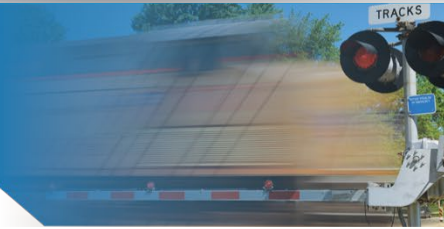




MEETING MINUTES

High-Speed Rail Commission Meeting
January 26, 2026



Location:

IDOT Headquarters, 2300 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, IL 62764

IDOT Office of Intermodal Project Implementation, 69 W. Washington Street, Suite 2100,
Chicago, IL 60602

Virtual Webex Webinar Meeting

Meeting Date and Time:

Monday, January 26, 2026 | 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Attendance:

Commission Member Attendees:

**Asterisk indicates attendance in-person otherwise virtual.*

- Erin Aleman – Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning*
- Tim Butler – Illinois Railroad Association*
- Jim Derwinwki – Metra*
- Michael Paul Dunn Jr. – Region I Planning Council
- Karl P. Gnadl – Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District
- Robert Guy, III – SMART-TD*
- Richard Harnish – High Speed Rail Alliance*
- Raymond Lai – McLean County Regional Planning Commission
- Jason Osborn – Illinois Department of Transportation*
- Cassaundra Rouse – Illinois State Highway Toll Authority
- Bria Scudder – State of Illinois*
- Brian Shanahan – Transportation Communications Union*
- P.S. Sriraj – University of Illinois Chicago
- Senator Steve Stadelman – Senate
- James Wild – East-West Gateway Council of Governments
- Bogdan Vitas Jr. – Illinois Municipal League

Commission Members Not in Attendance:

- Senator Don DeWitte – Senate
- Katrina Thompson – Village of Broadview
- Brian Vercruysse – Illinois Commerce Commission

Non-Commission Member Attendees:

- Carrie Cooper – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Timothy McMahon – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Elliot Ramos – Illinois Department of Transportation*
- Shoun Reese – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Hannah Schmidt – Illinois Department of Transportation
- DeAnna Smith – Illinois Department of Transportation*
- Janel Veile – Illinois Department of Transportation
- Nafeel Farooqui – Quandel Consultants
- Julia Hiatt – Quandel Consultants*
- Melanie Johnson – Quandel Consultants*
- Charlie Quandel – Quandel Consultants*
- Laura Quandel – Quandel Consultants*
- Victoria Fulbright – Images, Inc.
- Janet Henderson – Image, Inc.
- Virginie Amerlynck – WSP
- Rhett Fussell – WSP
- Berenice Alvarez – Morreale Communications*
- Mary McIlvain – Morreale Communications*
- Penny Weaver – Morreale Communications*
- Ben Dodson – Amtrak
- James Anderson *
- Justin Cochran
- Johnathan Garcia
- Roger Huff
- Dan Johnson
- Alan Mammoser
- Dave Moses
- John Mark
- Neil Ormos
- David Phillips*
- Lonnie Schultz

OVERVIEW OF MEETING

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Commission Chairman Jim Derwinski started the meeting at 10:30 a.m. The meeting began with a roll call from Commissioners conducted by Mary McIlvain from Morreale Communications. Commissioners participated both in person (Springfield/Chicago) and virtually. With 16 Commissioners present, including in person quorum requirements, a quorum was met.

Attendees from both locations introduced themselves, including consultants and members of the public.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The November 19, 2025 meeting minutes were approved unanimously. Chairman Derwinski turned the floor over to Quandel Consultants for project updates.

III. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT UPDATE

Melanie Johnson and Charlie Quandel of Quandel Consultants provided an update on the feasibility study status, capital cost estimates, travel time and cost ranges by routes. Virginie Amerlynck from WSP presented a market analysis update.

Updates on Feasibility Study

Quandel provided an extensive update on capital costs estimates, based on FRA standard cost categories. This includes the following categories:

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

Please note a 50% contingency in Categories 10-70 and 20% unallocated contingency.

Next Quandel Consultants presented 12 route variations, each with estimated travel times and further broke out cost per mile. A summary of the estimated travel times and cost per mile is included below.

Estimated Travel Times

Route #	Intermediate Station Stops	Right-of-Way Type	Equipment Type	Chicago Access	Travel Time
1	Springfield - Bloomington/Normal - Joliet	Interstate Median	Tilting	Rock Island	2:54
2	Springfield - Bloomington/Normal - Joliet	Greenfield	Conventional	Rock Island	2:26
3	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - University Park	Interstate Median	Tilting	Metra Electric District	2:55
4	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - University Park	Greenfield	Conventional	Metra Electric District	2:22
5	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - Joliet	Greenfield	Conventional	Rock Island	2:32
6	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - Joliet	Median Adjacent/Greenfield	Conventional	Rock Island	2:39
7	Springfield - Peoria/Morton - Joliet	Interstate Median	Tilting	Rock Island	3:10
8	Springfield - Peoria/Morton - Joliet	Greenfield	Conventional	Rock Island	2:44
9	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - Joliet	Median/Greenfield	Tilting	Rock Island	2:53
10	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - University Park	Median/Greenfield	Tilting	Metra Electric District	2:45
11	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - Joliet	Median/Greenfield	Tilting	Rock Island	2:40
12	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - University Park	Median/Greenfield	Tilting	Metra Electric District	2:30

Cost Per Mile

Route #	Intermediate Station Stops	Right-of-Way Type	Cost per Mile (Millions/mile)
1	Springfield - Bloomington/Normal - Joliet	Interstate Median	\$160-\$194
2	Springfield - Bloomington/Normal - Joliet	Greenfield	\$182-\$216
3	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - University Park	Interstate Median	\$163-\$196
4	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - University Park	Greenfield	\$150-\$184
5	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - Joliet	Greenfield	\$164-\$197
6	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - Joliet	Median Adjacent/Greenfield	\$187-\$219
7	Springfield - Peoria/Morton - Joliet	Interstate Median	\$151-\$183
8	Springfield - Peoria/Morton - Joliet	Greenfield	\$190-\$222
9	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - Joliet	Median/Greenfield	\$154-\$185
10	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - University Park	Median/Greenfield	\$140-\$172
11	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - Joliet	Median/Greenfield	\$146-\$178
12	Springfield - Decatur - Champaign/Urbana - University Park	Median/Greenfield	\$131-\$165

Quandel highlighted Route 4 and Route 12 as particularly cost-efficient relative to their performance.

In terms of next steps for the Quandel Consulting team, they will be continuing to refine feasibility-level costs, continuing O&M costs and coordinating with the ridership team.

Market Analysis Update

The market analysis update was presented by Virginie Amerlynck from WSP. Ms. Amerlynck established the methodology to forecast high speed rail ridership. The steps include first to establish total demand between city pairs. The second step is to estimate high speed rail's market share. The third step, which is also the current step, is to estimate high speed rail demand. Current efforts noted include model development and forecasting.

Review of Schedule

- Service options complete in early 2026
- Final ridership and revenue modeling expected early to mid-2026
- Full study completion targeted for late spring–mid-year 2026

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair opened the floor for public comment. Notable remarks included:

- David Phillips asked about the feasibility of downtown stations in places like Champaign, Springfield, and Kankakee.
 - Mr. Quandel responded that feasibility assumes suburban stations, but downtown variations and costs will be included in the written report.
- Mr. Phillips also asked about routing via Joliet and the inclusion of grade separations on the Rock Island line.
 - Charlie confirmed the high-level feasibility and ongoing discussions.

- Mr. Phillips last suggestion was about including hourly 110 mph service via Bloomington in the study.
- Roger Huff expressed frustration about the lack of City of Chicago representation on the commission and suggested more serious outreach efforts.
- Mr. Huff suggested a public participation process after the report is compiled for the governor and state legislature.
- Mr. Huff suggested showing the time and cost allocation for each segment in the report for better transparency.
- Dan Johnson suggested opportunities for multi-state collaboration and considering if leadership in other states may be interested in attending a future meeting to learn about the work the Illinois High-Speed Rail Commission has been studying.

V. ADJOURN

Chair Derwinski confirmed that the next meeting will be held at Metra Headquarters on February 23, 2026, due to IDOT office changes. A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:45 a.m.