

CREATE Program Overview

- Chicago is the busiest rail gateway in the United States, accounting for one-third of the nation's freight rail traffic. Each day, about 1,200 trains pass through the region.
- For almost 150 years, Chicago has been the nation's rail hub and the world's rail capital. As the region has grown, so have traffic jams, commuter delays and rail shipping times due to the convergence of automobiles and trucks with passenger and freight trains.
- Over the next 20 years, demand for freight rail service in Chicago is expected to nearly double. If rail capacity and infrastructure issues are not addressed, studies show the Chicago region will miss out on 17,000 jobs and \$2 billion in annual economic production.
- At the urging of Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, the federal Surface Transportation Board established a task force that led to the drafting of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE).
- CREATE is a first-of-its-kind partnership between the State of Illinois, City of Chicago, Metra and the nation's freight railroads. Six of the seven major railroads operating in North America pass through Chicago, and all six are partners in the CREATE program.
- A project of national significance, CREATE will invest \$1.5 billion over the next six to 10 years in critically needed improvements to increase the efficiency of the region's rail infrastructure and the quality of life of Chicago-area residents.
- CREATE will reduce train delays and congestion throughout the Chicago area by focusing rail traffic on five rail corridors. The projects include:
 - 25 new roadway overpasses or underpasses at locations where auto and pedestrian traffic currently crosses railroad tracks at grade level
 - 6 new rail overpasses or underpasses to separate passenger and freight train tracks
 - Viaduct improvements
 - Grade crossing safety enhancements
 - Extensive upgrades of tracks, switches and signal systems
- There are more than 38,000 rail-related jobs in the Chicago region, representing more than \$1.7 billion in annual wages. The rail industry generates \$22 billion in annual economic value to the region's manufacturers and businesses.

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