

Milwaukee Area-Racine-Kenosha Passenger Rail Commission

Meeting #2

March 2, 2026
Racine, Wisconsin



Agenda

Approval of Minutes of the Dec 5, 2025 Meeting

Admission of the City of Cudahy to the MARK Rail Commission

Overview of Ongoing MARK Rail Study

Future Meeting Cadence and Locations

Agenda

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— **Admission of the City of Cudahy to the MARK Rail Commission**

Overview of Ongoing MARK Rail Study

Future Meeting Cadence and Locations

Admission of the City of Cudahy

- The City of Cudahy adopted a resolution on January 20 requesting admission into the MARK Rail Commission.
- Cudahy would become a Regular Member with one representative; Cities of Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha are Founding Members with three representatives for each city.
- The resolution directs the Mayor of Cudahy to execute the MARK Rail Commission Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) upon approval of Cudahy's admission.
- To execute the IGA, Cudahy would return a signed copy of Exhibit B of the IGA to the MARK Commission's Secretary/Treasurer, who would then provide it to all current Members.

Agenda

Approval of Minutes of the Dec 5, 2025 Meeting

Admission of the City of Cudahy to the MARK Rail Commission

— **Overview of Ongoing MARK Rail Study**

Future Meeting Cadence and Locations

The initial Study provides the Commission a strong foundation to shape the next phase of work



- The MARK Rail Study demonstrates that intercity passenger rail along the Corridor is **technically viable** and would meaningfully **improve regional mobility**.
- The work completed for the Study should be used as the **starting point** for activities required under the Corridor ID program.
- The concepts and materials developed to date will be **further refined** as the project team and stakeholders continue to shape the service plan.

The Purpose and Need Statement guides the development of the project

- The Purpose and Need Statement serves as a **foundation for the MARK Rail Study**, guiding the development and evaluation of alternative service designs and infrastructure improvements.
- A Purpose and Need Statement is a **required component** of a Corridor ID Service Development Plan.
- Can be **refined as needed** as the project progresses and **input is gathered from residents and stakeholders**.

Purpose and Need Statement: Primary Purpose and Need

Need

The existing transportation system in Southeastern Wisconsin does not adequately connect Racine, Kenosha, and other lakeshore communities to the larger Chicago-Milwaukee economic region. As a result, the overall economic health of these communities, and the mobility and quality of life of their residents, lags considerably behind many communities in the region.

Purpose

The primary **purpose** of investing in passenger rail service in the MARK Rail corridor is to **better connect Racine, Kenosha, and other lakeshore communities with the larger Chicago-Milwaukee economic region**. This stronger connection would **enhance mobility** and **alleviate traffic congestion**. It would also provide an opportunity for corridor communities to improve their **economic competitiveness** by increasing access to jobs and education, growing jobs, attracting new residents and businesses, spurring development, and lifting property values.

Project goals were also established to focus Study work

- Project goals were **guided** by the Steering Committee and Technical Working Group
- Goals create a **clear framework** for the service planning process and for Study efforts

Project Goals

Enhance regional mobility for a wide range of trip types throughout the day

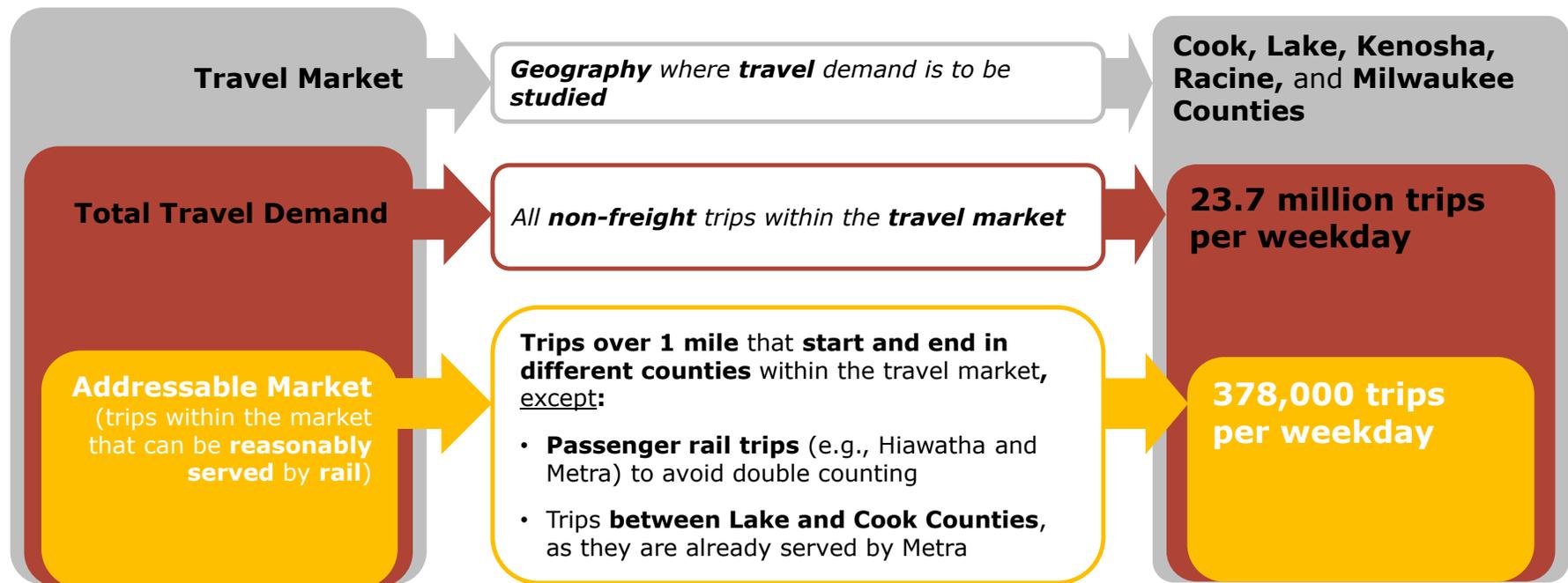
Strengthen economically distressed areas and spur investment in communities along the study corridor

Address traffic congestion and **improve** air quality

A Market Viability Assessment (MVA) measured the travel market and which trips rail could serve

- An early step in the Study was to determine **if there is sufficient demand** along the MARK Rail Corridor.
- Utilizing real world travel data, an MVA helps determine **whether a market exists** for a potential new rail service.
- However, it is important to note that an **MVA does not forecast ridership** as there are myriad factors (e.g., service levels) that determine ridership.

The Market Viability Assessment (MVA) demonstrated that robust travel demand exists in the Corridor

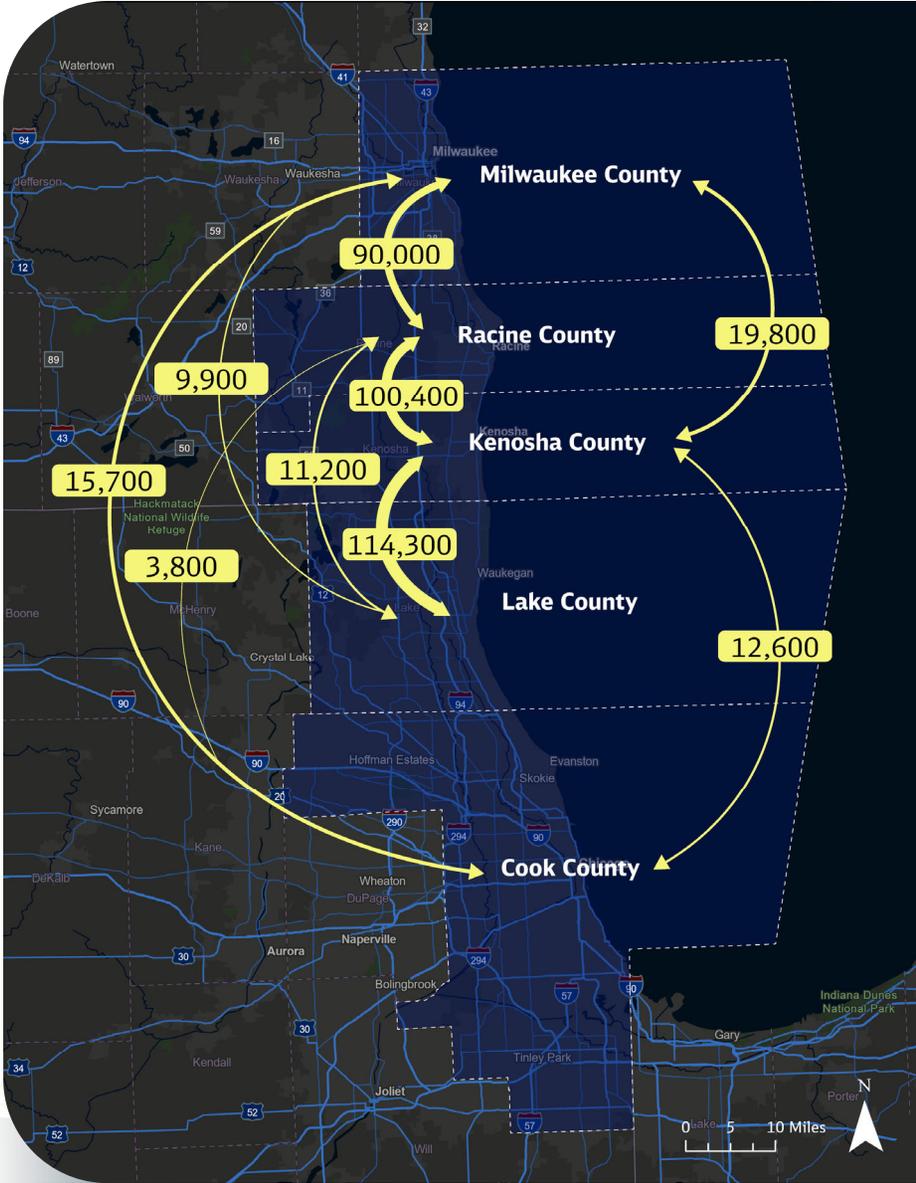


The MVA analyzed where the trips are occurring in the market

Daily Non-Freight Trips Over 1 Mile, Starting and Ending in Different Counties, by OD Pair	
Kenosha ↔ Lake County	114,300
Racine ↔ Kenosha	100,400
Milwaukee ↔ Racine	90,000
Milwaukee ↔ Kenosha	19,800
Milwaukee ↔ Cook County, IL	15,700
Kenosha ↔ Cook County, IL	12,600
Racine ↔ Lake County, IL	11,200
Milwaukee ↔ Lake County, IL	9,900
Racine ↔ Cook County, IL	3,800
Total	377,700

Source: Replica Spring 2024 Weekday

These approximately **378,000 trips** are the addressable market.



In summary, the results of the MVA show:



Rail Service on the MARK Rail corridor is viable

Based on **current travel patterns** along the MARK Rail corridor (in Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, Lake, and Cook Counties), there **is a market for travel that a new rail service could potentially take advantage of.**



Demand for travel along the MARK Rail corridor exists throughout the day

There is a significant volume of addressable trips **throughout the day**, aside from very late at night. This indicates that MARK Rail has **potential to attract customers throughout the day** with regular service.



There is a clear case for rail service on the MARK Rail corridor

If MARK Rail captured **2.27%** of the **378,000 addressable trips** — similar to other rail services in the region — **it would serve around 8,600 daily trips**. This is not a ridership forecast, but simply the number of trips that could be reasonably captured by rail.

An Initial Service Concept was developed to advance planning work

- The MVA showed demand for a rail service, and the Study team, working with the Technical Working Group and Steering Committee, developed several **service concepts**.
- The team created **stringlines** and **preliminary runtimes** using Viriato train planning software to **understand how trains could operate** in the Corridor.
- An **Initial Service Concept was advanced**, which was necessary to support other Study work, including an analysis of infrastructure.
- The Initial Service Concept is **expected to evolve** as additional stakeholders provide input and as the Commission offers guidance.

What factors led to the development of the Initial Service Concept?

Purpose and Need Statement: Primary Purpose and Need

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Purpose and Need Statement

Current Conditions & Previous Studies



Market Viability Assessment



Initial Service Concept

Technical Analysis

Federal Funding Programs

Primary Funding Program Options

There are two main federal funding programs for new rail projects, one through the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and another through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).



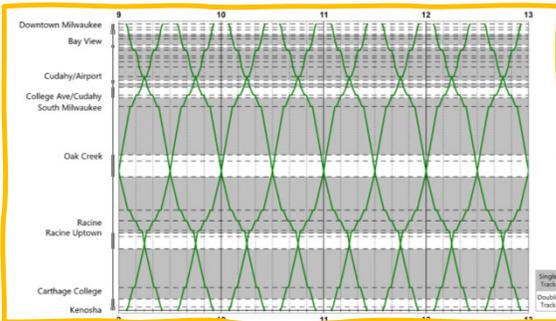
Corridor Identification and Development Program

Planning program for intercity passenger rail projects in the US administered by FRA under the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
5% (\$365M) of Federal-State Partnership program (\$7.2B) made available for FY22 Corridor ID planning and development activities
69 passenger rail corridors accepted into FY22 Corridor ID Program (4 WisDOT Corridor ID projects)



Capital Investment Grant Program (New Starts)

The 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law continues the discretionary Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program, which funds fixed-guideway investments including new/expanded commuter rail
Maximum annual appropriations for CIG is \$4.6B
FTA requested \$3.97B for FY2025 in total appropriations (\$3.21B for New Starts)



The Initial Service Concept envisions an integrated Milwaukee-to-Chicago service



- The Initial Service Concept envisions a **one-seat ride between Milwaukee and Chicago** and **serving four core stations in Wisconsin**: Milwaukee Intermodal Station, Cudahy/Airport, Racine, and Kenosha.
- The concept features 16 Milwaukee–Chicago roundtrips each day.
- The service could begin with a **phased approach** that introduces a largely bihourly schedule then works toward an hourly schedule.
- Travel times were developed using **79-mph track speeds and diesel trainsets**, following a vehicle assessment.
- This concept represents an early vision for what MARK Rail service could look like and has not been endorsed by Metra, Union Pacific, or CPKC; **additional coordination will be needed**.
- No decision has been made yet regarding an **operator** for MARK Rail.

Initial Service Concept: Example of Southbound Draft Timetable (Bihourly)

	Southbound	302	306	310	314	318	322	414	332	338	346	358	368	498
MILWAUKEE INTERMODAL STATION				5:52		6:52		7:52	9:52	11:52	13:52	15:52	17:52	21:52
CUDAHY/AIRPORT				6:05		7:05		8:05	10:05	12:05	14:05	16:05	18:05	22:05
RACINE 4:30	5:52	6:22	6:52	7:22	7:52	8:22	10:22	12:22	14:22	16:22	18:22	22:22		
KENOSHA 4:43	6:05	6:35	7:05	7:35	8:05	8:35	10:35	12:35	14:35	16:35	18:35	22:35		
WINTHROP HARBOR 4:51	6:13	6:43	7:13	7:43	8:13	8:43	10:43	12:43	14:43	16:43	18:43	22:43		
ZION 4:55	6:17	6:47	7:17	7:47	8:17	8:47	10:47	12:47	14:47	16:47	18:47	22:47		
WAUKEGAN 5:05	6:27	6:57	7:27	7:57	8:27	8:57	10:57	12:57	14:57	16:57	18:57	22:57		
NORTH CHICAGO 5:08	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	11:00	13:00	15:00	17:00	19:00			
GREAT LAKES 5:12	6:34	7:04	7:34	8:04	8:34	9:04	11:04	13:04	15:04	17:04	19:04			
LAKE BLUFF 5:16	6:37	7:07	7:37	8:07	8:37	9:07	11:07	13:07	15:07	17:07	19:07			
LAKE FOREST 5:19	6:40	7:10	7:40	8:10	8:40	9:10	11:10	13:10	15:10	17:10	19:10			
FORT SHERIDAN 5:23	6:45	7:15	7:45	8:15	8:45	9:15	11:15	13:15	15:15	17:15	19:15			
HIGHWOOD 5:26	6:47	7:17	7:47	8:17	8:47	9:17	11:17	13:17	15:17	17:17	19:17			
HIGHLAND PARK 5:29	6:50	7:20	7:50	8:20	8:50	9:20	11:20	13:20	15:20	17:20	19:20			
RAVINIA 5:32														
BRAESIDE 5:35														
GLENCOE 5:37	6:55	7:25	7:55	8:25	8:55	9:25	11:25	13:25	15:25	17:25	19:25			
HUBBARD WOODS 5:40														
WINNETKA 5:43	6:59	7:29	7:59	8:29	8:59	9:29	11:29	13:29	15:29	17:29	19:29			
INDIAN HILL 5:45														
KENILWORTH 5:47														
WILMETTE 5:49	7:03	7:33	8:03	8:33	9:03	9:33	11:33	13:33	15:33	17:33	19:33			
CENTRAL ST 5:52														
EVANSTON 5:55	7:08	7:38	8:08	8:38	9:08	9:38	11:38	13:38	15:38	17:38	19:38			
MAIN STREET 5:57														
ROGERS PARK 6:00	7:12	7:42	8:12	8:42	9:12	9:42	11:42	13:42	15:42	17:42	19:42			
PETERSON/RIDGE 6:03	7:15	7:45	8:15	8:45	9:15	9:45	11:45	13:45	15:45	17:45	19:45			
RAVENSWOOD 6:07	7:19	7:49	8:19	8:49	9:19	9:49	11:49	13:49	15:49	17:49	19:49			
CLYBOURN 6:14	7:26	7:56	8:26	8:56	9:26	9:56	11:56	13:56	15:56	17:56	19:56			
DOWNTOWN CHICAGO 6:24	7:36	8:06	8:36	9:06	9:36	10:06	12:06	14:06	16:06	18:06	20:06			



Estimated Trip Times (Minutes)		
Station Pairs	Train	Auto
Milwaukee - Cudahy	13	12-22
Milwaukee - Racine	30	35-55
Milwaukee - Kenosha	43	40-65
Milwaukee - Chicago	134	85-150
Cudahy - Racine	17	30-50
Cudahy - Kenosha	30	40-65
Cudahy - Chicago	121	85-150
Racine - Kenosha	13	18-26
Racine - Chicago	104	80-140
Kenosha - Chicago	91	70-130

Source: Train times calculated using Viriato train planning software. Auto times estimated from Google Maps.



Initial Service Concept: Example of Southbound Draft Timetable (Hourly)

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RACINE	4:30	5:52	6:22	6:52	7:22	7:52	8:22	8:52	9:22	10:22	11:22	12:22	13:22	14:22	15:22	16:22	17:22	18:22	19:22	20:22	21:22	22:22
KENOSHA	4:43	6:05	6:35	7:05	7:35	8:05	8:35	9:35	10:35	11:35	12:35	13:35	14:35	15:35	16:35	17:35	18:35	19:35	20:35	21:35	22:35	22:35
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WAUKEGAN	5:05	6:27	6:57	7:27	7:57	8:27	8:57	9:57	10:57	11:57	12:57	13:57	14:57	15:57	16:57	17:57	18:57	19:57	20:57	21:57	22:57	22:57
NORTH CHICAGO	5:08	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	22:00	22:00
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LAKE BLUFF	5:16	6:37	7:07	7:37	8:07	8:37	9:07	10:07	11:07	12:07	13:07	14:07	15:07	16:07	17:07	18:07	19:07	20:07	21:07	22:07	22:07	22:07
LAKE FOREST	5:19	6:40	7:10	7:40	8:10	8:40	9:10	10:10	11:10	12:10	13:10	14:10	15:10	16:10	17:10	18:10	19:10	20:10	21:10	22:10	22:10	22:10
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Infrastructure improvements to the existing freight line are necessary to operate passenger service

Improvements include:

- Replacing/upgrading rail
- Replacing wooden ties
- Improving grading & drainage
- New track/sidings
- Grade crossing upgrades
- UP to CPKC connection
- Bridge repair and replacement
- New traffic control devices and signals
- Implementing PTC
- Stations and platforms
- Maintenance and storage facilities

Track Upgrades

Track improvements will be needed to support passenger rail services and operation at higher speeds and safety standards.

Improvements include:

- Track and tie replacements to meet FRA Class 4 standards (60 mph freight, 79 mph passenger)
- New ballast beds
- New interlocking/control points



New Track/Siding(s)

A railroad siding is a short stretch of track that is connected to a main railroad line via switches (or turnouts), allowing trains to pass each other or load, unload, or store cars without blocking the main line.



Anticipated construction activities:

- Earthwork
- Grading/clearing
- Track laying (ballast, ties, rails)
- Crossovers/turnouts/switch installation
- Signalization

Currently at least one new additional siding is anticipated for the service plan to facilitate passing trains.

Grade Crossing Upgrades

Grade crossing upgrades will be required to improve safety and visibility, reduce the likelihood of collisions, and limit wear and tear on vehicles.

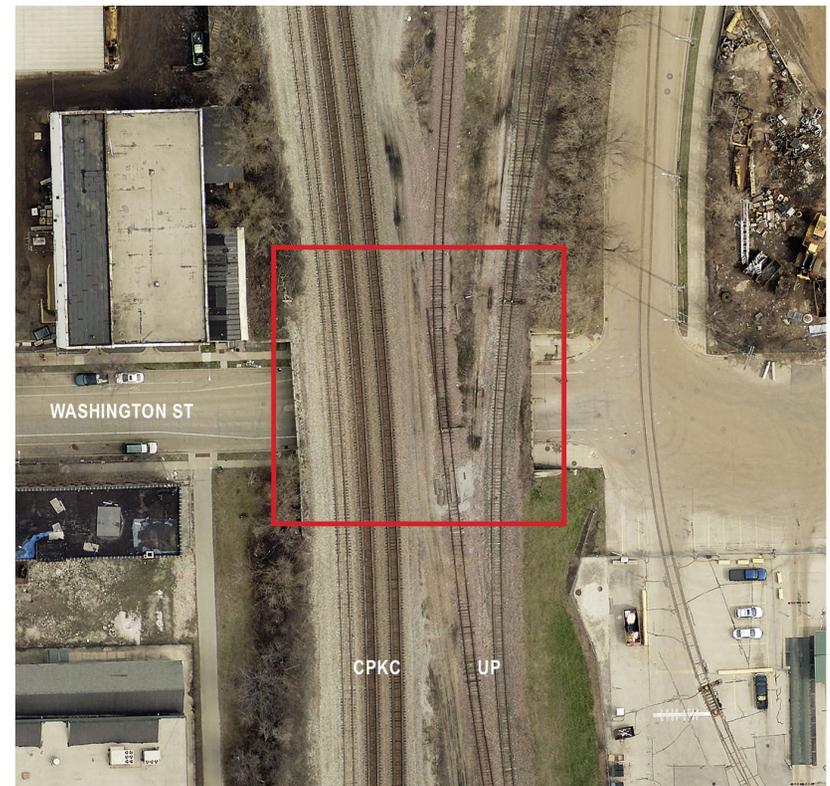
Upgrades include:

- Track panel replacement
- Road surface restoration
- New four-quadrant gates
- Positive Train Control (PTC) overlay



UP to CPKC Connection

The connection from UP to CPKC trackage will need to be restored at Washington Street in Milwaukee to be able to serve the Milwaukee Intermodal Station.



Bridge Repair

22 bridges along the corridor require repairs.

Anticipated repairs range widely:

- Handrail and traffic attenuator installation
- Concrete abutment/wing wall/retaining wall repair
- Spalling repair
- Deck repairs
- Tree removal
- Deck joint waterproofing and drainage system
- Replace timber ballast retainers
- Steel repairs
- Fresh paint



Bridge Replacement

At least 6 bridges will likely need to be replaced. The **Kinnickinnic River Bridge**, a historic swing bridge constructed in 1908, is anticipated to be the greatest undertaking.

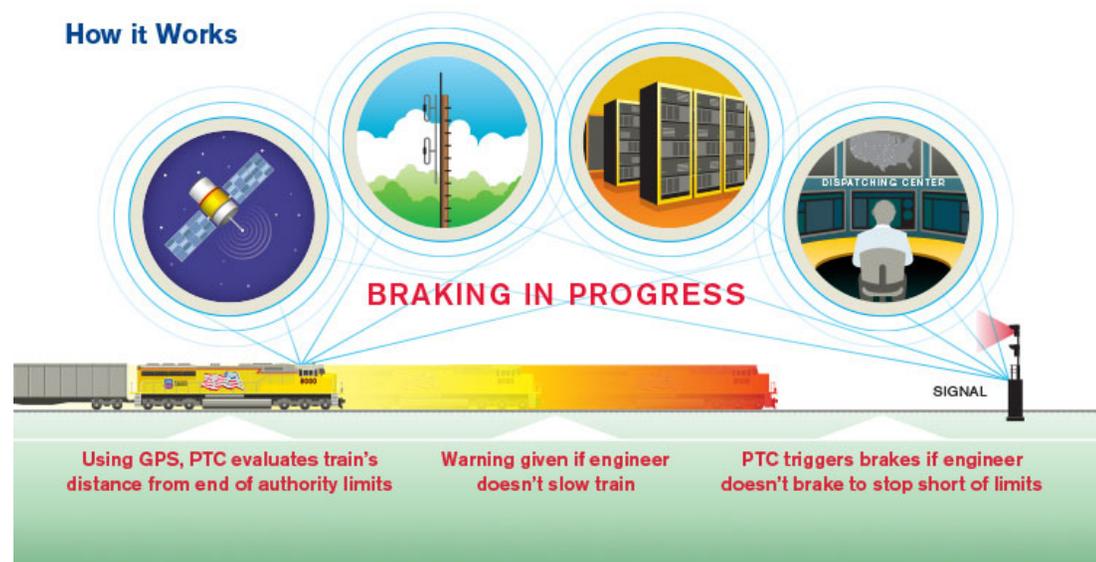
The team completed a focused study of the Kinnickinnic River Bridge, including structural assessment, alternative crossing options, and recommendations for future detailed infrastructure planning.



PTC & Signaling

A Positive Train Control (PTC) overlay will need to be incorporated as a **crucial safety system** to monitor and control train speed if operating speeds are exceeded.

Additionally, the project will need to integrate modern signaling systems, including centralized traffic control and wayside signals, to enhance operational safety and efficiency.



Source: Union Pacific Illustration of PTC from:
https://www.up.com/media/media_kit/ptc/about-ptc/index.htm

Stations and Platforms

The Initial Service Concept includes stations at Kenosha (existing), Racine, Cudahy, and Milwaukee Intermodal Station (existing) with potential additional future stations.

- Stations typically require a platform, canopy, signage, and parking facilities
- Building and additional amenities are typically community driven
- Milwaukee Intermodal Station may require escalator work
- Several site options have been identified for the Racine and Cudahy stations



Maintenance and Storage

- Existing Metra Kenosha facility is not adequate for MARK Rail needs.
- New facility would allow train storage and accommodate service of trains, ranging from light activities to complete rebuilds depending on need.
- Passenger service facilities are more like parking lots, not freight rail yards.
- Facilities can be contracted out (such as to Metra or Talgo) or done with in-house staff.
- A Maintenance Facility report outlines potential yard locations.



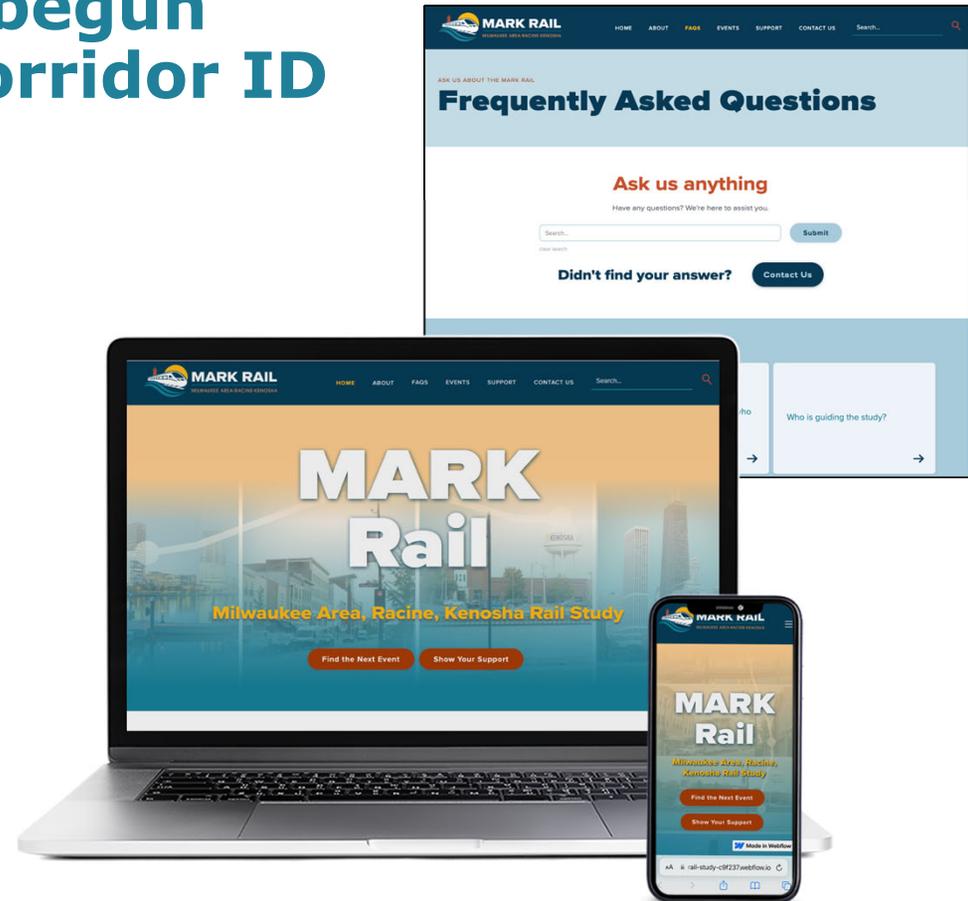
Metra maintenance facility located in Chicago, Illinois

Preliminary Environmental Analysis

- The team has conducted preliminary environmental analysis to consider potential impacts from the project, understand the likely permitting requirements, and make a future class of action request to FRA.
- This work will serve as a basis for future National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation in Step 3 of FRA Corridor ID.
- No significant impacts have been identified, but work on the Kinnickinnic Bridge will require extensive coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Engagement efforts have begun and will be required for Corridor ID

- **MARK Rail website** (www.markrail.org) serves as the project's primary public-facing information source.
- Project team is **responding to inquiries** and **assembling a contact list** of interested individuals.
- MARK Commission should determine **methods and approach for engagement**.
- Corridor ID requires **robust public and stakeholder engagement**.
- Study team drafted **three Corridor ID-required engagement plans**: Public Coordination, Railroad Stakeholder Engagement, and Agency Coordination.



Additional Study tasks are under development that will support future stages of MARK Rail

- **Operating and capital cost estimates** are being developed to reflect the infrastructure needs and service plan shaped through the initial Study.
- **Funding options and strategies** are under development for planning, project development, construction, and operations.
- **Corridor Context & Conditions** report documents why current conditions along the MARK Rail Corridor are ripe for passenger rail and will be presented at a future meeting.
- **Business Case** report is being prepared to describe the benefits of MARK Rail and will include a preliminary cost-benefit analysis based on the Initial Service Concept, with the expectation that it will be updated during the Corridor ID process.
- Project team requests **Commission direction on engaging Metra** so that coordination can advance in parallel with technical and funding work.

Agenda

Approval of Minutes of the Dec 5, 2025 Meeting

Admission of the City of Cudahy to the MARK Rail Commission

Overview of Ongoing MARK Rail Study

— Future Meeting Cadence and Locations

Future meeting cadence and locations

- Propose to establish standing quarterly meetings in 2026.
- Potential schedule: second Monday of June (6/8), September (9/14), and December (12/14) at 10 AM.
- Hold additional meetings as needed for time-sensitive issues (e.g., when Corridor ID NOFO is announced).
- Rotate meeting locations among the participating communities.