



**ILLINOIS
HIGH-SPEED
RAIL**

COMMISSION

**IDOT Headquarters:
Springfield & Chicago
July 15, 2026**



TODAY'S AGENDA



10:30am:



Welcome & Introduction (Chair Derwinski)
Roll Call (Morreale Communications)

10:35am:



Minutes Approval from prior Commission Meeting (Chair Derwinski)

10:40am:



Technical Assistance & Support Update (Quandel Consultants)

11:25am:



New Business

11:45am:



Public Comment

12:00pm:



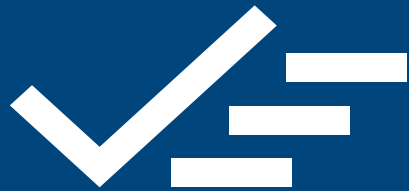
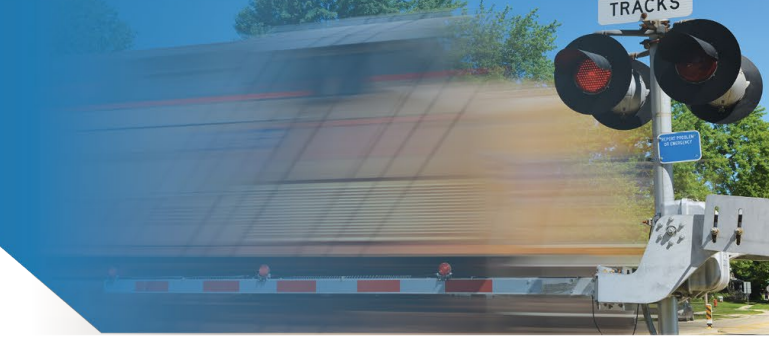
Commission Meeting Adjourns

MEETING MINUTES



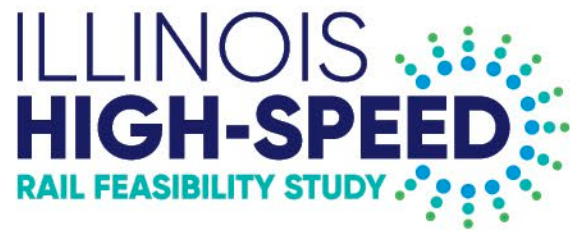
- Meeting minutes from prior Commission meetings were circulated prior to today's meeting.
- Are there any requested changes?

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE UPDATE



Technical Assistance and Support Update

Presented by the Quandel Consulting Team



Strengthening our State. Connecting the Region.

Illinois High-Speed Rail Commission

July 15, 2026 Meeting

Meeting Agenda

- TM 2 – Route Options Development
- TM 6 – Feasibility-Level Cost Methodology
- TM 7 – Investment Options Development
- TM 8 – O&M Cost Methodology
- Next Steps

Report from TAC

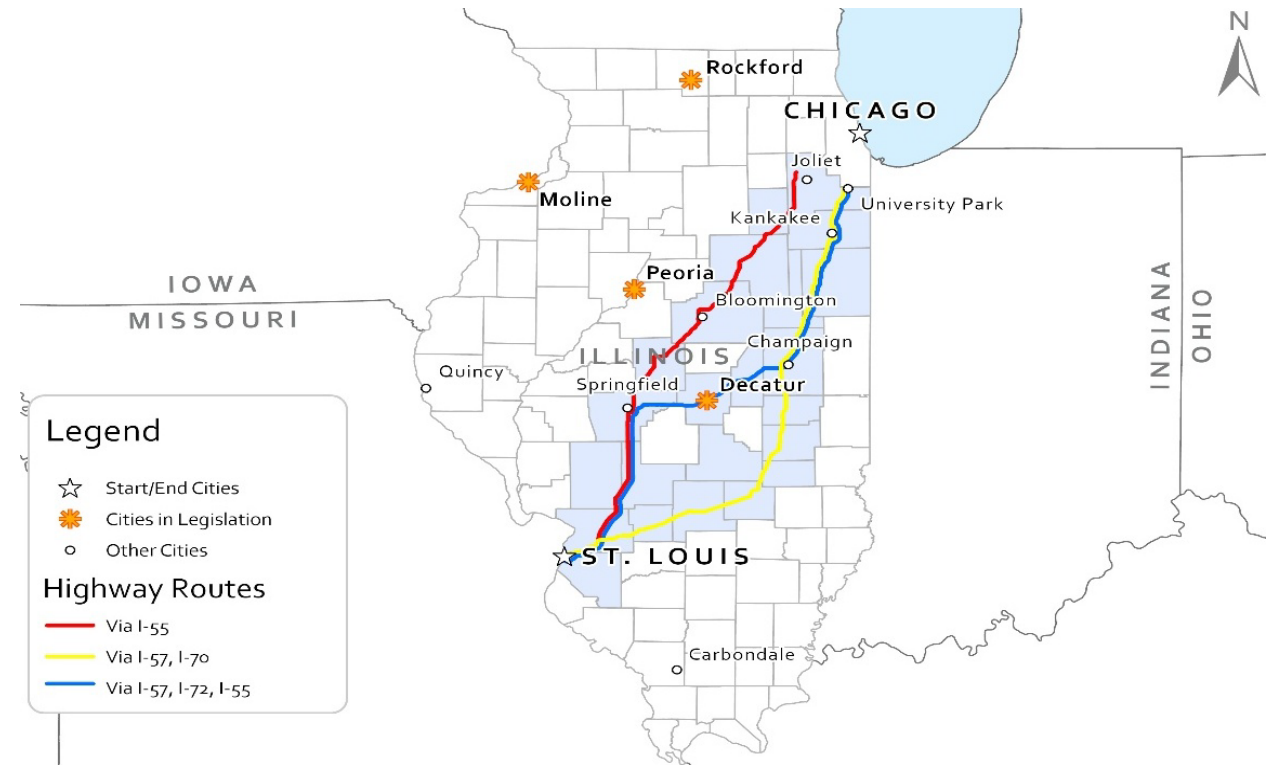
TM #2 – Route Options Development

Initial Range of Route Options

- Initial range of options identified
- Evaluated based on:
 - Serving major population centers
 - Potential for multimodal connectivity
 - Compatibility with existing transportation corridors

Initial Range of Route Options

- Existing Interstate ROW



Initial Range of Route Options

- Existing Railroad ROW



Initial Range of Route Options

- Greenfield ROW



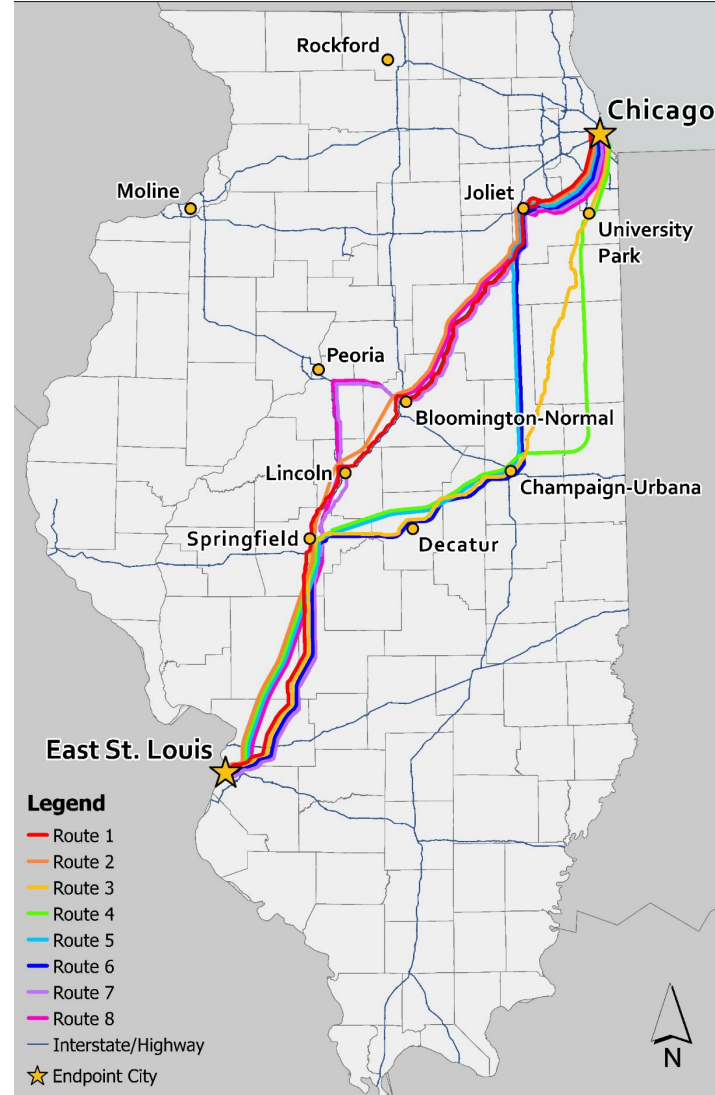
Evaluation of Initial Route Options

- Carried forward:
 - Existing interstate ROW
 - I-55 Corridor
 - I-55/I-72/I-57 Corridor
 - Existing Railroad ROW
 - None
 - Greenfield ROW
 - Greenfield via Bloomington/Normal and Joliet
 - Greenfield via Peoria and Joliet
 - Greenfield via Champaign/Urbana and University Park
 - Greenfield via Champaign/Urbana and Joliet

Route Development

- Three phase process:
 - Evaluate potential intermediate markets
 - Identify feasible corridor connections
 - Preliminary design of route alignments

Route Identification



TM #6 – Feasibility-Level Cost Methodology

Purpose

- Develop consistent, planning-level capital cost estimates for each route
- Apply a uniform methodology across all routes
- Support comparison of routes at the feasibility level

Cost Sources

- Colorado Department of Transportation Interregional Connectivity Study
 - California High-Speed Rail project
 - Northern Lights Express project
-
- Costs were adjusted to Illinois conditions and expressed in 2025 dollars

FRA Standard Cost Categories

- 10 Track Structures and Track
- 20 Stations, Terminals, Intermodal
- 30 Support Facilities: Yards, Shops, Administrative Buildings
- 40 Sitework, Right of Way, Land, Existing Improvements
- 50 Communications & Signaling
- 60 Electric Traction
- 70 Vehicles
- 80 Professional Services
- 90 Unallocated Contingency

TM #7 – Investment Options Development

Capital Investments

- Organized in accordance with FRA Standard Cost Categories
- Each category described and assumptions stated

Quantity Development

- Developed from conceptual route alignments
- Major infrastructure elements were identified for each route
- Infrastructure quantities were measured or estimated using CAD



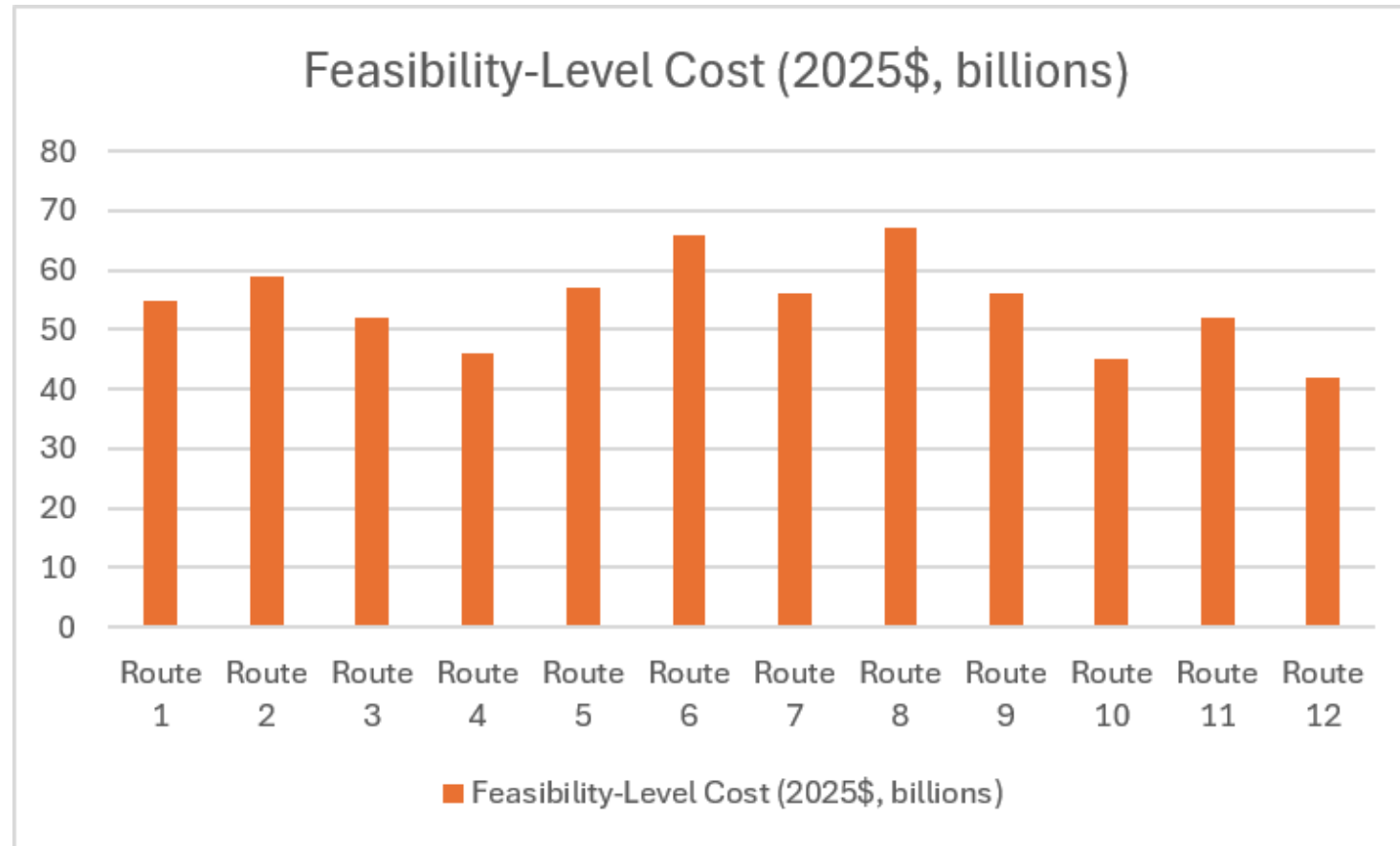
Corridor map

Feasibility-Level Costs

- Feasibility-Level costs were calculated by multiplying the unit quantities by the unit costs
- Costs were presented for each route option

FRA STANDARD COST CATEGORY	Capital Costs (2025\$, billions)
10 TRACK STRUCTURES & TRACK	\$19
20 STATIONS, TERMINALS, INTERMODAL	\$4
30 SUPPORT FACILITIES: YARDS, SHOPS, ADMIN. BLDGS.	\$1
40 SITEWORK, RIGHT OF WAY, LAND, EXISTING IMPROVEMENTS	\$2
50 COMMUNICATIONS & SIGNALING	\$3
60 ELECTRIC TRACTION	\$6
70 VEHICLES	\$2
80 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	\$11
90 UNALLOCATED CONTINGENCY	\$7
TOTAL CAPITAL COST	\$55

Feasibility-Level Costs



TM #8 – O&M Cost Methodology

Approach

- O&M costs were estimated using a train-mile-based cost framework
- Annual train-miles operated on each corridor are multiplied by a standardized per train-mile unit cost

Cost Components

- Train and onboard crew labor
- Dispatching and system operations
- Energy and traction power consumption
- Rolling stock preventive and heavy maintenance
- Track, power, and signal infrastructure maintenance
- Station operations and passenger services
- Insurance and regulatory compliance
- Administrative and systemwide overhead

Unit Cost Benchmarking

- Evaluated O&M costs for three studies:
 - California High-Speed Rail project (2024 Business Plan Technical Supporting Document) for Merced-Bakersfield
 - Colorado Department of Transportation Interregional Connectivity Study 2017 Interoperability Evaluation Draft Report
 - NEC FUTURE 2015 O&M Costs Technical Memorandum

California High-Speed Rail

- Bottom-up forecasting model based on operating plan and system configuration
- Estimated costs by major functional areas
- Used service characteristics as the primary cost drivers
- Developed staffing, equipment, utility and maintenance requirements using industry benchmarks and Early Train Operator's international HSR experience
- Included contingency allowances and Monte Carlo risk analysis to account for uncertainty in long-term O&M costs

CDOT Interregional Connectivity Study

- Spreadsheet-based, service-driven O&M cost model
- Used key operating characteristics as cost drivers, including train-hours, train-miles, car-miles, route miles, stations, and fleet size
- Organized costs into three major functional areas: Operations, Maintenance, and General Administration, with separate labor and non-labor cost components
- Applied staffing productivity rates and unit costs derived from commuter rail systems and adjusted to reflect high-speed rail operations where appropriate

NEC FUTURE

- Developed a unit cost-based forecasting model using actual Amtrak Northeast Corridor operating costs as the foundation
- Organized costs into infrastructure and transportation cost categories
- Calculated unit costs by dividing historical costs by key cost drivers such as train-miles, train-hours, track-miles, route-miles, fleet size, ridership, and ticket revenue

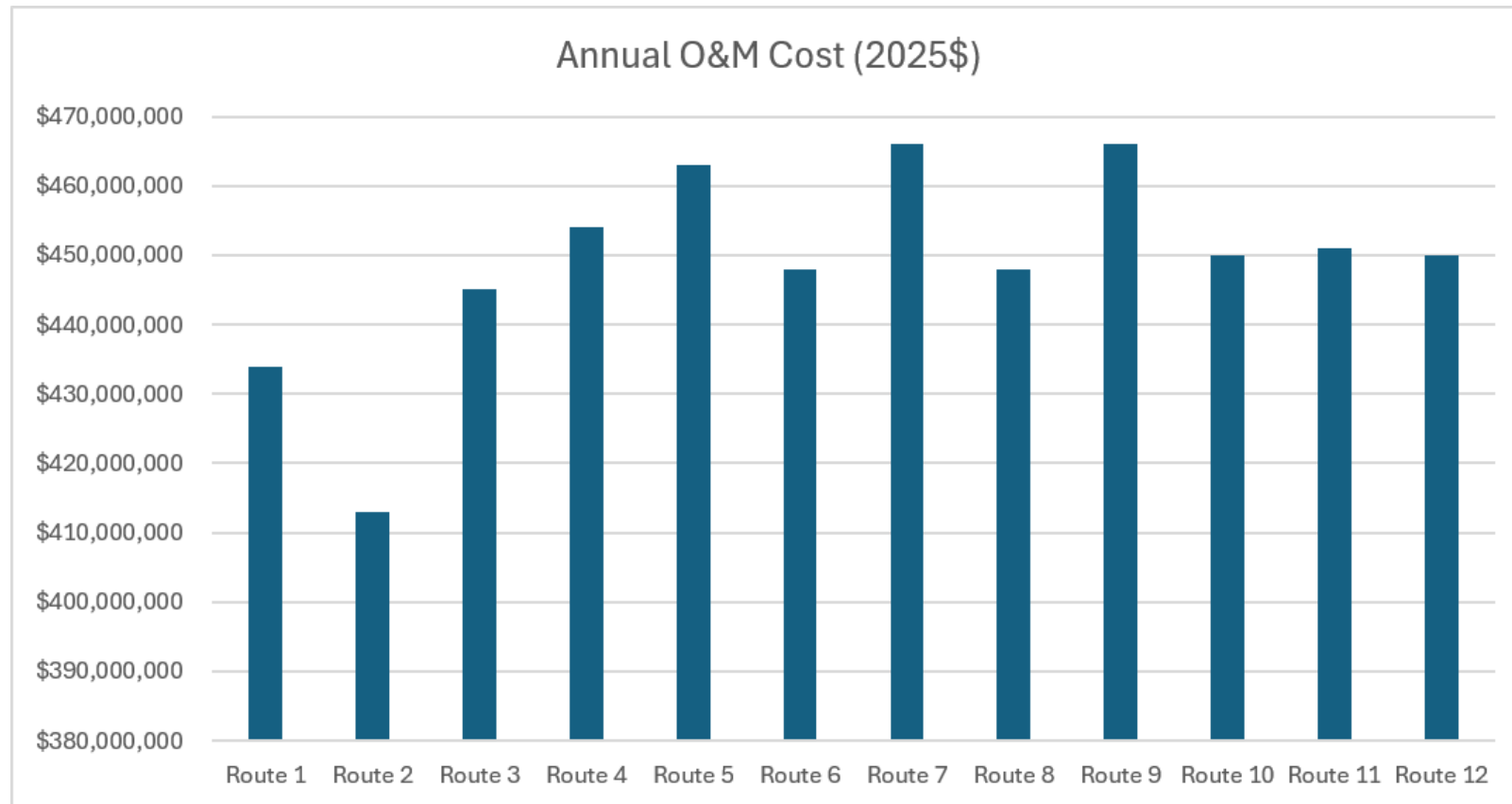
Selected O&M Unit Cost

- Excluded NEC FUTURE because its cost structure reflects a mixed-use corridor with freight operations, making it less representative of the proposed Illinois HSR system
- Selected a planning-level unit cost by averaging:
 - The high end of the CDOT ICS cost range and
 - The low end of the California High-Speed Rail cost range
- Final adopted unit cost: \$128.48 per train-mile (2025 dollars), applied consistently across all routes

O&M Costs

- O&M assumptions:
 - Base service frequency of 32 trains per day (16 round trips)
 - All-day service operated 356 days per year
 - Uniform fleet configuration and operating philosophy across routes
 - O&M unit cost applied uniformly per train-mile

O&M Costs



Next Steps

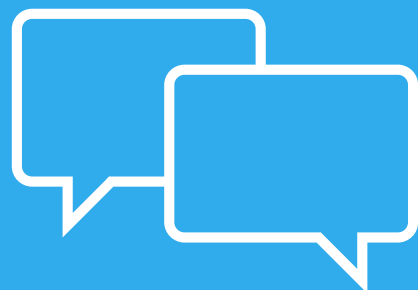
Next Steps

- Will submit the next four technical memoranda to the TAC
- Schedule a TAC meeting to review in mid-August
- Continue working on the final report

Technical Memoranda

- TM 1 – Alternatives Development
- TM 2 – Route Options Development
- TM 3 - Service Plan Development Technical Memorandum
- TM 4 - Operations Analysis Technical Memorandum
- TM 5 - Demand Forecasting Technical Memorandum
- TM 6 - Planning-Level Cost Estimating Methodology Technical Memorandum
- TM 7 – Investment Options Development
- TM 8 – Operations and Maintenance Cost Methodology Technical Memorandum
- TM 9 – Station Access Development Technical Memorandum
- TM 10 – Governance Technical Memorandum
- TM 11 – Environmental Compliance Technical Memorandum

New Business



Call for New Business



PUBLIC COMMENT



We will now open the floor for public comment.



Adjournment

Jim Derwinski, Chair, HSR Commission

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