

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

**CORRIDOR IDENTIFICATION
AND DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM GRANT UPDATES**

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), provided record levels of funding to support the development and expansion of passenger rail service across the country. One of the programs established by the legislation is the Corridor Identification and Development Program (Corridor ID or CID) administered by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The purpose of the program is to identify a “comprehensive intercity passenger rail planning and development program that will help guide intercity passenger rail development throughout the country and create a pipeline of intercity passenger rail projects ready for implementation.”

The FRA has established a three-step process for the program. The first step is for the project sponsor to develop a scope of work, schedule and cost estimate for the preparation of a service development plan (SDP). The SDP is a long-standing FRA planning document that encompasses many different activities including Purpose & Need, Alternatives Analysis, project planning, implementation planning, environmental planning, coordination with host railroads and robust public engagement. The FRA awards up to \$500,000 to each CID project to support the Step 1 scoping process. Step 2 of the CID process is the preparation of the SDP. Upon completion of the SDP, projects are eligible to move forward in Step 3 project development, which encompasses preliminary engineering and environmental clearance.

CID funding is organized into four categories of projects:

1. **New High-Speed Rail:** Services planned to operate at speeds of up to 186 mph or greater, primarily or solely on new, dedicated alignment.
2. **New Conventional Rail:** Services generally planned to operate at speeds of up to 79-125 mph, and primarily on existing rail alignments shared with other railroad operations (freight and/or commuter).
3. **Existing Routes with Extensions:** Existing intercity passenger rail services with planned extensions, operating at speeds of up to 79-125 mph and primarily on existing shared rail alignments.
4. **Existing Routes:** Existing intercity passenger rail services with planned improvements to frequencies, trip times, stations, or other characteristics

In December 2023, the FRA awarded grants to 69 CID program applicants across 44 states and the District of Columbia under the FY 2022 Notice of Solicitation of Corridor Proposals and Funding Opportunity for the Corridor Identification and Development Program (Notice). There were over 100 grant applications received by FRA for the CID program. This is a testament to the popularity of passenger rail projects and the latent demand for passenger rail travel. To date, 66 of the 69 projects have had funds obligated for Step 1 of the CID program. Three corridors have been approved to enter Step 2 and one corridor is approved for Step 3.

The **table** below describes each of the 69 corridors approved and two projects that were not granted funds and provides a status of each grant award and project.



Anchorage North and South Corridor

Alaska Railroad

The proposed Corridor spans 470 miles between Fairbanks and Seward, AK, including Anchorage, Whittier, Wasilla, Talkeetna, Denali National Park, Nenana, and other intermediate points. The project would provide improvements to the existing intercity passenger rail services operated by Alaska Railroad Corporation by adding new frequencies, reducing travel times and improving reliability.

Funding for Step 1 was obligated in May 2024. The Alaska Railroad requested proposals in late August 2024 from consulting firms interested in providing planning and engineering services to prepare a comprehensive intercity passenger rail service development plan under the CID program.

National Railroad Passenger Corporation

Amtrak

Amtrak is thrilled to contribute to the development and expansion of America’s passenger rail network in partnership with states through the Federal Rail Administration’s (FRA) Corridor Identification and Development (CID) Program. This transformative program will determine the future playbook for Amtrak’s growth across the country and we believe we are uniquely equipped to support current and future partners in growing American intercity passenger rail.

Amtrak received grants for four services: daily Cardinal, daily Sunset Limited, Long Island Northeast Regional extension, and Texas High-Speed Rail service. Amtrak is also working with current and potential state partners to support other proposed corridors.

As of December 2024, Amtrak’s Texas High Speed Rail project is the only project to be obligated in all three steps of the CID Program. Amtrak’s Long Island Extension, Daily Cardinal, and Daily Sunset Limited projects have all been obligated in Step 1, and Amtrak’s Network Development team is working with the FRA to get those services obligated in Step 2 soon.

Daily Cardinal Service

The proposed Corridor would provide improvements to the existing Amtrak Cardinal Service between New York City, NY and Chicago, IL via Philadelphia, PA, Baltimore, MD, Washington, DC, and the States of Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois (including Cincinnati, OH and Indianapolis, IN) by increasing service frequency from three days per week to daily. Funds for Step 1 were obligated in July 2024. Amtrak is seeking consultant assistance to complete Step 2 of the program to develop a service development plan. Amtrak is coordinating with INDOT on the Chicago – Indianapolis corridor and KIPDA on the Louisville – Indianapolis Corridor.



Daily *Sunset Limited* Service

The proposed Corridor would provide improvements to the existing Amtrak long-distance *Sunset Limited* between Los Angeles, CA and New Orleans, LA by increasing service frequency from thrice weekly to daily. Intermediate cities served include Houston, San Antonio and El Paso, TX and Tucson, AZ. Funding was obligated for Step 1 in August 2024. Amtrak is seeking consultant support for completing the service development plan to restore daily service to the *Sunset Limited*.

Long Island Extension

The proposed Corridor would better connect Long Island, NY to the national intercity passenger train network by extending three existing daily Amtrak Northeast Regional roundtrips between Washington, DC and New York, NY east to Ronkonkoma, NY, with stops at Jamaica (Queens, NY) and Hicksville, NY. The proposed Corridor would entail track, station and infrastructure upgrades to accommodate these trains and better integrate Amtrak service with existing Long Island Railroad commuter service. Step 1 for the Corridor which included development of a scope, schedule, and cost estimate for preparing a service development plan is complete. Amtrak advertised for services to support Step 2 in November 2024 and is evaluating proposals from qualified consulting teams.

Texas High-Speed Rail Corridor (Dallas – Houston)

The proposed Corridor would connect Dallas and Houston, TX with a new, dedicated and grade-separated high speed passenger rail service. The proposed Corridor would provide new service on a new alignment, with station stops in Dallas, Brazos Valley, and Houston. Amtrak contracted with AECOM to assist them in completing Step 1 of the program to develop a scope, schedule, and cost estimate for preparing, completing, or documenting its service development plan. Upon completion of Step 1, Amtrak was permitted to enter Step 2 of the process and AECOM prepared the SDP in compliance with current FRA guidance. This project is now in Step 3 project development with a funding obligation of \$63.9 million as of September 2024.

Phoenix - Tucson Corridor

Arizona Department of Transportation

The proposed Corridor would connect Phoenix to Tucson, AZ with multiple daily frequencies. The proposed Corridor would reinstate service on an existing alignment over which Amtrak discontinued service in 1997, rerouting the long-distance *Sunset Limited* to a more southerly alignment through Maricopa, AZ (the corridor would use the same route as the existing *Sunset Limited*/*Texas Eagle* between Picacho and Tucson). Funding for Step 1 was obligated in May 2024. The Arizona DOT contracted with a consultant team led by WSP and supported by AECOM to assist them in completing Step 1 of the CID program to develop a scope, schedule, and cost estimate for preparing, completing, or documenting its service development plan. Step 1 tasks have been completed and forwarded to FRA for approval to move into Step 2.