

75th Street Corridor Improvement Project

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP) is a set of interconnected projects that will reduce congestion in a rail corridor on Chicago's South Side currently used by 30 Metra SouthWest Service (SWS) trains, 90 freight trains and two Amtrak trains each weekday.

Work began on the first \$474 million in projects in 2019, including the construction of the Argo Connection (new double track connection and crossovers between the Belt Railway of Chicago and lines owned by the Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad and CSX), the design and construction of a grade separation at 71st Street; the design and construction of a flyover bridge at Forest Hill; the design of a commuter/freight flyover connecting the SouthWest Service Line to the Rock Island Line (so SWS trains can use LaSalle Street Station) and the design for a realignment for freight tracks at Belt Junction, as well as the addition of a commuter track.

The 75th Street CIP is the largest project in the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program, 70 projects designed to improve the efficiency of passenger and freight rail operations throughout the region.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- **Congestion relief at Chicago Union Station (CUS):** During peak periods and service disruptions, rail traffic at CUS can become gridlocked. Moving 30 weekday SWS trains to LaSalle Street Station will release slots for additional Metra and Amtrak trains on the south side of CUS.
- **SWS expansion opportunities:** Improving infrastructure in the corridor and moving the SWS out of CUS will allow Metra to increase the number of trains serving this fast-growing line.
- **Improved service reliability:** Adding a second Metra track along Columbus Avenue and eliminating at-grade train conflicts is projected to reduce SWS delays by more than 50 percent. Passenger travel times through the corridor will be reduced by 18 percent.

PROJECT FUNDING

Funding for the first \$474 million includes \$132 million from the federal government, \$116 million from freight railroads, \$111 million from the state of Illinois, \$78 million from Cook County, \$23 million from Metra, \$9 million from the city of Chicago and \$5 million from Amtrak.

