expanded passenger rail serving more of Iowa's population became feasible.

The ultimate passenger rail network provides rail service connecting Iowans to major cities, regional destinations, and many other communities not typically served by commercial air or current passenger rail.

The immediate goal in the first phase of the vision is to achieve passenger rail service from Iowa City (via the Quad Cities) to Chicago and Dubuque to Chicago, with later phases exploring further expansion.

Passenger Rail Service in Iowa

- Existing Amtrak routes
- Routes being studied
- Planned intercity passenger rail
- Routes for future study



Expanded passenger rail service is feasible

“We are anxious to build this new connection to create economic opportunities and transportation alternatives for residents in both states, within the framework of livable, sustainable practices and communities.”

-Illinois Governor Pat Quinn and Iowa Governor Chester J. Culver in a joint letter of support



Expanded passenger rail service is feasible

The creation of a federally funded passenger rail program for capital costs has made expanded passenger rail service in Iowa more realistic. Federal legislation in 2008 created the High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program – a competitive grant program to initiate or improve passenger rail routes.

The Iowa and Illinois departments of transportation, in cooperation with the freight railroads that would host passenger rail routes, undertook the planning, environmental studies, preliminary engineering, and other activities required to submit applications for federal funding.

Applications were submitted in 2009 for routes from Chicago to Dubuque and Chicago to Iowa City, as well as a planning study for the entire Chicago to Omaha route. Iowa received funding for the planning study in this first round of applications.

Illinois made the decision to move forward on the Chicago to Dubuque route using their state funding, so progress toward initiation of that service continues under the lead of the Illinois DOT.

In August 2010, a further developed HSIPR application was submitted for the Chicago to Iowa City (via Quad Cities) route, with an announcement of the grant awards expected in the fall of 2010.

The Illinois and Iowa departments of transportation submitted a joint application under the FRA's HSIPR program. The total cost of the joint project is \$310 million. The federal program will pay 80 percent of the cost or \$248 million. Each state will be required to provide a prorated share of the required 20 percent match, based on the share of investment in each state.

Iowa's share of the match will be \$20.6 million; and it will come from a combination of state appropriations and local funding. The legislature appropriated \$3 million for fiscal year 2010, \$2 million for 2011 and \$6.5 million for 2012. Lawmakers also approved intent language to provide up to \$20 million over four years to help fund Iowa's commitment for matching federal passenger rail funding. The grant would fund infrastructure improvements, equipment and station start-up costs for the 219-mile route. Service would be provided twice daily on the route that would obtain an initial maximum speed of 79 mph.

Iowa and Illinois DOTs are committed to initiation of service on these routes and will continue to seek federal funding and work toward implementation.

The time is *now* to
Get on Board



The time is now to *Get on Board*

Never has there been a better time to begin building Iowa's passenger rail system. Many factors are rapidly converging to make the vision feasible. Iowa is now able to take advantage of federal funding opportunities. Iowa and Illinois state governments have a common goal to make expanded passenger rail a reality. Partnerships between the states and privately run railroads are being solidified. And, there is a groundswell of support for passenger rail, both from individuals and communities.

Now it is possible to leverage federal funding to expand Iowa's passenger rail services. The HSIPR grant program may pay up to 80 percent of the capital investment costs for intercity passenger rail projects. The remaining 20 percent of the cost of the project must be on hand from state or other nonfederal sources to compete for a grant.

Most states, like Iowa, plan an incremental approach to building their passenger rail systems. Those routes that receive federal funding early are more likely to receive continued future funding to complete the planned route or routes.

Acting now, rather than later, to support an investment in intercity passenger rail may mean the difference between seeing passenger rail as early as 2015 or a decade or more later.

Get on board now with an investment to make this vision a reality. A committed long-term investment will allow Iowa to compete at the federal level for intercity passenger rail funding for infrastructure improvements and move forward with incremental growth. Once service is operational, a committed funding source will provide the operating subsidy to bridge the gap between actual expenses and ticket revenues.



Iowa can *Get on Board* with
a \$5 million annual investment

Iowans *Getting on Board*



Iowans Getting on Board

Iowans Getting on Board

Support for passenger rail is building. National, regional, statewide and local organizations have been busy planning and advocating for expanded passenger rail.

The Iowa DOT:

- Seeks funding to initiate expanded passenger rail as grant announcements are made.
- Continues ongoing discussions with Amtrak, Illinois and the host railroads on route improvements, cost sharing, equipment, and other details.
- Facilitates a statewide Passenger Rail Advisory Committee, whose members are helping shape the vision for passenger rail service in the state and make it a reality (members are listed on page 22).
- Participates in passenger rail organizations at a national, regional and local level.
- Updates Iowa's statewide rail plan that includes passenger rail.
- Develops the Iowa DOT's 10-Year Strategic Passenger Rail Plan.

Regional and metropolitan planning organizations are including passenger rail in their future plans. Cities are identifying potential depot locations and developing plans.

If you share the vision of expanded passenger rail in Iowa, take action today to ***Get on Board!***

- Do your homework and get the facts. This brochure and the Iowa DOT's Web site are good places to find information you need to be a champion for passenger rail.
- Talk to your local officials about expanded passenger rail service opportunities.
- Encourage your state legislators to invest in passenger rail; a list of legislators and their contact information is available at the Iowa General Assembly's Web site at www.legis.state.ia.us.
- Join a local rail passenger advocacy group.
- Write a letter of support to your local media.

Getting on Board now makes sense for Iowa's environment

"A balanced, integrated, well-functioning transportation system is essential for a globally competitive economy, broadened employment opportunities, efficiency in the movement of people and goods, redundancy for security, and environmentally sound and energy smart travel."

-Iowa DOT Director Nancy Richardson



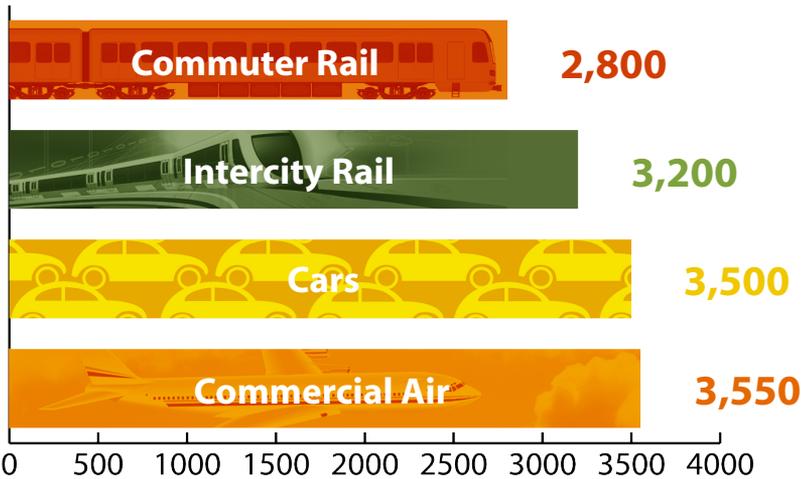
Getting on Board now makes sense for Iowa's environment

Passenger rail contributes to energy and environmental sustainability. A reduction in the growth rate of vehicle miles traveled, and the related fuel consumption and vehicle emissions, will help move Iowa toward a goal of energy independence and security.

The impact of GHG emissions on human health and our global climate is a very good reason to support the expansion of transportation modes that generate lower levels of GHG emissions.

The Chicago to Iowa City route plans to use an innovative "GreenLine" concept. Available or emerging technologies will be investigated and used to make this one of the "greenest" lines in America. Everything will be on the table for consideration as this line is developed, including fuel-saving technologies, emission controls, alternative energy sources and lubricants, use of recycled or repurposed materials in the equipment manufacture and operation, and even locally grown foods served in the dining cars.

Energy used per passenger mile (BTUs)

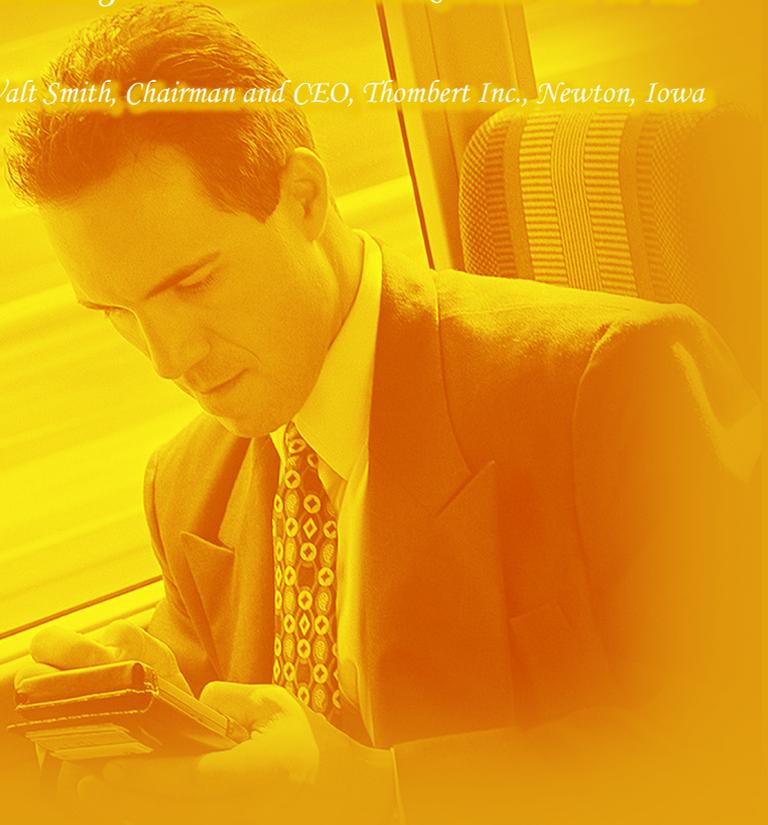


Source: U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Data Book

Getting on Board now makes sense for Iowa's economy

"Passenger rail is fuel efficient and it can take you to the heart of Chicago's business district. It will save 10 hours of driving time (four hours by air) each time I need to do business in Chicago. I can read or work while I'm on the train."

-Walt Smith, Chairman and CEO, Thombert Inc., Newton, Iowa



***Getting on Board* now makes sense for Iowa's economy**

To support passenger rail, existing track will need improvement to support higher speeds, and train signals must be upgraded to increase passenger safety. Depots must be built or rehabilitated, and platforms that meet current standards constructed. All of these activities will support job creation or retention by requiring the services of a variety of workers.

Businesses locate where there are transportation options that serve them best; and the additional passenger rail routes will open up new opportunities, and help attract and retain good workers in Iowa. Universities will have a similar advantage in recruitment by offering more travel options for students.

With the initiation of service to Iowa City and Dubuque, nearly twice as many Iowa employers will be located within a one hour drive of a rail station.

New commercial and residential developments are likely to spring up near passenger depots, helping to reinvigorate an area or a community.

Projected economic benefits of the Chicago to Iowa City route

- Job growth is estimated at 588 per year over the first four years during design and construction.
- An increase in business activity is estimated at \$25 million per year following service initiation.

Getting on Board now
makes sense for us



Getting on Board now makes sense for us

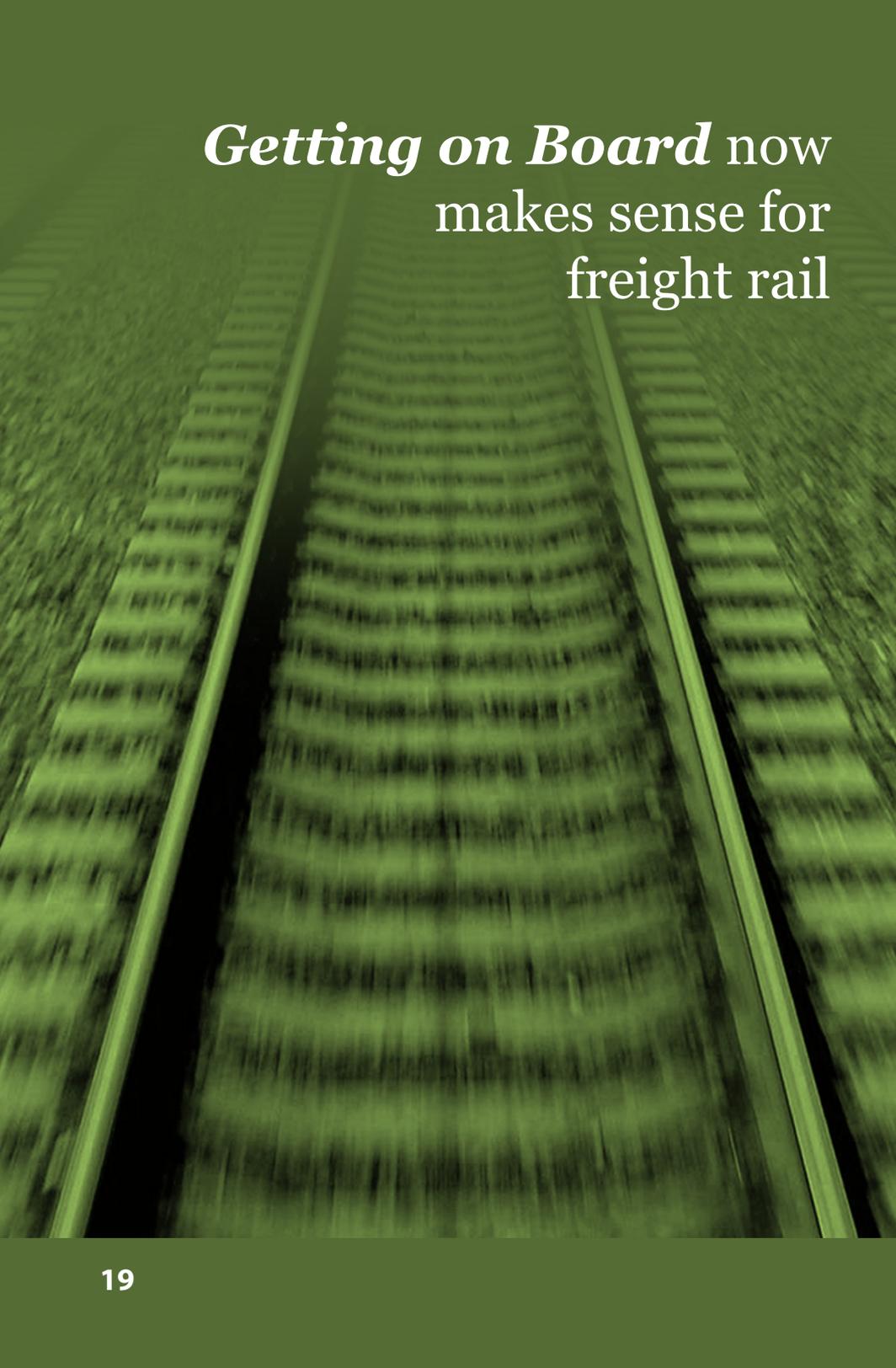
Expanded passenger rail is a key piece of a versatile, flexible way to move people, along with automobiles, air travel, buses, shuttles, and commuter services. Alternative travel options that work in concert with or as alternatives to other modes of transportation allow smart and easy choices for travelers.

Passenger rail is an especially popular choice for business travelers who can quickly board a train and make productive use of their time on board. Families can take advantage of the travel time for relaxation and enjoy time together during a trip.

As baby boomers head into retirement, this group will require attractive alternatives to automobile travel. One in five Americans age 65 or older does not drive, and the population older than 65 is expected to nearly double by 2030. Whether aging lowans can no longer safely drive or choose not to drive, the need will increase for travel options that allow them the ability to visit friends and family around the country.

On the other end of the age spectrum, university students will likely be frequent travelers, as many out-of-state students are from the Chicago area, which is a popular destination for weekend outings among young adults.





Getting on Board now
makes sense for
freight rail

Getting on Board now makes sense **for freight rail**

Passenger and freight trains will travel on the same track. The infrastructure improvements required for passenger rail will allow passenger and freight trains to coexist.

Iowa's businesses and industries are served by freight rail providing competitive shipping rates and access to distant markets. Movement of freight by rail helps reduce the wear and tear of trucks on our highways and is an earth-friendly mode.

Freight rail will continue to do what it does best by moving goods and passenger rail will provide an alternative to moving people. Both serve a key role in Iowa's transportation system, and help to relieve highway congestion as freight and passenger volumes grow.



Members working to *Get Iowa on Board*

“Rail – intercity, commuter, freight, and their intermodal links – is a vital part of the nation’s transportation system that helps balance demand across multiple modes.”

-Iowa DOT Office of Rail Transportation Director Tamara Nicholson

Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC)

In 2008, the Iowa DOT formed a Passenger Rail Advisory Committee whose members are helping shape the vision for passenger rail service in the state and make it a reality.

Membership includes:

Ames Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

AMTRAK

Bi-State Regional Commission

BNSF Railway Co.

CN

City of Osceola

Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization

Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway Company

Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority

East Central Intergovernmental Association

I-80 Corridor Passenger Train Task Force

Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers

Iowa Department of Economic Development

Iowa Interstate Railroad

Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments

Johnson County Council of Governments

Metropolitan Area Planning Agency

Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission

Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council

Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission

Union Pacific Railroad

More information is available at:
www.iowadot.gov/iowarail

Produced by



**Iowa Department
of Transportation**

**Office of Rail Transportation
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010
515-239-1052**

Federal and state laws prohibit employment and/or public accommodation discrimination on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or veteran's status. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission at 800-457-4416 or Iowa Department of Transportation's affirmative action officer. If you need accommodations because of a disability to access the Iowa Department of Transportation's services, contact the agency's affirmative action officer at 800-262-0003.

09/22/10
MM259