

City of Madison Passenger Rail Station Identification Study



Rail car passing over the Harrison Street viaduct on the Wingra Park line.

Wisconsin Historical Society, unknwn, Harrison Street Viaduct Image ID 26617. Viewed online at

<https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM26617>

Agenda

1

● **History of Passenger Rail in Madison**

2

● **Recent Studies**

3

● **Current Effort**

History



- First Passenger Rail entered Madison in 1854 – west side of Madison
- Chicago Northwestern constructed line in 1864, crossing Monona Bay
- East Side Depot constructed in 1910



Chicago & Northwestern Passenger Train at Blount Street

Photo – Nick Schroeder - <http://www.thirdlakeridge.org/places/219-s-blair---chicago-northwestern-depot>

Public

CN&W Railroad At Blount St, looking up East Wilson. The building being erected in the background is the State Office Building at One Wilson St. On the extreme left is visible the edge of the McCormick Harvester Building at 301 S. Blount St. Courtesy of N. Schroeder. Date: 1930s

Chicago & Northwestern Passenger prior to 1910



Wisconsin Historical Society, Nadeau, O.E. Chicago and Northwestern Railroad Station, Image ID 138562.
Viewed online at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM138562>

1910 Chicago Northwestern Station – Blair and Wilson



Wisconsin Historical Society, Hone, Harold, Northwestern Railroad Station, Image ID 6890. Viewed online at <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Image/IM6890>

Recent Studies



Passenger Rail Studies



Table 6-2: Listing of Wisconsin-related passenger rail studies

Year	Studies
1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tri-State High Speed Rail Study
1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Amtrak Service Demonstration Project Year Two Report
1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to the Governor Concerning Restoration of Rail Passenger Service to Green Bay and Madison
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translinks 21 (Wisconsin's first statewide 20-year multimodal plan)
1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicago-Milwaukee Rail Corridor Study
1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Phase 1 and 2 Studies
2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tri-State II Study
2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Passenger Rail Service • Chicago-Milwaukee-Green Bay Corridor study and Milwaukee-Green Bay Passenger Rail Alternatives Analysis • Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Phase 3 Study
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eau Claire & Janesville Corridors Feasibility Study and Intercity Rail Modal Diversion Study • Madison-Milwaukee Passenger Rail Corridor Study: Environmental Assessment/Preliminary Engineering Study
2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Phases 4 and 5 Study (updated Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Business Plan) • Wisconsin Rail Issues and Opportunities Report
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Phase 6 Study (Economic Impact Analysis, Preliminary Environmental Impact Statement Scope of Work and Cost Estimate)
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Connections 2030</i> (Wisconsin's current statewide 20-year multimodal plan)
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan</i> (recommends several passenger rail corridors that include Wisconsin (Milwaukee-Minneapolis/St. Paul, Duluth/Superior-Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Eau Claire-Minneapolis/St. Paul)
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midwest Regional Rail Initiative Phase 7 Study (Updated Capital Costs, data gathering for future route alternatives analysis as part of a Passenger Rail Investment Plan, website development, analysis of equipment options, PTC issues, etc.) • Madison-Milwaukee Environmental Assessment Re-evaluation and Final Engineering Studies

Previous Rail/Transit Studies

1980-81 Dane County Technology Corridor Study (DCRPC)

1985-86 Dane County Transit Priority Corridor Study (DCRPC)

1990-92 Light Rail Transit Corridor Study (C. Madison)

1996 Study to Evaluate Commuter Rail Implementation (Dane Co.)

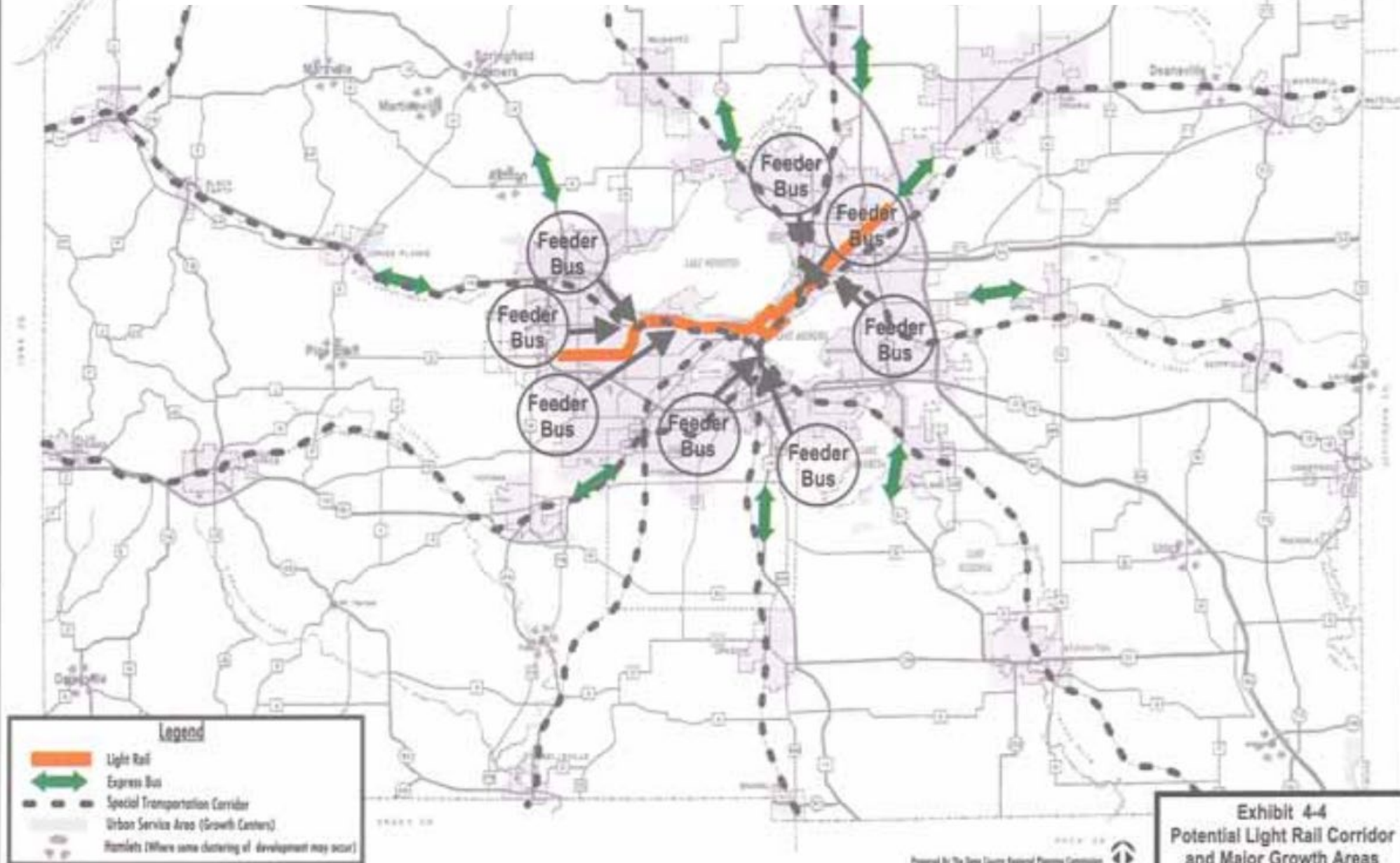
1998 Dane County Commuter Rail Feasibility Study (Dane Co.)

1999-2003 Transport 2020 Commuter Rail Alternatives Analysis
(City/County/WisDOT)

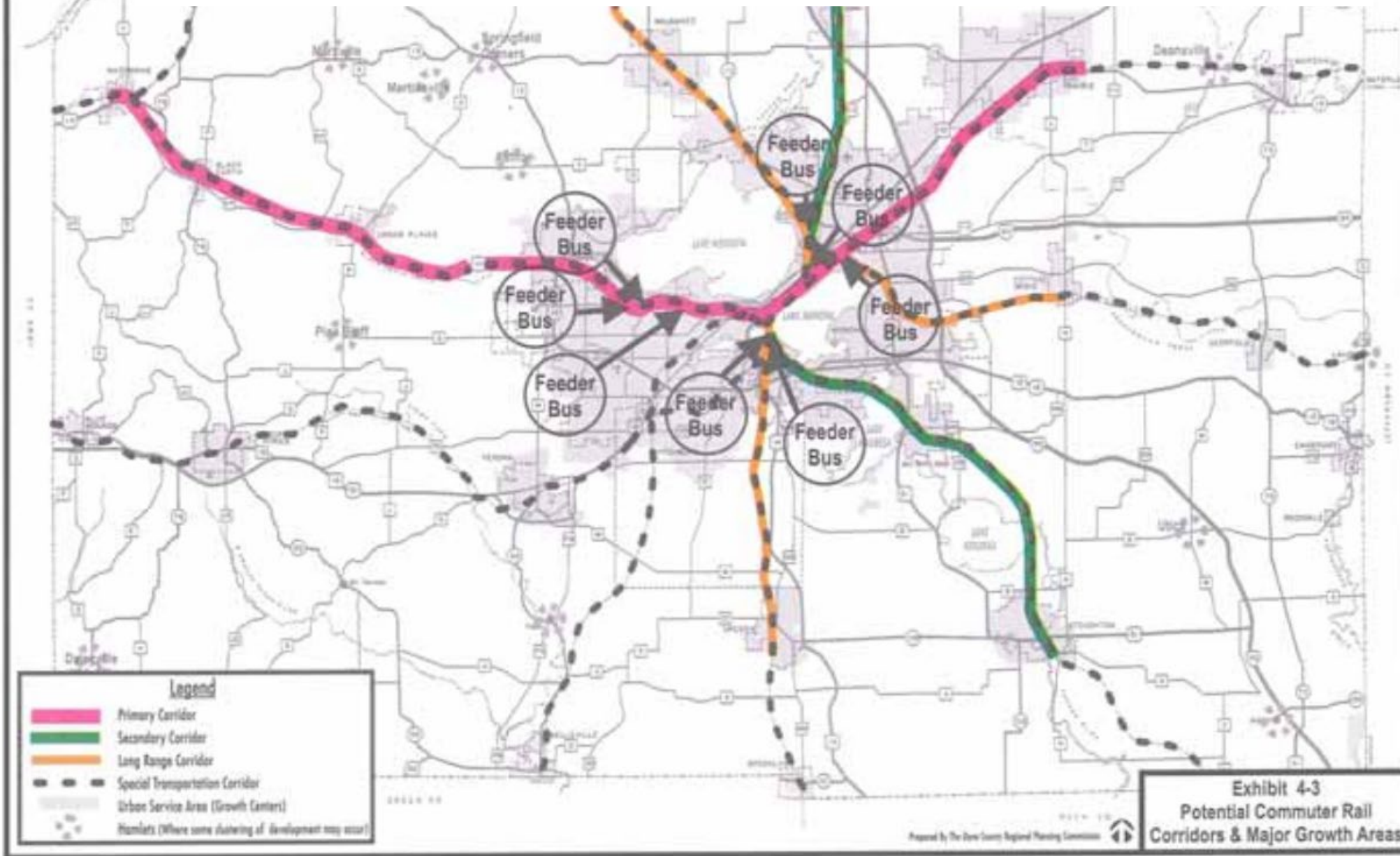
2005-2008 Transport 2020 Commuter Rail Preliminary Engineering/EIS
(City/County/WisDOT)

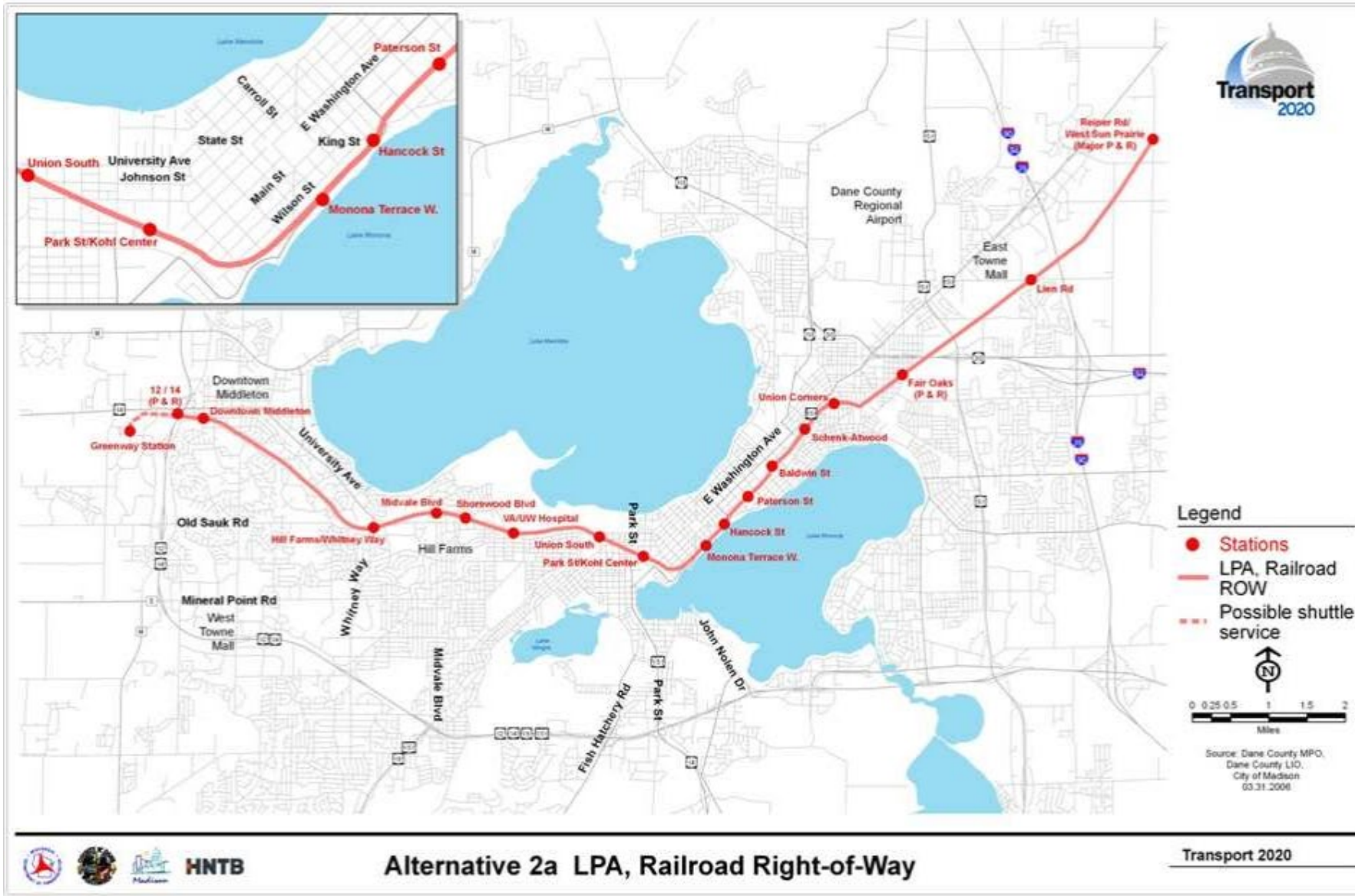
Connected to Midwest Rail Initiative – Madison Milwaukee Passenger Rail

Potential Light Rail Corridor – 1997 – Dane County



Potential Commuter Rail Corridor – 1997 – Dane County

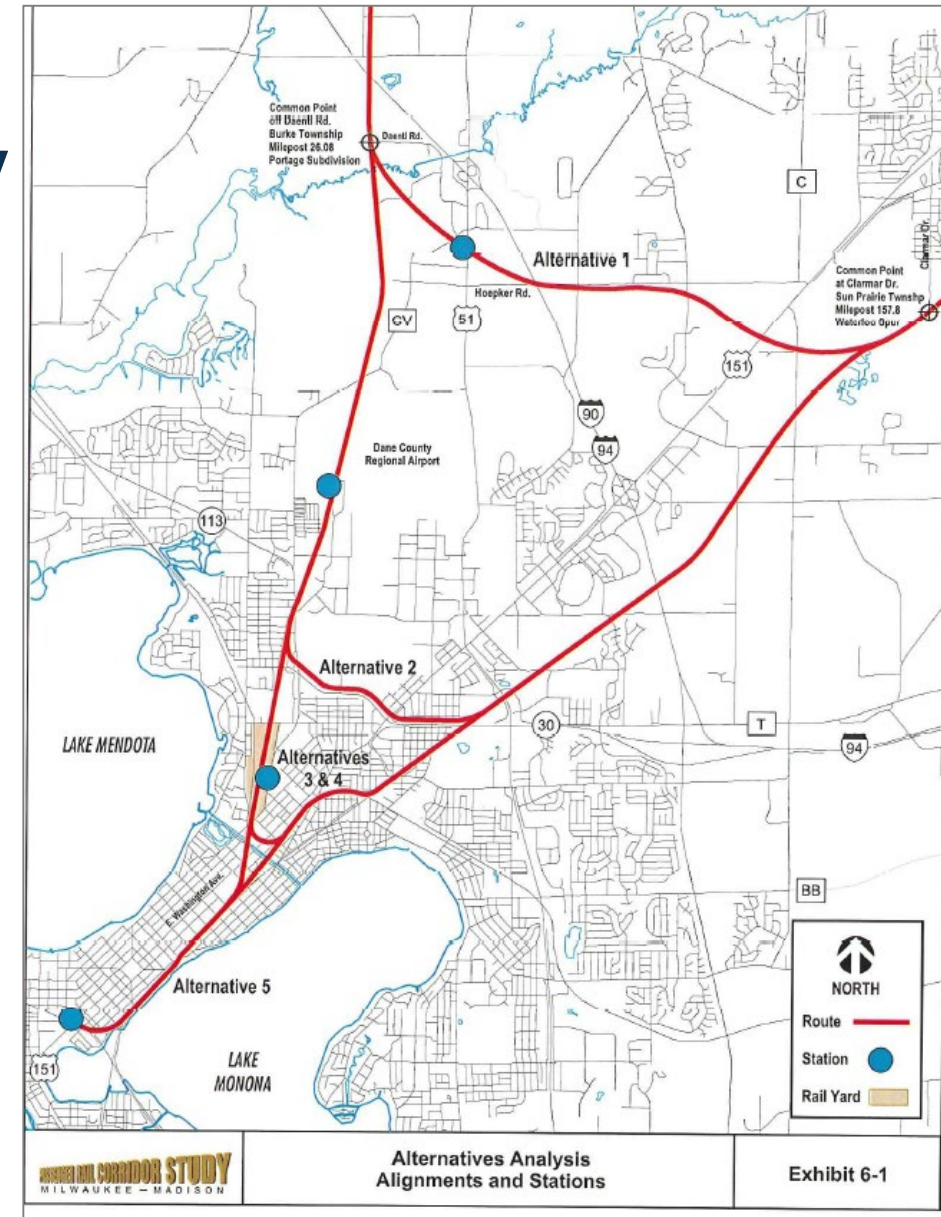




Alternative 2a LPA, Railroad Right-of-Way

Transport 2020

2010 Milwaukee-Madison Passenger Rail Corridor Study



Current Efforts



Bi-partisan Infrastructure Law

1. “Intercity passenger rail will get more money than ever before:

The IIJA delivers big for passenger rail, providing \$66 billion to Amtrak to improve and expand service. This is the largest investment ever for the nation’s intercity passenger railroad, which previously had an annual budget of \$2 billion.

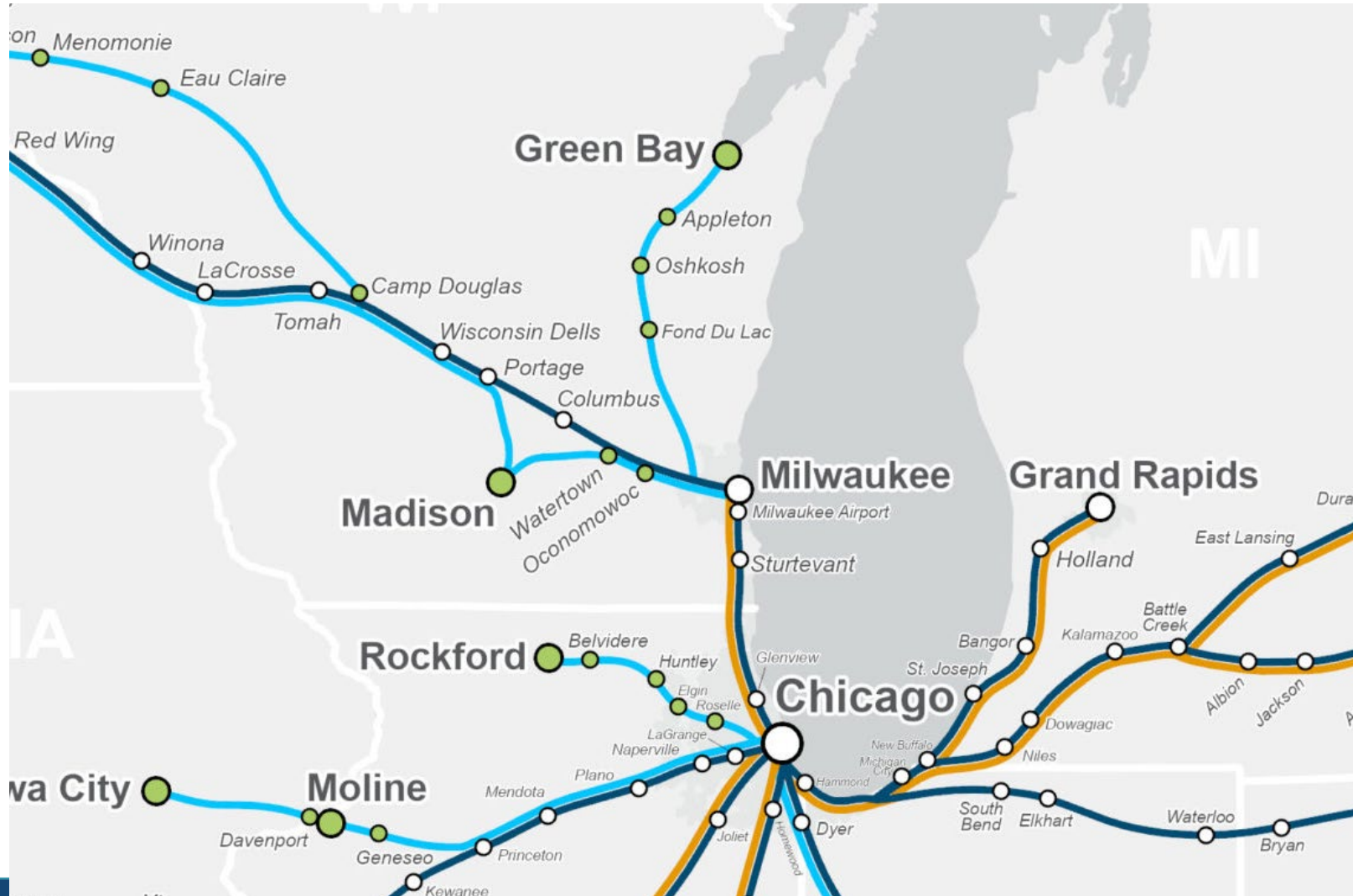
<https://www.railwayage.com/regulatory/gorail-what-iija-means-for-railroads/>

Staff analysis:

The infrastructure act would task the US Federal Rail Administration (FRA) with administering grant funding, with specific allocations dedicated to a number of programs:

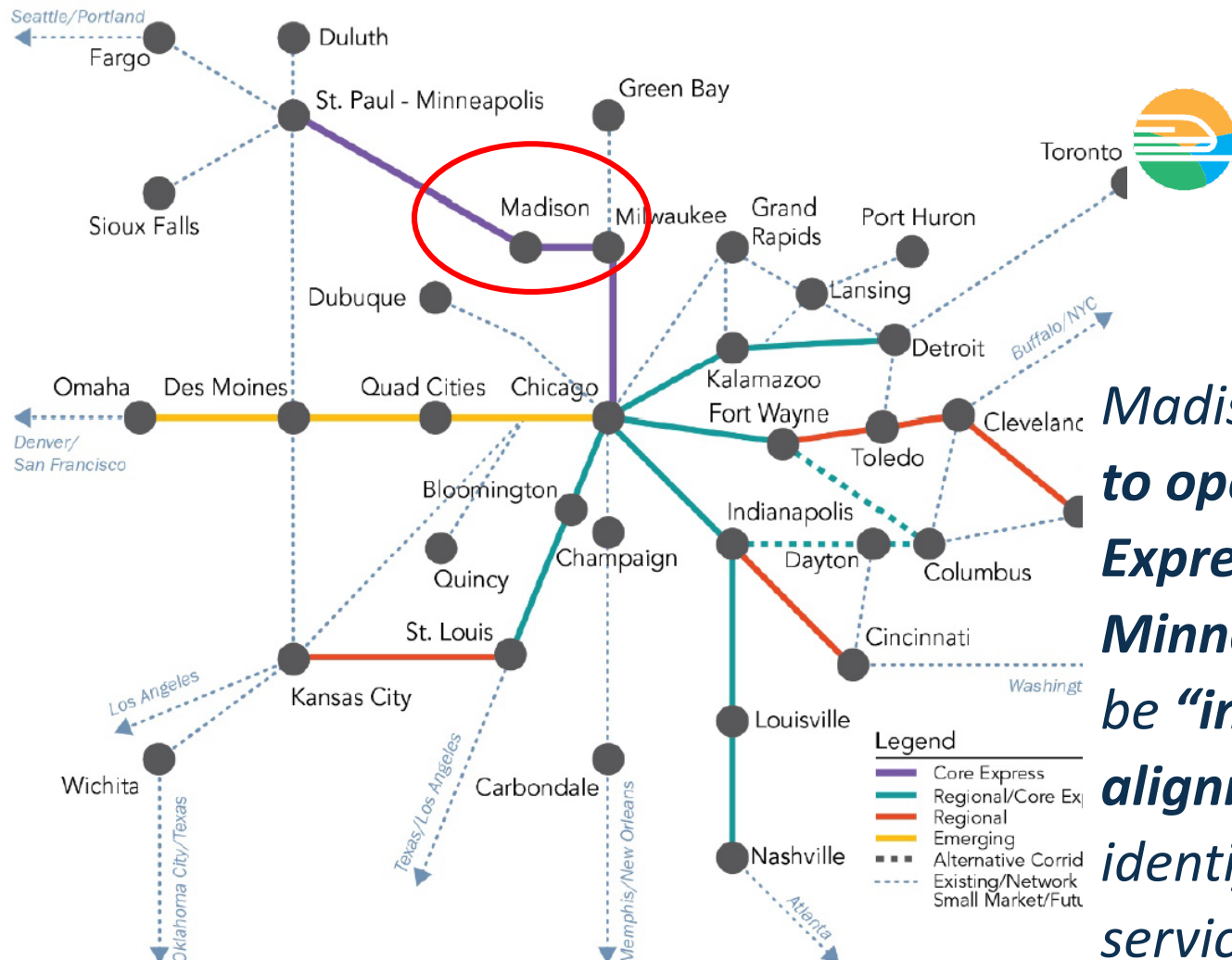
- 1. \$30 billion for grants to Northeast Corridor rail projects (\$6 billion to Amtrak, \$24 billion to Federal-State Partnership Grants)*
- 2. \$12 billion for State of Good Repair grants for other corridors*
- 3. \$16 billion for direct grants to Amtrak for the National Network*
- 4. \$12 billion for Federal-State Partnership Grants for the National Network**
- 5. \$8 billion for rail infrastructure, safety improvements, and railroad crossing elimination*
- 6. \$50 million for rail restoration and enhancement*

Amtrak's *Connects US*



Amtrak's Connects US recommends extending four daily Hiawatha trips to Madison, with three extending on to St. Paul/Minneapolis.

Figure 1. FRA Midwest Regional Rail Plan Network



Midwest Regional Rail Plan

Final Report
October 2021

Madison was a significant market “critical to operational viability of the Core Express corridor between Chicago and Minneapolis-St. Paul” and that it should be “included on any mainline route alignment.” Further, Madison was identified as part of the “Core Express service” – the backbone of the network with highest ridership potential.

Focus – Amtrak Connects US

Extension of the highly successful Hiawatha Service to Chicago

Amtrak is proposing to implement conventional service in the near-term that would create or expand initial markers for intercity passenger rail service and then feed complementary [High Speed Rail] services once built.



Madison's Current Efforts

- Formed coalition to support entering Corridor ID program
- Discussions with congressional delegation
- Issued RFP for and selected firm for Passenger Rail & Feasibility Study
 - Project Kick-Off Meeting in December 2022
 - Work to conclude by May 2023
- Coordination with Amtrak, WisDOT

Corridor ID

- Madison, Watertown, and Pewaukee issued joint letter requesting entrance into Corridor ID program in June 2022
- Program would provide funding and federal support for project planning and development, leading to eligibility for implementation funding
- Corridor ID NOFO anticipated in December 2022



June 21, 2022

Peter Schwartz
Chief Project Engineering and Planning Division
Federal Rail Administration

Re: Docket No. FRA-2022-0031
Corridor Identification and Development Program
Hiawatha Extension, Milwaukee to Madison

The City of Madison, in partnership with the Cities of Watertown and Pewaukee, as eligible entities are expressing our interest in incorporating the Hiawatha Extension from Milwaukee to Madison in FRA's Corridor Identification and Development Program. This extension builds on Amtrak's highly successful Hiawatha Line from Chicago to Milwaukee. It is incorporated in state and regional passenger rail plans, and previous NEPA and current location studies provide a higher level of readiness.

The extension of passenger rail service from Milwaukee to Madison is recommended in several regional plans:

- FRA's Midwest Regional Plan (October 2021) recommends extension of passenger rail from Milwaukee to Madison, with significant markets critical to the operational viability of the Core Express Corridor between Chicago and Minneapolis.
- Amtrak's Connects US (June 2021) recommends the extension of the Hiawatha passenger rail from Milwaukee to Madison, with a subsequent extension onto Minneapolis.
- WisDOT's Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 (March 2014) recommends extending passenger rail from Milwaukee to Madison. It is likely this recommendation will be carried forward in the 2050 Rail Plan currently being prepared.

The passenger rail corridor from Milwaukee to Madison has been well studied. An environmental assessment for high speed rail (Project ID 0385-10-11) using this corridor along with design drawings was prepared in 2011, providing a good baseline understanding of infrastructure needs. Additionally, the City of Madison is performing a passenger rail station location study providing key information needed for pre-NEPA activities.

All three communities along this corridor that would be served by the Hiawatha Extension strongly advocate for incorporating the project in the Corridor Identification and Development program. We strongly believe that this corridor satisfies the Selection Criteria outlined in the Federal Register Notice. We are also jointly excited to the benefits that passenger rail will bring our communities and the residents of Dane, Jefferson, Dodge, and Waukesha Counties.

Project Kickoff

- Selected HNTB to lead passenger rail study
- Currently working to review previous plans, begin coordination efforts with including Amtrak, and prepare for engagement meetings
- Kick-Off Meetings:
 - In-Person – Dec 7th, 4:30pm in MMB 215
 - Virtual – Dec 7th, 6:30pm on Zoom



**City of Madison
Passenger Rail Station Identification Study**

