



**ILLINOIS  
HIGH-SPEED  
RAIL**

COMMISSION

# IDOT & Metra Headquarters: Springfield & Chicago

April 14, 2025



Illinois Department  
of Transportation

[www.idothesr.org](http://www.idothesr.org)

# Agenda



**10:30am:**



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

**10:35am:**



Minutes Approval from March 10<sup>th</sup>  
Commission Meeting (Chair Derwinski)

**10:40am:**



Technical Assistance and Support Update  
(Quandel Consultants)

**11:10am:**



Public Comment

**11:20am:**



Commission Meeting Adjourns

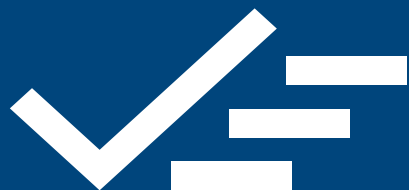
# Minutes Approval



- Meeting minutes from the **March 10th** Commission meeting were circulated with the agenda prior to today's meeting.
- Are there any requested changes?

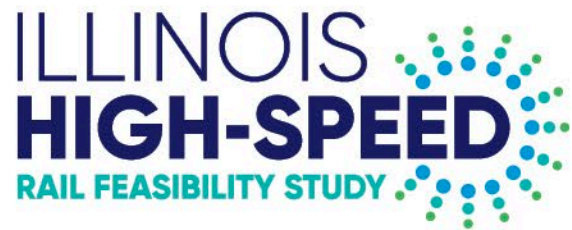


# Technical Assistance and Support Update



## Technical Assistance and Support Update

*Presented by Quandel Consulting Team*



*Strengthening our State. Connecting the Region.*

# Illinois High-Speed Rail Commission Meeting

Monday, April 14, 2025

# Agenda

- Project Timeline
- Alternatives Analysis
- Return on Investment
- Market Analysis
- Outreach & Engagement
- Questions and Comments

# Project Timeline



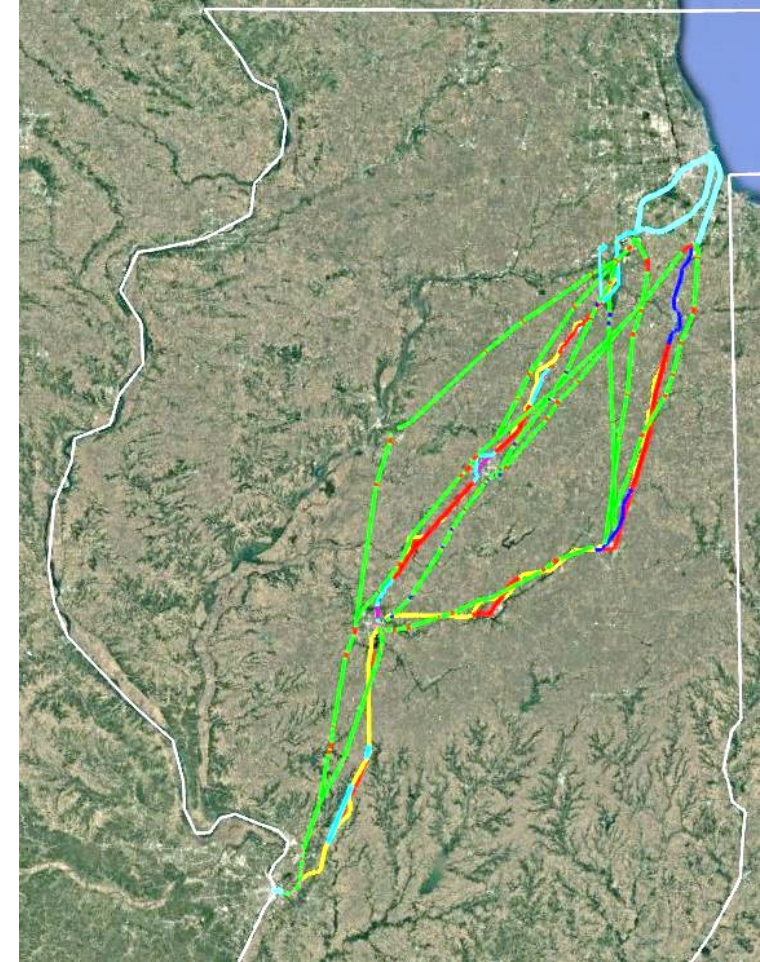


# Alternatives Analysis

# Route Alignments

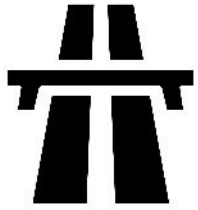
# Route Development Process

- ROW types:
  - Greenfield
  - Interstates
  - Railroad Corridors
  - Township divisions
  - Energy rights-of-way
- Route Alignment development:
  - **33 potential right-of-way** segments
  - Over **22,000 track miles**
  - More than **550 horizontal curves**



Range of Potential Route Alignments

# Construction and Operational Challenges and Opportunities



## Interstate ROW

Wind blasts – reduce impacts with clear zones between trains and roadway traffic

Geometric restrictions due to interstate curvature – cost comparison of interstate reconstruction vs. elevated structures



## Highways/Railroad ROW

Population impacts – travel time savings analysis for alternative routes

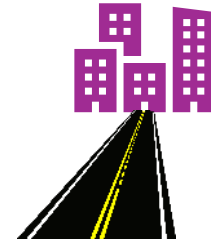
Roadway traffic impacts – grade separations



## Greenfield Corridors

Property bifurcation – grade separations and understand landowner impacts

Wind turbine impacts – follow wind energy ordinances



## Township Lines

Impacts to buildings – establish minimum clearances

Population center connections – identify connections on disturbed corridors

# Initial Horizontal Geometric Design

- Alignments designed to minimize disturbance to surrounding land uses
- Interstate alignments follow curvature of roadway
- Curves limit train speeds





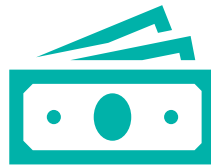
# Route Feasibility Elements



## Property Impacts

- **Minimizing impacts:**
  - Reduces planning timelines
  - Lowers public opposition

## Construction Cost



- **Lower costs:**
  - Improves the benefit cost ratio
  - Expedites construction



## Operating Speed

- **Higher speeds:**
  - Reduces travel times
  - Increases ridership

# Higher Speed Impact



# Higher Speed Impact





# Higher Speed Impact





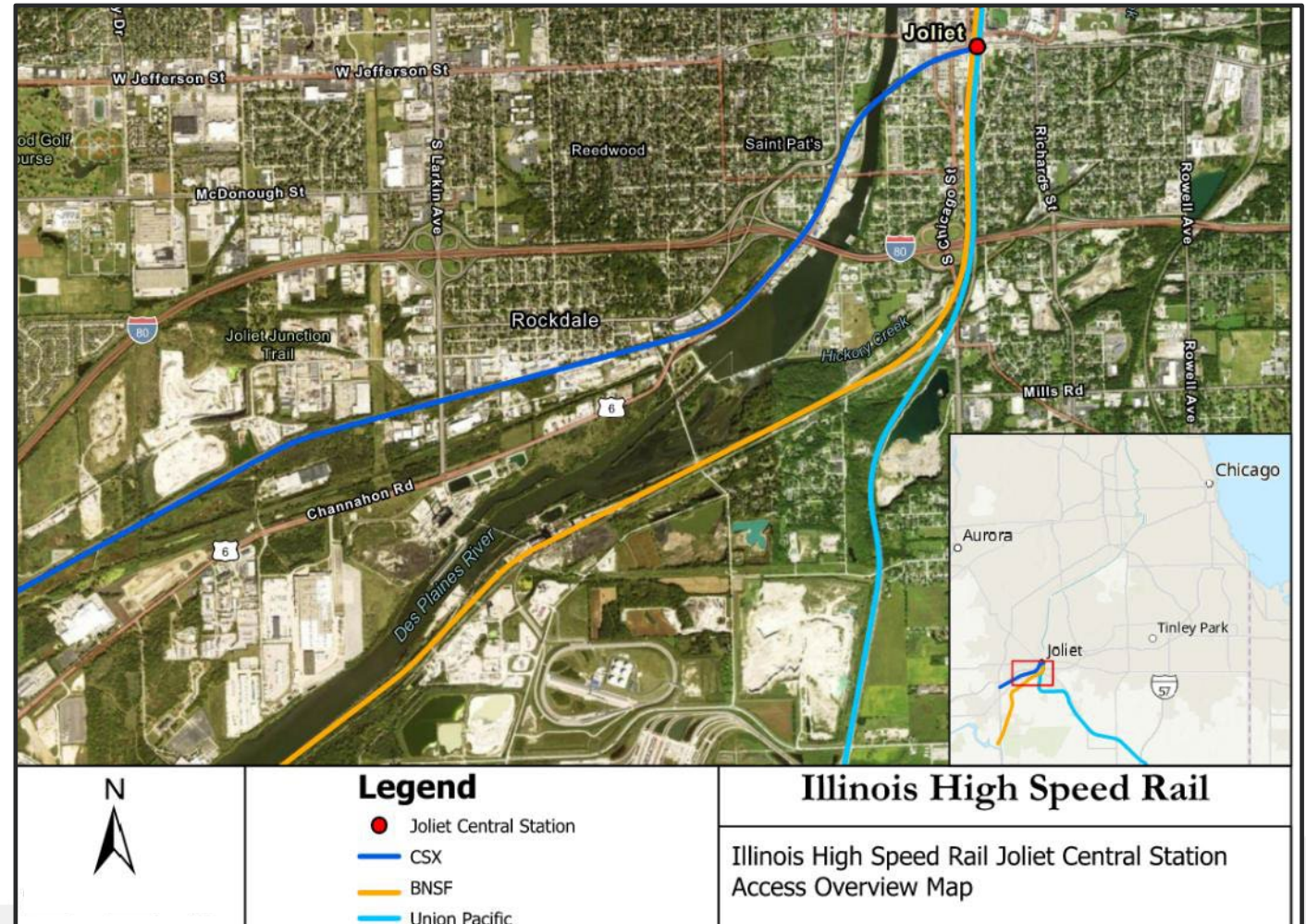
# Higher Speed Impact





# Joliet Access Route Options

- **CSX New Rock Sub:**
  - Peoria
  - Bloomington
  - Champaign
- **BNSF Chillicothe Sub:**
  - Bloomington
  - Champaign
- **UP Joliet Sub:**
  - Champaign



# Project Delivery TAC

- Will schedule a meeting with members of the TAC

# Station Access

# Intermediate Station Planning

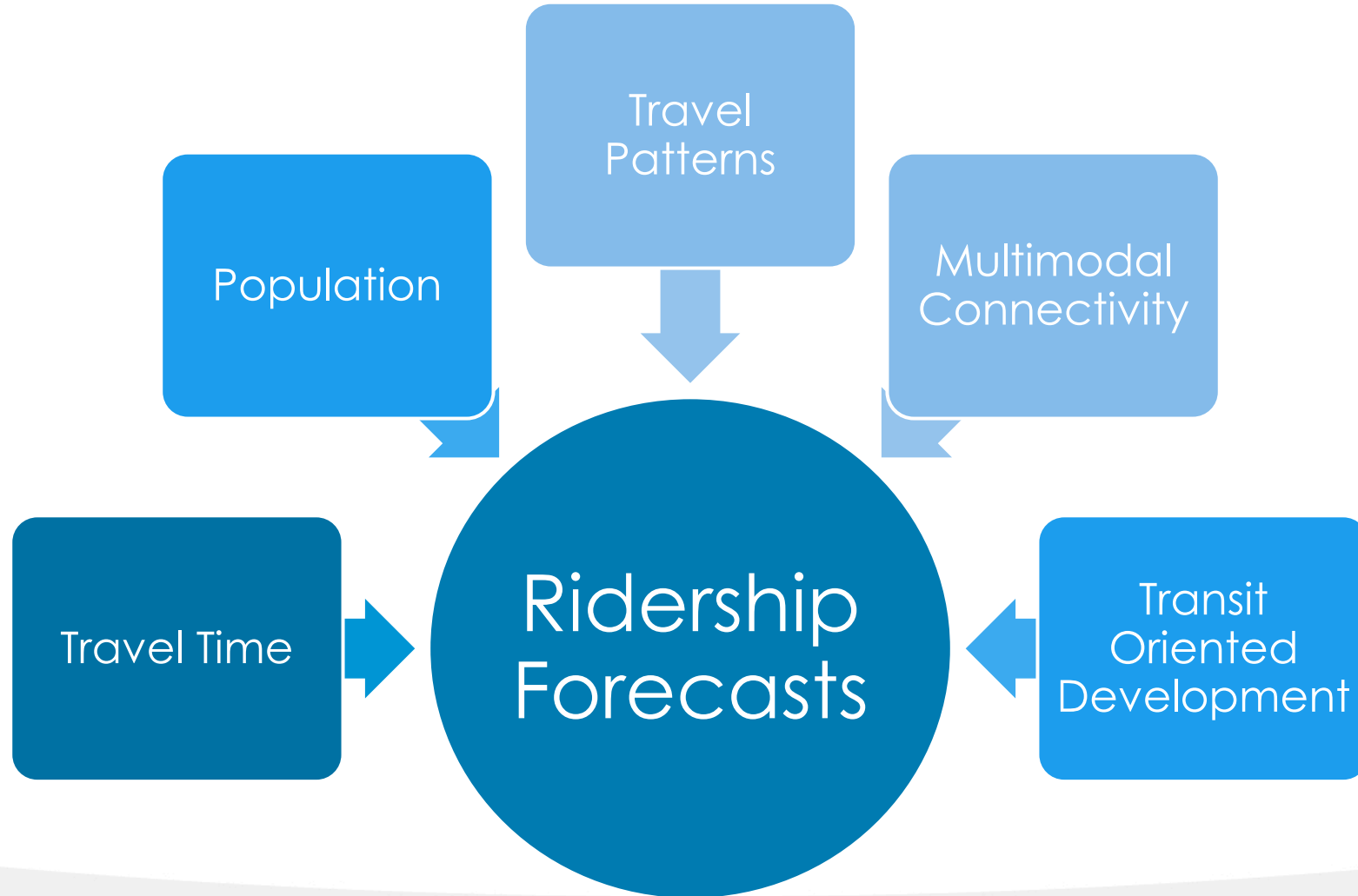
## Downtown Station

- **Pros:** existing population density; multimodal connectivity; prioritizes reinvestment
- **Cons:** limited parking and new development space; roadway traffic impacts; access to downtown stations

## Suburban Station

- **Pros:** Space for parking and new development; Lower cost to acquire property; less roadway impacts; private investment opportunities
- **Cons:** no existing multimodal connectivity; no access to city services; low population density; not centralized

# Station Impacts on Ridership





# Stakeholder Engagement

# Stakeholder Engagement

Municipality	Date of Meeting	Attendees
City of Champaign	April 8, 2025	<b>TJ Blakeman</b> (Economic Development Manager), <b>Bruce Knight</b> (Planning & Development Director)
City of Urbana	March 18, 2025 – no-show	N/A
City of University Park	No response	N/A
City of Joliet	April 3, 2025	<b>Mayor Terry D’Arcy</b> , <b>Beth Beatty</b> (City Manager), <b>Greg Ruddy</b> (Director of Public Works), <b>Mike Mahoney</b> (Will County Executive Chief of Staff), <b>Hugh O’Hara</b> (Will County Government League), <b>Elaine Bottomley</b> (Will County Executive Deputy Chief of Staff)
City of Bloomington	March 21, 2025	<b>Ellen Robertson</b> (Economic Development Manager), <b>Samantha Mlot</b> (Economic Development Advocate)
City of Normal	March 27, 2025	<b>Mayor Chris Koos</b>
City of Springfield	March 20, 2025	<b>Mayor Misty Buscher</b> , <b>Nathan Bottom</b> (Chief City Engineer), <b>Haley Wilson</b> (Communications Director), <b>Amy Rasing</b> (Director of Office of Economic Development)
City of Peoria	March 20, 2025	<b>Mayor Rita Ali</b>
City of Decatur	March 27, 2025	<b>Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe</b>
City of East St. Louis	April 2, 2025 – no-show	N/A

# Virtual Industry Day

# Virtual Industry Day

- Purpose: inform the industry of the project and gather product information
- Looking for: inspection equipment, train equipment

# Return on Investment



# Can Public HSIPR operate like a Franchise?

- A **private franchise**, such as Brightline and Texas Central, demonstrates an ROI to acquire investors and private funding, and therefore, needs to accurately estimate construction costs, operating costs, cyclic capital and expensed maintenance costs, and predict ridership and “project” revenues.
- Private franchise “project revenues” include fare box revenues and income from associated development at and around stations and other supplementary income
- A **public franchise** has to demonstrate a sound business case to local, regional, and national decision makers showing that an ROI to the public can be realized

# Phase I APTA Study: Developing the Framework

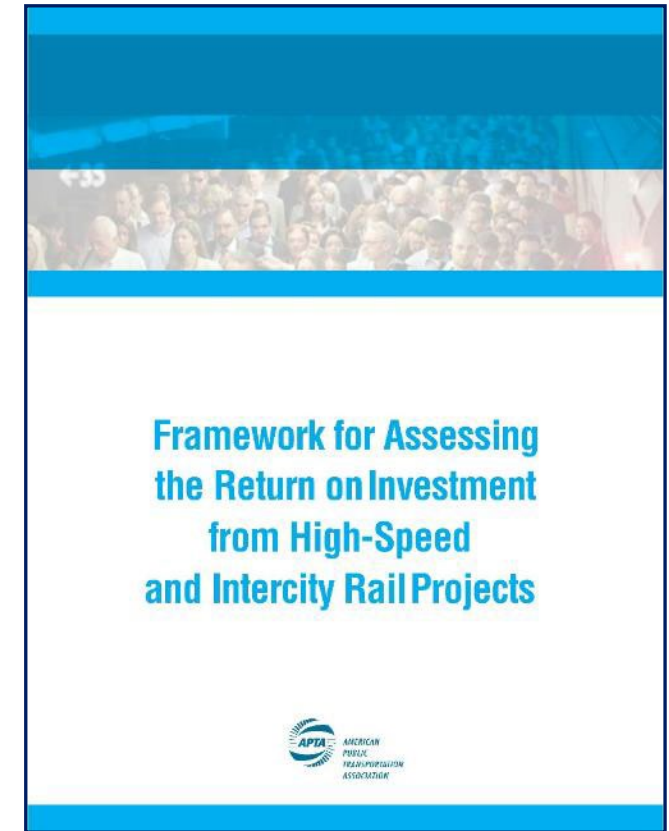
*Framework for Assessing the Return on Investment from High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Projects (2017)*

Authors:

- University of Illinois Chicago
- Economic Development Research Group (now EBP)

Literature review of 47 prior studies that assessed benefits, costs, and impacts of HS&IPR proposals.

Accounting framework to show elements of a comprehensive ROI that spans different levels of government



# Phase 2 Finding: Recognize Differing “Benefit” Perspectives

Perspective	Constituency	HS&IPR Public Policy Talking Points (benefit issues)
National Benefit	US (taxpayers, residents, and business)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• saves time, expense, and improves safety for travelers</li><li>• enhances national productivity and hence GDP</li><li>• can alleviate the need for investments in aviation and highway systems</li><li>• reduces greenhouse gas emissions</li></ul>
State Benefit	State (taxpayers, residents, business)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• enhances efficiency of the state’s highway, rail, and aviation facilities</li><li>• effectively enlarges labor and business markets</li><li>• leads to more economic activity and tax base growth over time</li></ul>
Local Benefit	Station area, city, or metro (taxpayers, residents, business)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• supports growth (of jobs, income, investment) around HSR stations, adding tax revenue</li><li>• visitors may also dwell longer and spend more money in the city</li></ul>

# Market Analysis

# Methodology to Forecast High Speed Rail Ridership (HSR)

1

Establish total demand between city pairs

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2

Estimate high speed rail's market share

-----

Preferences of current travelers (ILHSR survey)

3

Estimate high speed rail demand

-----

- Northeast Corridor MAGLEV
  - Washington - NY
  - Washington - Baltimore
- All Aboard Florida/Brightline
  - Southeast Florida
  - Southeast Florida - Orlando
  - Orlando - Tampa
- Texas Central High Speed Rail

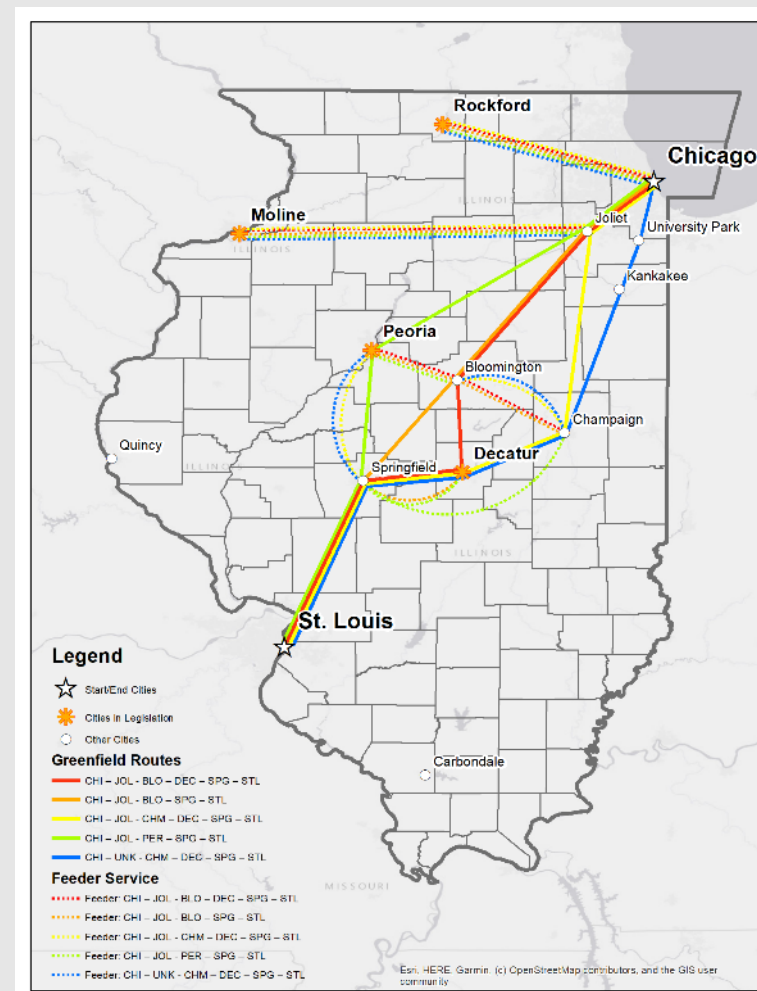
# Stations and Network Connections

## HSR stations

- Chicago/Joliet/University Park
- Bloomington
- Peoria
- Champaign
- Decatur
- Springfield
- St. Louis

## Feeder stations

- Rockford (connect to Chicago)
- Moline (connect to Joliet)
- Peoria and Champaign (connect to Bloomington)
- Decatur and Champaign (connect to Springfield)





# Stated Preference Survey

- Purpose
- Qualification & Segmentation of Participants
- Questionnaire
- Administration



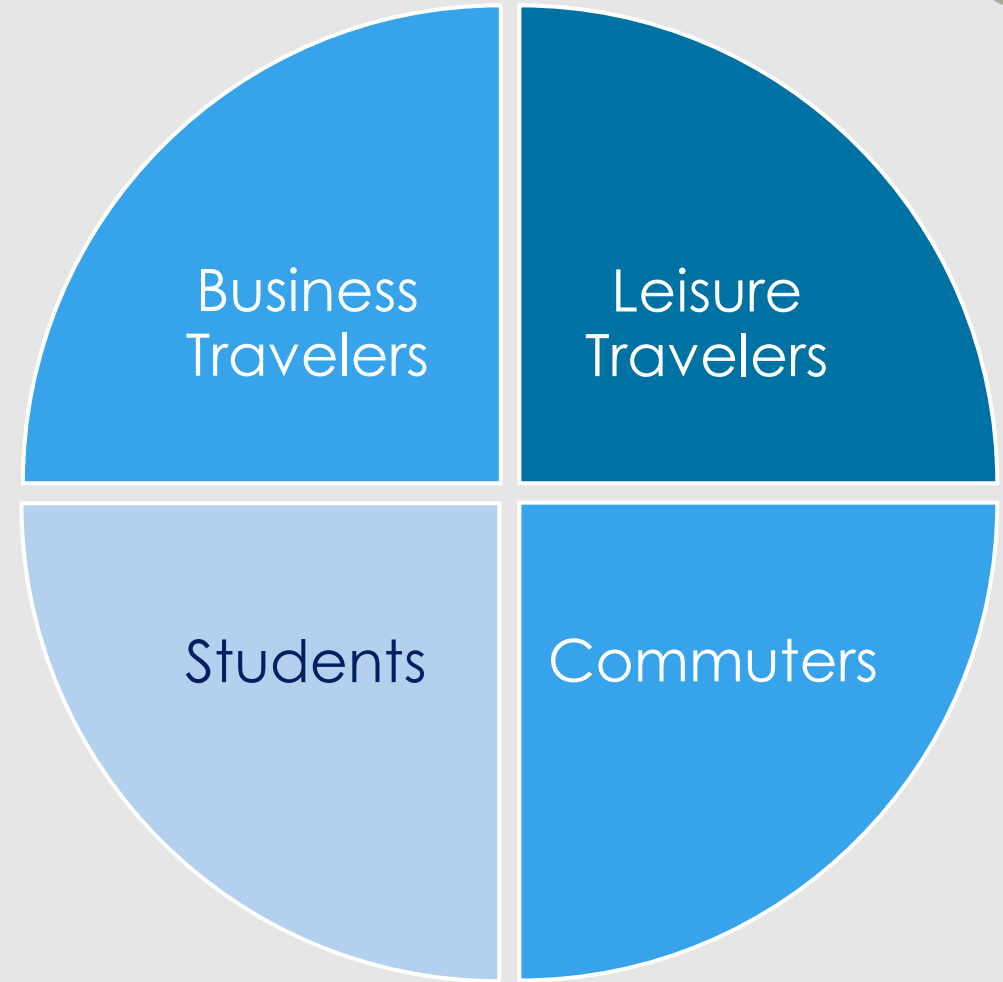
# Purpose SP Survey

## Goal:

- Learn about preferences of actual travelers
- Collect data to estimate market share

## How Do Travelers Value:

- Travel time savings
- Increased reliability
- One-seat ride vs a transfer
- Access time vs in-vehicle time



# Qualification and Segmentation

## Qualified if:

- Made a trip between an HSR/feeder city pair in the past 6 months
- Age 18 +

## Segmentation

- Place of residence within the corridor
- Trip purpose

# Questionnaire

## Types of Questions

- Qualification
- Actual Trip Details
- Choice Exercise
- Demographics

## Online Questionnaire Types

- Personal interview with tablet
- Self-administered

Welcome to the Illinois Travel Study!

You were selected to participate in a study of travel options in the State of Illinois.

On the following pages, you will be asked questions about your travel habits and travel preferences. The results of this study will help us to better understand travel demand in the state and allow us to explore the possibility of new transportation options.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Thank you in advance for your time.

# Example Question

2

## Trip Purpose

Your most recent trip from the Chicago metropolitan area to Greater St. Louis, IL-MO

Why did you travel to Greater St. Louis, IL-MO?

- ☐ Commute to usual place of work
- ☐ Company business (e.g., business meeting, client visit)
- ☐ Visit family/friends
- ☐ Leisure/vacation
- ☐ Combination of Company business and Visiting family/friends or Leisure
- ☐ Personal business (e.g., health, funeral)
- ☐ School
- ☐ Other

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# Example Question

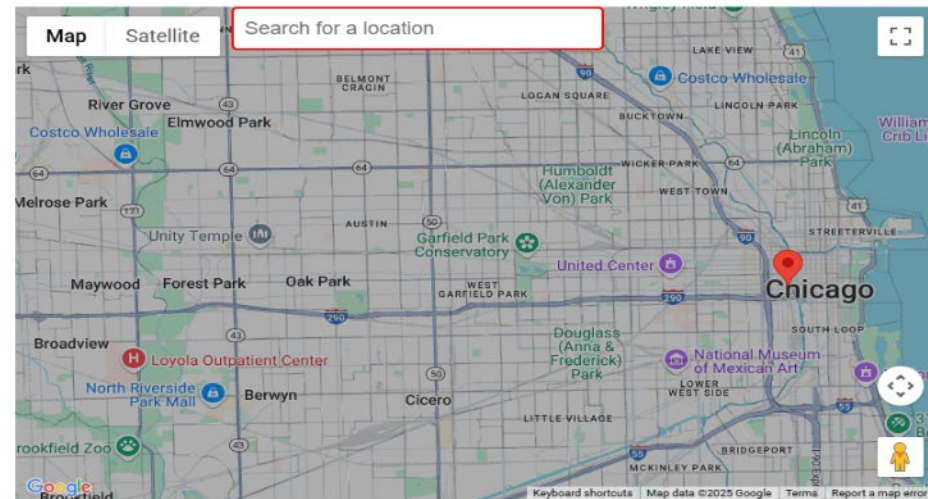
## Trip Origin (where your trip started )

Your most recent trip from the Chicago metropolitan area to Greater St. Louis, IL-MO

Where did your trip **begin**?

Please zoom in and move the red marker (click and drag) to the location on the map.

You can type the name of your town or neighborhood in the red search box to automatically move the marker to the general location of your home and drag the marker to the nearest intersection or approximate location of your home.



# Example Question

## Airport Access

Your most recent trip from the Chicago metropolitan area to Greater St. Louis, IL-MO




At the beginning of your trip, how did you travel from your home in the Chicago metropolitan area to the airport in Chicago?

- ☐ Bus
- ☐ Rail
- ☐ Drove personal car and parked
- ☐ Rode in personal car with travel companions and parked
- ☐ Dropped off by friend/family member with personal car
- ☐ Taxi
- ☐ Rideshare (e.g., Uber, Lyft)
- ☐ Walk
- ☐ Personal bike or scooter
- ☐ Shared bike or scooter
- ☐ Other (please specify)

# Choice Exercise

If these were your only options to travel between Chicago metropolitan area and Greater St. Louis, IL-MO, which option would you choose?

(3 of 8)

PERSONAL CAR	AIR	HIGH SPEED RAIL
		
■■■■ door-to-door drive	■■■■ to get to the airport and go through security screening	■■■■ to get to the station
\$■■■■	\$■■■■ total cost (all persons)	■■■■ train ride one seat ride (no transfer)
\$■■■■ total cost (all persons)		\$■■■■ total cost (all persons)
Select	Select	Select

Back Next

- 8 to 10 Hypothetical Scenarios
- Choose one mode based on time and cost
  - Blacked out values will be shown in actual survey
- Assumes same characteristics as actual trip

# Administration

- **In-Person**

- Harder travel pattern to collect
  - Over-sampling needed
- High response rate
  - Interviews performed by professional survey firm

- **Self-Administered**

- Easier to collect
- Low cost per survey

## In-Person Interview

Train Passengers onboard Amtrak

Air Passengers to St Louis at O'Hare

## Self-Administered

Drivers on I-55-I-57 rest stop

Drivers residing in Chicago/Rockford/ Moline with toll accounts

Residents of HSR Cities/Feeder Cities via e-panel

Students at Universities in HSR Cities/Feeder Cities

# Next Steps

- Survey Administration - **Tentative Dates: Late April**
  - All Surveys Completed in May
- Data Cleaning
- Data Analysis



# Outreach & Engagement

# Public Event

**VIRTUAL EVENT** April 28 - May 11  
**EDUCATION** on true HSR

## INCLUDES

- Registration
- Presentation
- Displays
- Newsletter
- Comment Section
- Link to Public Interest Survey



# Public Interest Survey



**Electronic Survey**



**Available in English  
and Spanish**



**13 Questions**

# Outreach Methods

billboards And more...

- Print advertisements
- Digital advertisements
- Social media posts
- Website postings
- Email blast
- Press Release
- Third party

posters

# Thank you!



# Public Comment



**We will now open the floor  
for public comment.**

# Adjournment

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