



CREATE Partners Mark 75th Street Rail Corridor Improvement Project

CHICAGO - Gov. Bruce Rauner today joined public officials and private industry partners to mark the upcoming \$474 million 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project, a linchpin in the [Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency \(CREATE\) Program](#) that aims to eliminate a chokepoint at a critical South Side Chicago junction for freight and passenger trains.

When completed in 2025, the project is expected to yield an estimated \$3.8 billion in new economic benefits from eliminating multiple conflicts and increasing capacity at one of the busiest rail intersections in the US. One quarter of the nation's rail freight originates, terminates, or passes through the corridor; approximately 100 trains use the corridor daily, including 30 Metra trains.

The project got a green light in June when the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced a \$132 million grant to complete the funding for the modernization, which will also deliver mobility, air quality and safety benefits.

"Today we mark the final phase of preparation for this important transportation infrastructure project," Rauner said. "It is the culmination of years of teamwork and planning by industry and government that will result in more efficient and more productive flows of goods, services and people in our region and in the nation as a whole. This will enhance Illinois reputation as the country's transportation center."

The State will contribute \$111 million to the effort. The freight railroad industry is providing \$116 million. Cook County will pay \$78 million; Metra and Amtrak \$28 million; and the City of Chicago \$9 million. According to CREATE, the investment will cut 32,000 annual passenger hours of delay from rail travel in the region.

"The Illinois Department of Transportation received one of the largest INFRA grants this year, totaling \$132 million through an exemplary public-private partnership created to improve freight connectivity, decrease congestion, and

enhance safety along this nationally significant rail network," said Secretary Elaine L. Chao.

The USDOT grant was made as part of the Department's INFRA (Infrastructure for Rebuilding America) program. INFRA grants support the Administration's commitment to fixing the nation's crumbling infrastructure by creating opportunities for all levels of government and the private sector to fund infrastructure programs.

"Cook County is North America's freight capital. By advancing this nationally significant project and creating additional capacity for rail, we are enabling businesses to move their products to market in the U.S. and, ultimately, overseas efficiently, with further downstream job creation," Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle said.

"Chicago is America's rail hub, and this project is a significant step forward towards safer, stronger and more reliable freight and passenger rail in our city," Mayor Emanuel said. "I want to thank our state, federal and private sector partners for working with the City of Chicago on this vital infrastructure investment that will create jobs and strengthen our economy for generations."

"The CREATE Program is grounded in a simple idea - solutions to big challenges only happen when everyone is at the table," said Edward R. Hamberger, President and CEO of the Association of American Railroads. "We are all committed to improving service for both Chicago rail commuters and freight customers nationwide, and this project dramatically moves the ball forward by untangling one of the most congested points in the U.S. rail network. America's railroads are here for the long-haul as we continue to advance rail in Chicago."

"This project - funded through the federal INFRA grant program - is great news for freight and commuter rail and communities throughout the region," U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) said. "Completion of this critical transportation link will improve safety, reduce rail and vehicle congestion, and create good paying jobs. I've been proud to support this federal funding program, which aids the City's efforts to improve safety and alleviate congestion in a region that desperately needs it."

"For too long, congestion and delays have defined transportation and commerce throughout the Chicagoland area. But today, we're taking a step toward ensuring that our rail system is as efficient as Illinoisans deserve. This project will relieve the chokehold along the 75th Street Corridor and at similar bottlenecks throughout the region-creating jobs and making our roads safer in the process. I want to thank the Department of Transportation along with the elected officials and industry partners

who worked hard to make this groundbreaking possible," said U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL).

"While the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project is located in Chicago, its completion will be beneficial to the entire state of Illinois," said Congressman Davis. "I applaud this administration for making infrastructure a priority. This project will go a long way in alleviating train congestion in the Chicago area that has slowed down the movement of ag products and other goods and prevented access to reliable, high-speed rail between Chicago and downstate Illinois."

"This key CREATE project will not only improve Metra and Amtrak service and alleviate blocked rail crossings, it will also create jobs and help boost the local economy," said Congressman Lipinski. "Since I was able to secure the initial \$100 million grant to begin CREATE in 2005, we have made significant progress in this public-private partnership with federal funding leading the way. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to secure more funding for CREATE and improve local transportation."

"Federal dollars play a significant role in rebuilding and reimagining our infrastructure. And addressing and providing solutions to the transportation needs of my constituents was one of the key reasons I advocated for this funding. I know the residents in the 1st Congressional District of Illinois will be pleased to see the benefits of this project once it is completed because it will greatly reduce delays, train idling, and congestion," said Congressman Rush. "I remain committed to fighting for more funding that will benefit our local economy and improve the quality of life for our communities. Americans deserve better infrastructure and we are delivering."

"The 75th Street corridor has long been one of the pillars of the CREATE program and a project that needed to happen if we are to truly build a world-class transportation system for Illinois," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blakenhorn. "Getting to this point has required vision, leadership and commitment that will benefit residents and businesses in countless ways, while strengthening our status as the country's transportation hub."

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The CREATE Program is a first-of-its-kind private-public partnership to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of freight, commuter and intercity rail, while improving the entire transportation network throughout the region. The \$4.4 billion program comprises 70 rail and highway improvements, 29 which are complete. The Program partners include the Illinois Department of Transportation, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Chicago Department of Transportation, Cook County as well as the freight and passenger railroads. createprogram.org