



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad  
Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

January 28, 2010

The Honorable Gary Hannig  
Secretary, Illinois Department of Transportation  
2300 S. Dirksen Parkway  
Springfield, IL 62764

**RE: High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program Selection Decisions**

Dear Secretary Hannig,

On behalf of President Obama, Vice President Biden, and Secretary of Transportation LaHood, I thank you for your interest in the historic High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) Program. We look forward to building upon the relationships established during last summer's outreach and pre-application process to make passenger rail a safe and competitive transportation option in Illinois and throughout the United States. Through our initial outreach workshops in May and June of 2009 and subsequent conference calls, meetings and other feedback, you have played a central role in helping to shape this truly collaborative program.

HSIPR is a new and ambitious endeavor—for the Department of Transportation, for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), for the states, and for the country—and we have a great deal of work ahead of us. These awards are just the beginning of a new level of federal engagement in building a safe, world-class passenger rail infrastructure in the United States.

Our initial investment decisions are focused in three key areas: 1) building new high-speed rail corridors that will fundamentally change passenger transportation in the markets they serve; 2) upgrading existing intercity passenger rail services; and 3) laying the groundwork for future high-speed rail services through smaller projects and planning efforts.

The HSIPR Program has generated enormous interest and excitement across the country. FRA received 259 grant applications from 37 states and the District of Columbia requesting nearly \$57 billion in funding—far exceeding the initial \$8 billion available. In order to reach the funding decisions detailed below, FRA employed a thorough, merit-based application review process based upon requirements contained in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA).

Applications were first screened to determine whether the applicant and the proposed project were eligible and complied with prerequisites outlined in the Interim HSIPR Program Guidance (Interim Guidance), which were based upon criteria stated in ARRA, PRIIA, and consistent with strategic transportation goals. Eligible applications were then assessed by expert panels at the Department of Transportation in conjunction with the evaluation criteria contained in the Interim Guidance. Following the review, Secretary LaHood made final selections to ensure broad program goals were addressed holistically as reflected in the selection criteria contained in the Interim Guidance and in line with the Department’s strategic transportation goals.

Below is a listing of the final selection decisions for the 11 grant application(s) submitted by the State of Illinois.

## **APPLICATIONS SELECTED**

### **MAJOR CORRIDOR PROGRAM**

The following application(s) has been selected contingent upon achieving milestone targets. Given the scope and complexity of this project(s), FRA will be working with you to draft an agreement that will describe project milestones and the process for moving from contingent funding to award. The Grant Solutions number(s) and project name(s) of the application(s) are:

- HSR2010000225; Dwight -St.Louis-2004 ROD Improvement; Track 2

### **SMALLER CORRIDOR PROGRAM, PROJECT(S) AND PLANNING**

The following project(s) has been selected for award contingent upon a more detailed review of the application. FRA will be working with you to develop a Statement of Work that describes the project goals and milestones, as well as a final budget for this project(s). The Grant Solutions number(s), project name(s) and track(s) of the application(s) are:

- IPR2010000049; Chicago-St. Louis Double Track NEPA; Track 3
- HSR2011000204; CREATE P1; Track 1a

## **APPLICATIONS NOT SELECTED**

### **FUNDING LIMITATIONS / EVALUATION**

The following application(s) was eligible and ready for consideration, but was not selected during this round due to the intense competition for funding and the results of our merit review process. FRA is available to work with you to further refine and develop this project(s) for potential funding in the future. The Grant Solutions number(s), project name(s) and track(s) of the application(s) are:

- IPR2009000057; Chicago-St Louis 220mph HSR; Track 3
- HSR2010000133; Dwight-St. Louis Siding Improvement; Track 1a
- HSR2010000129; Dwight-Joliet Siding Improvement; Track 1a
- HSR2010000130; Galesburg Congestion Relief Project; Track 1a

### **PROJECT NOT YET READY**

The following application(s) did not meet one or more project prerequisites outlined in the Interim Guidance. While the activities of the proposed project appeared to be eligible under the HSIPR Program, the application materials did not demonstrate that the project was sufficiently developed to receive funding for the proposed activities, and in some cases, did not include all materials necessary to adequately evaluate the project. An FRA representative can provide you with further details. The Grant Solutions number(s), project name(s) and track(s) of the application(s) are:

- HSR2010000239; Chicago-St.Louis Double-Track; Track 2
- HSR2010000222; Chicago-Dubuque Corridor-IPR; Track 2
- HSR2010000139; Wadsworth Illinois Bridges High-Speed Rail; Track 1a
- HSR2010000149; Midwest Regional Rail System Chicago Terminal Limits Preliminary Engineering/NEPA; Track 1b

An FRA representative will contact your staff shortly to schedule a conference call to discuss your application(s) and next steps. Additionally, FRA intends to hold regular calls with all applicants to ensure that we continue to build upon the collaborative relationship developed in 2009. If you have any questions, please visit FRA's High-

Speed Rail website, as grantee information will be continuously updated:  
<http://www.fra.dot.gov>.

These selections are just the first step towards achieving the President's vision for High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail. In December 2009, Congress appropriated an additional \$2.5 billion for the HSIPR Program. FRA will be in contact with you shortly concerning this and other subsequent opportunities for further developing Illinois' High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program.

Again, thank you for your interest in the HSIPR Program. We are excited to embark on this partnership with you as we work together to build a sustainable high-speed rail program in your state and throughout the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph C. Szabo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

Joseph C. Szabo  
Administrator