

CHAPTER 4 COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the efforts and events conducted for agency coordination, public meetings, tribal coordination, and public involvement during the development of this Tier 1 EA. Coordination and consultation with agencies, stakeholder groups, and the public was initiated early in the study to incorporate their comments and concerns into the development and analysis of the project purpose and need, alternatives, and potential resultant environmental impacts.

4.2 PUBLIC AND AGENCY OUTREACH

Representatives from Iowa DOT, Illinois DOT, and the community coordinated closely on the Project. The public meetings held to date (Table 4-1) helped to gain public support for the Project. Since Project initiation the public and communities along the proposed routes have shown overwhelming support for the Project, as reflected in Table 4-2, Written Coordination. The communities along the route have encouraged support of the Project from their residents. The Project would increase jobs and provide an alternative transportation route within the communities and has been strongly supported by local officials.

Public coordination included stakeholder meetings, briefings, and conference presentations. Table 4-1 lists the public coordination that occurred for the Project. A public information meeting to obtain public comments on this Tier 1 EA will be held September 29, 2009, at Moline Centre Station from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Comments and materials from this meeting will be added to this section after the meeting, and the comments will be considered for inclusion in the FRA decision document.

Table 4-1
Public Meetings

Date(s)	Coordination	Type of Coordination
August 25, 2009 May 26, 2009 March 24, 2009 January 27, 2009	Urban Transportation Policy Committee Meeting	Public Meeting
June 15, 2009 June 13, 2009	Region 9 Transportation Policy Commission Meeting	Public Meeting
June 18, 2009 April 16, 2009 February 19, 2009	Iowa Quad City Joint Chamber Transportation Committee	General update at meeting
April 18, 2009	Illinois Transportation Planning Conference	Presentation

Date(s)	Coordination	Type of Coordination
March 25, 2009	Bi-State Regional Commission	Public Meeting
July 29, 2009	Governors' Midwest Rail Plan ^a	Eight Midwest Governors and Chicago Mayor signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Chicago Hub High Speed Rail Corridor
July 26, 2009	Governor Culver's Iowa Unlimited Train ^a	Meeting at future Quad City station
March 27, 2009	Congressmen Hare and Braley meet with passenger rail supporters ^a	Meeting
November 21, 2008	Quad City Coalition met with legislatures at Wyandot Connection ^a	Site Visit
May 19, 2008	Quad City Rail 1 st Anniversary ^a	Meeting
October 2007	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission	Presentation outlined passenger rail service efforts; community updates were given, and the Amtrak corridor studies were described. The Quad Cities described their efforts for passenger rail – they were working with the Illinois DOT. Dubuque, Iowa City and Des Moines also described their passenger rail efforts.
June 2008	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission	Presentation outlined the importance of passenger rail and DOT initiatives. The funding for passenger rail projects and pertinent legislation was also described.
August 2008	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission	Sue Czeshinski from the Dubuque Convention and Visitors Bureau described the proposed rail alignment from Chicago to Dubuque, the committees involved in the planning process as well as activities and outcomes involved in their projects and community coalitions and tourism.
May 11, 2009	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission	This presentation provided basically the same information from the presentation given in June of 2008
June 24, 2003	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission, Sioux City	The Sierra Club asked why there isn't a lot more passenger rail in Iowa. ICE responded that while a modest investment in rail infrastructure can have a huge benefit to moving freight, the incremental investments required for passenger service are substantial.
July 8, 2003	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission, Creston, IA	Dr. Forkenbrock discussed passenger rail in Europe and rising demand in U.S.
July 23, 2003	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission, Council Bluffs, IA	Dr. Forkenbrock discussed need for shorter haul passenger service and passengers and freight sharing rails.
July 30, 2003	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission, Spencer, IA	Discussion of need for society to invest in passenger rail, and that it may be feasible only in large population areas.
September 9, 2003	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission, Davenport, IA	Some of the focus from the earlier meetings has been on the high speed rail between Chicago and Des Moines. There is a lot to be said about passenger rail.
September 30,	Iowa Transportation	Discussion of why inter-modalism (i.e. using intercity

Date(s)	Coordination	Type of Coordination
2003	Commission and DOT Commission, Mount Pleasant, IA	busses in combination with passenger rail) should be a key focus in transportation today.
October 7, 2003	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission, Cedar Rapids, IA	Discussion of the need for interstate cooperation to make passenger rail viable.
October 21, 2003	Iowa Transportation Commission and DOT Commission, Mount Pleasant, IA	California, which was always held up as the biggest proponent of automobiles, has now become the largest producer of public passenger rail in the country. Los Angeles has become a leader in public rail transit simply because you can't get anywhere with a private automobile.
February 2000	Iowa DOT	Iowa's Rail System Plan
2004	Iowa DOT	Held Public Outreach meetings for the modal system plans. Established Iowa DOT Office of Rail Transportation webpage. www.iowarail.com
2004, 2005, 2006	Iowa DOT	Iowa State Fair information booths
2007	Iowa DOT	Meetings with regional and local supporters of Amtrak routes to Chicago, on-going since 2007
2007	Iowa DOT	Iowa legislation passed to join the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact (MIPRC)
April 18, 2007	Iowa DOT	Media Event – Release of Amtrak Feasibility Study for Chicago to Iowa City route
2008	Iowa DOT	Formation of the statewide Passenger Rail Advisory Committee
2009	Iowa DOT	Iowa Connections website highlighting passenger rail expansion in Iowa. http://www.iowadot.gov/IowaPassengerRail/index.htm
undated	Iowa DOT	Presentations to Iowa Metropolitan Planning Organization/Regional Planning Affiliations – held quarterly
June 24, July 27, & September 23, 2009	Iowa DOT	Iowa Governor Culver rides train across Iowa promoting passenger rail awareness
April 1, 2009	Iowa Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC)	Meeting with members in Ames, IA
April 30, 2009	Iowa Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC)	Conference call with members
August 14, 2009	Iowa Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC)	Meeting with members in Ames, IA
November 18, 2009	Iowa Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC)	Meeting with members in Ames, IA

Source:

^a Quad Cities Passenger Rail Coalition. 2009. <http://www.quadcitieschamber.com/qcrail/index.htm>.

Table 4-2 lists letters of support for the Project from local government and public entities. No letters of opposition were received. See Appendix F for the full text of the letters.

Table 4-2
Written Coordination

Agency/Department	Date	Regarding
City of Geneseo	September 11, 2009	The City of Geneseo forwarded two potential station locations, a resolution supporting passenger rail service between the Quad Cities and Chicago, and two memoranda discussing the willingness of Feldman/Red Mill to donate railroad frontage properties.
Bi-State Regional Commission	September 9, 2009	The Bi-State Regional Commission supports the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant application to fund passenger rail service from Chicago to Iowa City via the Quad Cities.
Resolution from Bi-State Regional Commission ^a	June 27, 2009	The Bi-State Regional Commission encourages area residents to advocate their support for passenger rail.
Quad City local government leaders	Undated	Letter of support signed by mayors of the cities of Bettendorf, Davenport, East Moline, Moline, Rock Island, and Silva; president of the Village of Milan, and chairs of Scott and Rock Island counties.
Quad City Passenger Rail Coalition	Undated	Over 1,100 area individuals have joined the Quad Cities Passenger Rail Coalition since May 2007. Lists of group/organizations and elected officials.
Resolution from City of Davenport, Iowa ^a	2007	The City of Davenport supports the implementation of passenger rail service between Quad Cities and Chicago.
Resolution from DavenportOne, Chamber of Commerce	2007	DavenportOne encourages its members and area residents to advocate their support for passenger rail.
Johnson County Council of Governments ^a	December 7, 2007	JCCOG is supportive of passenger rail efforts.
Quad City Chamber of Commerce ^a	August 3, 2007	The Quad City Chamber of Commerce encourages its members and area residents to advocate their support for passenger rail.
Resolution from Quad City Convention and Visitors Bureau	Undated	The Quad City Convention and Visitors Bureau hereby supports the implementation of passenger rail service between the Quad Cities and Chicago.
Resolution of the Quad Cities Development Group	August 3, 2007	The Development Group encourages area residents to advocate their support for passenger rail.
Scott County Board of Supervisors ^a	July 26, 2007	Support the implementation of passenger rail service between Quad Cities and Chicago
Muscatine County Board of Supervisors ^a	July 16, 2007	The County Board encourages area residents to advocate their support for passenger rail.
Midwest Business Coalition for	June 22, 2007	Greater Des Moines Partnership shall

Agency/Department	Date	Regarding
Passenger Rail and Greater Des Moines Partnership ^a		become a member of the Midwest Business Coalition for Passenger Rail.
Resolution from the Quad Cities Audubon Society	June 6, 2007	Passenger rail transportation between the Quad Cities and Chicago would reduce the amount of automobile traffic and consequently reduce carbon dioxide emissions which contribute to global warming.
Resolution from Bettendorf City Council ^a	June 5, 2007	The Bettendorf City Council encourages area residents to advocate their support for passenger rail by joining the Quad City Passenger Rail Coalition
YPN Creative Council ^a	May 23, 2007	Encourages members and area young professionals to advocate their support for passenger rail.
Bettendorf Chamber of Commerce Resolution	May 20, 2007	Encourages all citizens and interested parties to indicate their support for his effort by joining the QC Rail Coalition.
Midwest High Speed Rail Association ^a	May 11, 2007	The Midwest High Speed Rail Association would like to applaud the creation of the Quad Cities Passenger Rail Coalition.
Iowa DOT ^a	April 3, 2007	On Feb. 20, 2007, the Illinois DOT requested that Amtrak conduct a feasibility study to resume services between Chicago and Quad Cities. The Iowa DOT respectfully requests that the study be extended to include service to Iowa City, Iowa.

Source:

^a Franke, M.W., R.P. Hoffman, and B.E. Hillblom. 2008c. *Feasibility Study on Proposed Amtrak Service from Chicago to Iowa City, Iowa, via Quad Cities (an addendum to December 5, 2007, Feasibility Report on Proposed Amtrak Service, Quad Cities-Chicago).*

Early agency coordination with federal, state, and local government agencies was initiated on August 19, 2009, to commence the NEPA analysis of the Project. An example of the early coordination letter sent to federal state, and local government agencies as well as the written comments received from those agencies can be found in Appendix F, Comments and Coordination. A specialized set of early coordination letters were sent to the Iowa and Illinois SHPO and potentially interested Tribes. SHPO and tribal coordination letters as well as the written comments received from the SHPOs and tribes can be found in Appendix E, Cultural Resources.

The federal and state agencies consulted regarding the Project include:

- Federal Aviation Administration
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Railroad Administration
- Federal Transit Administration
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service

- State Historical Society of Iowa
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Coast Guard
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- State Historical Society of Illinois
- Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- Illinois Commerce Commission

Tribal coordination was also conducted as part of this Tier 1 EA. Early coordination letters were sent from the Federal Railroad Administration to the following tribal parties:

- Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
- Forest County Potawatomi
- Citizen Potawatomi Nation
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
- Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
- Hannahville Indian Community
- Sac and Fox Nation of Oklahoma
- Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri
- Sac and Fox Nation of Mississippi in Iowa
- Ho-Chunk Nation
- Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
- Otoe-Missouria Tribe
- Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska
- Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma

Table 4-3 lists letters received from federal and state agencies.

**Table 4-3
 Agency Coordination**

Date	Coordination	Key Comments
Illinois EPA	September 3, 2009	We have no objections to the project; however, a permit may be required from the Division of Water Pollution control. If more than 1 acre is disturbed during construction, a construction site activity stormwater National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit will also be required from the division. Solid and hazardous waste must be properly disposed of or recycled.
Iowa State Historical Society ^a	September 3, 2009	We look forward to consulting with FRA for this project and determining whether this project will affect any significant historic properties.

Date	Coordination	Key Comments
U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard	September 3, 2009	Route A does not appear to cross any river until it reaches the Mississippi River. However, Route B appears to cross the Illinois Waterway at several locations; please advise this office of the proposed crossings of the Illinois River. Both proposed routes will cross the Mississippi River on the Rock Island Railroad and Highway Drawbridge at mile 482.9. This drawbridge also crosses Lock 15. The EA should include the impact of drawbridge operations. If the other crossings of the Illinois River require drawbridges, they also need to be addressed.
EPA, Midwest Region 5	September 1, 2009	The Tier 1 review should adequately assess the goals it intends to achieve (selecting the preferred alternative, identifying station stops, and identifying logical next steps) and should compare the environmental impacts of each alternative.
Illinois Commerce Commission Transportation Division/Rail Safety Section	August 28, 2009	We recommend 1) along the IAIS corridor, a review of all highway-rail grade crossings for potential safety improvements, including the elimination of redundant crossings; 2) along the BNSF corridor, a diagnostic review at all crossings equipped only with crossbuck warning and yield signs; and 3) a review of existing pedestrian-rail and private highway-rail grade crossings for possible safety improvements.
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS-Iowa)	August 28, 2009	Please take into account any erosion which may occur in any work done within or outside the existing rail.
NRCS-Illinois	August 26, 2009	I would expect this project to have no significant impacts on prime agricultural lands in Illinois.
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	August 25, 2009	You will need to know where the public-use and military airports are in the project area in order to judge whether a project requires airspace review.
Illinois State Historical Society ^a	September 1, 2009	Your proposal summary is acceptable to the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency provided that once individual sites are approved they will be submitted for review.

Date	Coordination	Key Comments
USACE – Rock Island District	September 2, 2009	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No further Rock Island District real estate coordination is necessary. 2. Any proposed placement of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. (including jurisdictional wetlands) requires Department of the Army authorization under Section 404 of the CWA. When detailed plans are available, submit an application packet to the Rock Island District. 3. The responsible federal agency should coordinate with the Illinois Historic Preservation Officer and with the State Historical Society of Iowa to determine impacts on historic properties. 4. Contact the USFWS Rock Island field office to determine if there would be impacts on federally listed endangered species and, if so, how to avoid or minimize impacts. 5. Contact the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and the Iowa Emergency Management Division to determine if the proposed project may impact areas designated as floodway in Illinois and Iowa, respectively. 6. If your proposal includes building a train station in downtown Moline, there appear to be many LUST and site remediation program cleanup sites. A Phase I and/or II environmental site assessment may be required.
Iowa Department of Natural Resources	September 17, 2009	We would ask that Best Management Practices be used to control erosion and protect water quality near the project.
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	September 22, 2009	The Purpose and Need for this HSR project is comparable to and consistent with goals of the FRA funding program for a Track 2 program seeking to establish a passenger service corridor that may eventually upgrade to HSR service.

Note:

^a These documents are in Appendix E, Cultural resources.