



CREATE PARTNERS ANNOUNCE \$12.9 MILLION CRISI GRANT FOR PULLMAN JUNCTION

March 24, 2020 – Chicago -- The CREATE partners received a \$12.9 million federal grant for the Pullman Junction project in the south Chicago communities of Burnside and Cottage Grove Heights. This investment from the Federal Railroad Administration will improve rail safety and fluidity, and reduce congestion throughout the Chicago Terminal by constructing a second main track, improving existing rail track geometry, increasing operating speeds and upgrading signals and switches in the vicinity of Pullman Junction. A quarter of all US freight rail shipments move to, from, and through Chicago each year. These improvements will increase efficiency by removing bottlenecks and replacing outdated infrastructure that slows train movements and limits capacity.

“The Pullman Junction project has national impacts by addressing a major chokepoint and improving supply chain fluidity for goods moving through Chicago to markets across North America,” said Ian Jefferies, President and CEO of the Association of American Railroads. “This CRISI grant will pay dividends beyond Chicagoland to customers and families across the country who depend on the diverse products moved by rail.”

The CRISI grant application for CREATE's Pullman Junction project was submitted by the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways (DOTH) on behalf of the CREATE partners, including the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) and Association of American Railroads (AAR). AAR represents ten of the freight, passenger, and commuter railroads serving the Chicago region. These railroads include freight carriers BNSF Railway, CN Railway, Canadian Pacific, CSX, Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific, Belt Railway of Chicago, and Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad, as well as Amtrak and Metra.

This \$12.9 million federal award leverages \$6.5 million from IDOT and \$6.5 million from AAR to complete construction of the Pullman Junction project.

“We are proud to collaborate with our partners to help secure this important grant and deliver yet another major piece of the CREATE Program,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “These investments will pay dividends for efficient transportation far into the future, while improving safety and quality of life throughout the state and the region.”

"As the project sponsor and lead applicant, the County is proud to announce the CRISI grant award for the Pullman Junction project," Toni Preckwinkle, Cook County Board President said. "This grant enables the implementation of more efficient train operations, which will reduce train idling and emissions, improving public health and air quality. Due to this project, the communities of Pullman, Burnside and Cottage Grove Heights will breathe easier."

Construction of the Pullman Junction project will lead to \$172.8 million in benefits. This includes approximately \$50 million in benefits related to increased safety, \$60 million in reduced fuel usage and emissions for trucks, \$3 million in reduced delay on the rail network, and \$60 million from improved state of good repair for our nation's infrastructure.

"Investments in our railroad infrastructure create jobs and build on Chicago's status as a transportation hub for the nation," said Gia Biagi, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Transportation. "This project will allow goods to flow more efficiently via rail, help reduce congestion and truck traffic on local roadways, and, importantly, improve air quality for Chicagoans, especially residents of Burnside, Cottage Grove Heights, and nearby communities."

The Pullman Junction project is a critical rail project on Chicago's East-West Corridor. The project is aligned with ongoing planning and construction activities elsewhere in the Chicago Terminal, including the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP), which received \$132 million from the United States Department of Transportation's 2018 Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program. An average of nearly 100 trains travel the Chicago East-West Corridor daily. Furthermore, delays at these locations spread throughout the Chicago Terminal. By undertaking the Pullman Junction project and 75th St. CIP simultaneously, benefits from both projects are being maximized.

"The efficiencies resulting from this project support the movement of consumer goods to communities throughout the nation – growing our economy – as well as directly benefiting the neighboring communities with cleaner air, reduced delay at train crossings, improved economic development potential and a more fluid rail system," said John Friedmann, Vice President for Network Planning and Optimization at Norfolk Southern.

"This important investment will not only improve rail speed and reliability in Cook County, it will help keep passengers and drivers safe," said Senator Richard Durbin. "Senator Duckworth and I are proud to support this improvement project, and will continue advocating for strong investments in Illinois' transportation infrastructure."

"The congestion and delays caused by so many freight trains using the Pullman Junction each day aren't just incredibly aggravating for Illinoisans, they can cause ripple effects that slow down freight traffic—and economic growth—far

beyond the Chicagoland area,” said Senator Tammy Duckworth. “This critical funding will help relieve this bottleneck and help improve reliability and boost our economic development. Moving forward, I’ll keep working with Senator Durbin and other members of the Illinois congressional delegation to promote infrastructure improvements across Chicagoland and the state of Illinois in order to bring back as much federal investment as possible.”

To learn more about the CREATE Program's benefits and projects go to www.createprogram.org.

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The CREATE Program is a first-of-its-kind public-private partnership to improve the rail and roadway transportation network within the Chicago region through the completion of 70 interrelated infrastructure projects. The \$4.6 billion CREATE Program is a partnership that includes U.S. Department of Transportation, State of Illinois, Cook County, City of Chicago, Metra, Amtrak and the nation's freight railroads. To date, 30 CREATE projects have been completed, with four more projects under construction and 17 in various stages of design.