

**NRHS**

Publishers of the Minnesota Rail Calendar

Northstar News

Happy New Year!



L: CN holiday train visits
Proctor MN Dec 6 2019
-David Shauer Photo

R: CP commemorates US
Military with a camouflage
painted unit in St Paul Dec
2019 -Eric Carlson



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Meeting Notice

Just a reminder, our meetings will now start at 6:15pm instead of 6:30pm to give more time for the program. Our next business meeting is scheduled for Saturday January 11 2020 6:15pm, at Roseville Lutheran Church at 1215 Roselawn Avenue, midway between Lexington and Hamline Avenues in Roseville. See map on page 2.

There will be a pre-meeting get-together January 11 2019 at the Keys Cafe and Bakery at the northeast corner of Lexington and Larpenteur starting about 4:35 pm. PLEASE CALL Bob Clarkson at 651-636-2323 and leave a message with your name and the number of persons coming with you. For the best service, Keys Café needs to know how many people will be dining, so it is imperative to let Bob Clarkson know if you are attending dinner!

Program after the January meeting — Jack Barbier video of trains in the 1990s, with trains on the BNSF Wayzata, St Paul and St Croix Subs, a Skally line shortline, CN on Steelton Hill, trains in the Duluth area and a #2719 photo charter.

Next newsletter will be out around Feb 2, 2020.

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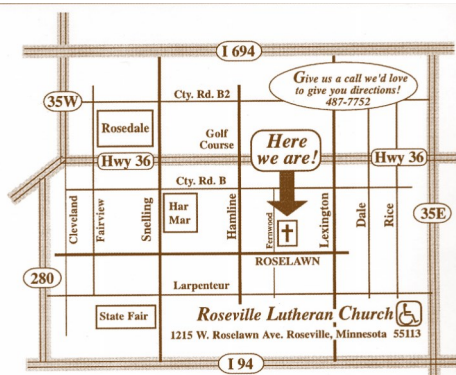
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Meeting Location: From the east or west take MN 36 to Lexington Avenue. Drive south on Lexington Avenue to Roselawn Avenue and turn right. The large lighted parking lot is on your right as you travel west on Roselawn. Use the lower entrance to the church and turn left through the commons area. We'll be in room 40, The Diamond Room.



From the Editor:

Your editor volunteered a couple of days on the North Pole Express with #261. It was such great fun, I will look forward to helping next year.

This year, our annual Holiday Banquet was held at Guldens Restaurant in Maplewood MN. It was well attended and Rob Mangles gave a very interesting program.

Note: **Member dues for 2020 are due.** All members have received an invoice in the November 2019 Newsletter for snail mail recipients. NRHS member dues are unchanged (\$25), but the *subscriber dues* have been raised to \$30, this is mainly due to increased postage in mailing the black & white newsletter. Please remit promptly to the address on your invoice.

2020 NRHS Election Coming Soon December 2019

By JOSEPH C. MALONEY JR, Vice President NRHS & Chair 2020 NRHS Electoral Committee

The National Railway Historical Society, Incorporated (NRHS) is conducting its national elections under the procedures outlined in the NRHS Bylaws as revised and adopted January 13, 2013. Per the revised Bylaws of the NRHS, the NRHS Board of Directors consists of 25 members. Two (2) members hold the office of NRHS President and NRHS Vice President; five (5) members are Global Directors; and the remaining eighteen (18) members are District Directors. There are seven districts for the chapter members, and two districts for the At-Large members. The upcoming 2020 election is the fifth election being conducted under the revised NRHS Bylaws. **Nominations** for candidates will be **open** from **January 1, 2020 through March 31, 2020**. In this election, affected officers and Board members will be elected to four year terms. We have provided you the details about the election process on the NRHS Admin web site <<https://admin.nrhs.com/>>. The qualifications for candidates are contained in the NRHS Bylaws, found on the Admin site at https://admin.nrhs.com/public/general/NRHS_Bylaws_June2015.pdf. This year, for the first time since the current NRHS Bylaws went into effect, we have several NRHS officers and Directors who have reached the "end of the line" because of the Bylaws' term limits. The following NRHS officers and directors may not run for office in this upcoming election:

Joe Maloney – NRHS Vice President

Bob Ernst – Global Director

Walter Zullig – Global Director

Ralph R. Bitzer - District 3 Director

Wesley F. Ross - District 5 Director

Vacant - District 6 Director

Vacant - District A Director

NRHS extends its thanks and sincere appreciation to these members for their time and commitment to the effective operations of the Society. All NRHS members, in good standing, as of April 11, 2020, will elect the Vice-President and two (2) Global Directors. Global Directors represent the entire NRHS membership. Members must be 12 years of age as of June 13, 2020 to be eligible to vote in this election. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: As a member in good standing, you will also elect one (1) district board member based on the district you are assigned. Districts are determined if a member is a chapter member or an At-Large member. Chapter members are assigned to one of seven chapter districts, Districts 1 through District 7, based on the geographical location of your home chapter. For chapter members, this means that you may be assigned to a different district from your residential address because you live in another part of the country compared to your home chapter's location. For At-Large members, your assignment is based on your residential location to either District A or District B. The Electoral Committee is now soliciting members who wish to run for these offices. Any and all NRHS members who meet the qualifications and wish to run should contact Joseph P. Maloney, Jr. at vp@nrhs.com so that they may be placed on the ballot. If you have any questions regarding qualifications for office, please advise Joseph P.

Maloney, Jr. at vp@nrhs.com. Please note that all nominations for any NRHS office must be in the possession of the NRHS no later than March 31, 2020. The Electoral Committee for the 2020 election consists of Valli Hoski, Roberta Ballard, Bob Ernst and Joseph P. Maloney, Jr., with legal support from John K. Fiorilla, NRHS General Counsel. The committee is responsible for the entire election process which includes the approval of qualifications of candidates, and oversight of the election process to assure that schedules and procedures adhere to the NRHS Bylaws and laws of the State of Maryland. Upcoming Conferences & Conventions

- **March 26 - 29, 2020** - 2020 NRHS Spring Conference. West Chester, Ohio.
- **June 9 - 13, 2020** - 2020 NRHS Convention. Fullerton, California.
- **October 15 - 18, 2020** - 2020 NRHS Fall Conference. Johnson City, Tennessee.
- **April 16 - 18, 2021** - 2021 NRHS Spring Conference. Raleigh, North Carolina.



RPCA/AMTRAK CONFERENCE CALL

November 15 2019 Summary Provided by John Goodman

For RPCA: Roger Fuehring Brad Black Burt Herney

For Amtrak: Steve Robusto Mike DeAngelo Necho Terry Teresa Smith

- 1) For the FYE Sep 30, 2019, PV moves are down about 50% vs FYE 2018. Now that moves are priced on a FULLY ALLOCATED basis PV moves make Amtrak money. Previously the pricing model was based on Incremental Cost.
- 2) There are currently 10 inspectors certified by Amtrak to perform PV inspections. Their names appear on the Amtrak website. This is current and has been updated to reflect the recent retirings and death of Jim Lewis. Amtrak thanked RPCA for its work in creating the insurance program for inspectors.
- 3) Amtrak recognizes that the pool of qualified inspectors may be too small and requested that RPCA assist by suggesting names of qualified persons for Amtrak to vet. It also recognizes that pool size is a bit of a balancing act because, with the new insurance requirements, too many inspectors would mean fewer inspections/inspector and possibly drive some inspectors out of the business.
- 4) Consists may change more than 2x/year, and those changes may trigger the need for an extra locomotive. Trains 29-30 was cited as a case in point. They are currently running with one locomotive, and even 1 PV may require extra power.
- 5) RPCA asked that the chart that used to be on the website showing consists and limitations be reinstated, as it was pointed out that the earlier owners know what consists will look like the better able they are to control their business, and perhaps to take advantage of certain opportunities that may open up. Amtrak agreed to explore that but mentioned that consists may still change on short notice.
- 6) Steve Robusto and Mike DeAngelo will be attending the RPCA Conference in January.

The call ended after approximately 30 minutes. Burt Herney



RPCA Report Amtrak/Federal Agencies Nov 2019

Amtrak has released a new photo of a prototype high speed trainset being built in upstate New York. France's Alstom is building the new Acela trainsets at its Hornell shops. The passenger sets with power cars are expected to enter service on the Northeast Corridor in 2021. Amtrak Now and Into the Future was the topic of the House Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, Wednesday, November 13, 2019. Among the topics addressed by Anderson, representatives from three labor unions, the Rail Passengers Association, an Oregon state legislator, and a California corridor operator were: Passenger train priority and preference, On-board amenity degradation, Lack of Amtrak transparency and accountability. The written testimony of the participants and video of the entire session is available [here](#).

Continued on next page:

Continued from previous page: Amtrak announced another ridership record in Fiscal Year 2019, providing 32.5 million customer trips, a year-over-year increase of 800,000 passengers. Amtrak recorded an operating loss of \$29.8 million, an improvement of \$140.9 million or 82.6% compared with the previous year. However, it does not break out revenue by route as it has does in the past.



AAPRCO

Mid-Month Highlights



Washington Update

with Ross Capon

December 2019

Provided by John Goodman

Thank you, AAPRCO members, for your efforts in support of strong report language in the FY 2020 appropriations bills! The results are shown below (the Senate language also was in my October 14 column; House language June 4). Our focus shifts to reauthorization. It is quite possible that an authorization will not be enacted before the November election, but work on legislation early in 2020 is likely to have a great impact on the final result whenever it is realized.

The House and Senate have passed big Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations bills and the White House has said President Trump will sign them into law, thereby averting a December 21 government shutdown.

For FY 2020, as for FY 2019, both House and Senate report language will be operative. This is made clear in the opening paragraph of the conferees' joint [explanatory statement](#). Thus, any reports mandated by House or Senate language must be submitted by Amtrak to both the House and Senate committees.

[Here](#) is the Senate report language, *Charter Trains and Private Cars* - The Committee continues to applaud Amtrak's efforts to make itself financially more sustainable through a business-like approach to its operations. However, stakeholders continue to remain concerned with Amtrak's communication and implementation of new policies. In fiscal year 2019, the Committee directed Amtrak to report on the effects of its changes in policy to charter trains, special trains, and private trains, but stakeholders continue to express concerns with Amtrak's billing and pricing for private cars and charter trains. Amtrak is directed to once again report on the impact of its policies to charter trains and private trains in the fiscal year 2021 budget request, and to include the amounts and percentages by which revenues and usage declined. Amtrak should also continue to update the list of eligible locations for private car moves and continue to evaluate such locations going forward. Amtrak should continue to strive to improve public outreach and offer its stakeholders an opportunity to comment on policies that affect services prior to finalizing any such decisions.

[Here](#) is the House language, (bolding added) *Charter Trains and Private Cars* - During fiscal year 2018, Amtrak issued new guidelines for charter trains operated by Amtrak and private cars on Amtrak trains. While the Committee understands that these policy changes reflect Amtrak's mandate to provide efficient, effective, and safe regularly scheduled passenger rail service, the Committee remains concerned with Amtrak's implementation and communication of these guidelines. The Committee notes that Amtrak added a small number of locations and trains to the list of eligible locations and trains for private car moves in its January 1, 2019 update to the Guidelines for Private Cars on Amtrak. **Amtrak is directed to continually review and evaluate the locations and trains that may be eligible for private car moves.** If additional locations or trains meet Amtrak's criteria for private car moves, then the Committee directs Amtrak to update the list of eligible locations and trains and notify private car owners accordingly. Further, the Committee is concerned that Amtrak does not typically inform private car owners when a private car caused a delay to an Amtrak train. The Committee encourages Amtrak to establish a mechanism by which private car owners are notified of such delays. This information could provide private car owners opportunities to improve their operations and processes. In February 2019, the Amtrak Office of Inspector General issued a report which found that Amtrak has failed to account for the costs of operating the private car program. The Committee agrees with the Inspector General's conclusions that **Amtrak cannot accurately assess and make informed decisions about the private car program until Amtrak properly identifies the costs of the program. These conclusions are particularly concerning considering that Amtrak implemented two price increases for the private car program prior to the report's release.** The Inspector General's recommendations include identifying the cost of private car moves and long-term parking, factoring this cost data into future decisions on setting or adjusting prices, and establishing a financial and performance reporting system. As Amtrak works to comply with these recommendations, the **Committee directs Amtrak to engage with private car owners and associations on the identified costs, the analysis of recent price increases, the reductions in locations and trains eligible for private car moves, and any new potential revised pricing.** The Committee directs Amtrak to submit a report to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations within 90 days of enactment of this Act detailing its plan to standardize the cost and revenue analysis for the private car program. Further, Amtrak is directed to include an updated report on charter train and private car policies in Amtrak's fiscal year 2021 budget justification. **The Committee acknowledges that certain information may be commercially sensitive and cannot be made public. Therefore, the Committee directs Amtrak to provide such information through briefings to the Committees.**

As previously reported, during 2017-2018 when Bob Donnelley was AAPRCO president, his generosity enabled me to attend many Congressional fund-raisers which enable me to voice your concerns directly to legislators. This year, because 13 different AAPRCO members (including Donnelley) wrote checks, I was able to continue this work. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: With the focus on reauthorization, the most recent events were for House Railroads Subcommittee Chair Dan Lipinski (D-IL) and Ranking Member Rick Crawford (R-AR), and House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chair Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Ranking Member Sam Graves (R-MO). It is always good for legislators to hear directly from constituents within a few months of when I attend their fund-raisers.



LB Steel LLC in Harvey, Illinois, is building the wheel assemblies and other components that will become part of the new Acela trainsets. Photo - Amtrak/Alstom

Amtrak: New Acela Trains a Boost to Nation's Economy

AARPCO News December 2019

The Amtrak-Alstom partnership to produce the next generation of Acela trains that will operate between Boston and Washington, D.C., is contributing to the nation's economy, Amtrak officials announced earlier this month. At a ceremony held at LB Steel LLC in Harvey, Illinois, Amtrak and Alstom representatives thanked the workers for building the wheel assemblies and other components that will become part of the new trains.

"While these new trains will provide world-class accommodations for customers traveling in the Northeast, this production will benefit communities across the country by creating jobs and stimulating local economies," said Amtrak Executive Vice President Roger Harris - who led a visit to the factory south of Chicago - in a press release.

Alstom is building the 28 trainsets for Amtrak at its plant in Hornell, New York, using parts manufactured by nearly 250 suppliers in 27 states. About 95 percent of the components are produced domestically, Amtrak officials said.

More than 1,300 new jobs will be generated in nearly 90 U.S. communities to support production, including the creation of new, sustainable, high-tech, engineering and manufacturing jobs in New York, they added. Other suppliers of components for the new Acela trainsets include ABB Power Transformers of Virginia; Bode Doors, South Carolina; Centum Adetel Transportation Solution, Wisconsin; Eaton, Michigan; Wabtec Faiveley Doors, New York; Gessman, Connecticut; Hoppecke, New Jersey; Kelox IRT USA, Pennsylvania; Knorr Brake, Maryland; Merrill Technologies, Michigan; Seisenbacher Rail Interiors Inc., New York; Thermo King, Nebraska; Transitair Systems, New York; UTC, Pennsylvania; Voith Couplers, Pennsylvania; and Wabtec Corp., South Carolina and Maryland.

The new trains, which will operate at speeds up to 160 mph, are scheduled to enter service in the Northeast Corridor in 2021. They will accommodate nearly 25 percent more riders than the current Acela service.



Cliffs to Buy AK Steel in \$1.1 Billion Stock Deal

ENERGY AND MINING Provided by David Shauer Wed, Dec 4, 2019



A mountain of low silica DR-grade pellets awaits its journey to Ohio on Tuesday at Northshore Mining. Northshore Mining built a new plant with new equipment to produce low silica DR-grade pellets to be used as feedstock at Cliffs' hot briquetted iron plant in Toledo, Ohio. Ellen Schmidt/

Cliffs, an iron ore company, will transition to "vertically integrated steel company" with purchase of steelmaker.

Cleveland-Cliffs, which owns several Minnesota and Michigan iron ore mines and taconite plants, will buy steelmaker AK Steel in a \$1.1 billion stock deal, the companies announced Tuesday morning.

The move allows Cliffs to own AK Steel's existing blast furnaces and electric arc furnaces, and supply the furnaces with its own iron ore pellets. Cliffs had long sold its pellets to other steelmakers.

That "vertically integrated steel company" model is used by U.S. Steel, which mines taconite and produces iron ore pellets at Keetac in Keewatin and Minntac in Mountain Iron that then supplies its blast furnaces throughout the U.S., and ArcelorMittal, which supplies its Indiana Harbor blast furnaces with pellets from its mines and plants at Hibtac in Hibbing and Minorca in Virginia.

"We're going to basically replicate what Arcelormittal does out of Hibbing and Minorca and what U.S. Steel does out of Keetac and Minntac," Cliffs President and CEO Lourenco Goncalves said in a conference call with investors Tuesday morning.

On Minnesota's Iron Range, Cliffs mines taconite and produces iron ore pellets at Northshore Mining in Babbitt and Silver Bay and United Taconite in Eveleth and Forbes. Cliffs also owns and operates the Tilden mine in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

All three companies own stakes in Hibtac, which is managed by ArcelorMittal.

In a letter to Cliffs employees Tuesday, Goncalves said the two companies will operate separately until the merger is completely approved, which is expected to occur in the first half of 2020.

No Cliffs offices or facilities are expected to close after the sale. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: "I do not anticipate changes to our existing organization, so it is business as usual for our employees," Goncalves said.

AK Steel, which is based outside Cincinnati, is a significant producer of flat-rolled carbon and stainless and electrical steel products. It supplies much of the automobile industry with steel, which will help ensure a more constant, predictable demand for Cliffs' pellets, Goncalves said. Cliffs will continue to sell pellets to other steel companies.

Both boards have unanimously backed the purchase, but the shareholders will still vote on the sale, Goncalves said.

When the sale is complete, Cliffs shareholders will own 68% of the company's shares and AK Steel shareholders will own the remaining 32%.

AK Steel will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Cliffs but will keep its branding and corporate identity, the companies said.

Goncalves will lead the combined company out of its Cleveland headquarters while Roger Newport, CEO and director of AK Steel, will retire.

Newport said AK Steel supported the sale.

"The combination of Cliffs' iron ore pellet capabilities and our innovative, high-quality steel product development and production is strategically compelling," Newport said in a news release Tuesday morning. "Together, we expect to be able to take advantage of growth opportunities faster and more fully than either company could on its own."

The merger is expected to save \$120 million in annual costs through consolidations within the first year, \$40 million of which would come from annual public company-related cost savings alone, Cliffs said.

Cliffs' stock fell 10.75% Monday to \$7.51 a share while AK Steel's stock increased 4.33% to \$3.01 a share.

No. 261's North Pole Express Trips Carry 10,000 Passengers

By Steve Glischinski | December 18, 2019 From the TRAINS Newswire:



North Pole Express heads for Santa's Workshop. Daniel Swanson



North Pole Express at St Paul Union Depot Dec 14 2019 - R Tubbesing Photo

ST. PAUL, Minn. – Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 No. 261 pulled North Pole Express trips that carried 10,000 passengers this month, the nonprofit Friends of the 261 reports. While the first weekend at St. Paul Union Depot Dec. 6-8 found temperatures in the 20s and 30s, the second weekend was a different story with highs in the teens and lows below zero Dec. 12-15.

Since 2014 the Friends have operated the North Pole Express offering a 60-minute train ride on the Union Depot grounds. After departing the depot platform, the trains travel to the east end of the depot property to Santa's Workshop, a structure built by Friends volunteers. Santa then boards the train and collects letters written to him by passengers. He visits with each child on the trip back to the depot. Volunteers offer children cookies and hot chocolate in the depot head house on their return.

"I think the biggest thing this year was overcoming the weather. I can't imagine what it was like in the old days, being on a steam locomotive in the middle of North Dakota when it was -10 degrees," says Steve Sandberg, Friends of the 261's president and chief operating officer.

New this year was former Milwaukee Road E9A 32A, still lettered as Wisconsin & Southern 101, which pulled the trains west back into the depot (No. 261 led east). The Friends acquired the E unit earlier this year from WATCO. "The E unit was fantastic," Sandberg says. "It provided head end power to the entire train."

Minnesota Museum Moves Soo Line Combine

By Steve Glischinski | November 26, 2019 From the TRAINS Newswire: Provided by Rick Krenske Metro News

CHISAGO CITY, Minn. – The Ironhorse Railroad Park has moved a former Soo Line RPO/baggage/coach No. 397 to its museum in Chisago City. The car had been stored in Ladysmith, Wis., since it was acquired by Ironhorse Central about four years ago. It was constructed in 1930 by St. Louis Car Co. for the Chesapeake & Ohio as No. 402. *Continued on next page:*



Ironhorse Railroad Park Baldwin No. 2 switches No. 397 at Chicago City on Nov. 15, 2019.

Continued from previous page: It was sold by C&O to a dealer in 1949, used for a time on Georgia's Gainesville Midland, then went to the Soo in 1950. Numbered 397, it was used on mixed and branch line trains, including locals between Duluth and Thief River Falls on Soo's Plummer Line. It was eventually renumbered Soo 56. As mixed and passenger train service waned in the 1960s, the car was converted into a kitchen/diner/bunk car for maintenance of way crews, becoming Soo X-579.

In the early 1980s, along with several other Soo Line heavyweight passenger cars, the car was donated to the City of Ladysmith. The city also received ex-Soo FP7 500-A, and put the other passenger cars and the F unit on public display, but the combine wasn't a proper fit for the display so it was stored.

About four years ago the city was searching for a flatcar to put on display, and Ironhorse head Erik Thompson arranged a swap: a flatcar the museum owned for the combine. Ironhorse also furnished transportation to move the flatcar to Ladysmith. In the interim the combine remained in storage. Loss of its storage location prompted Ironhorse to move the car to Chisago City this month.

Cranes from Collision Mechanical Towing and S&R Towing lifted the car and STS Transport Service moved the car from Ladysmith to Chisago City on dollies with the car itself serving as the trailer. The car's trucks moved separately. Preparations for the move began Nov. 4 with the car moving Nov. 14-15.

"The big reason I like the car is that the theme to the museum that my dad (the late Richard Thompson) and I developed was a branch line railroad. We've always gravitated toward more branch line type of railroading so this car fits in with the mixed train, combine, the branch line style that is our theme," Thompson said. "It just fit in nicely in our collection."

The interior has been modified from its original configuration with partitions removed and an office, dining area, bathroom and locker room installed. There are no current plans to restore the interior, but Thompson said he hopes to repaint and letter the exterior and remove the aluminum windows installed by the Soo and restore the original windows which remain behind the aluminum ones. He also has parts from a scrapped former Great Northern car that can be used to restore the combine, including baggage doors, which are narrower than regular baggage car doors but which match those salvaged from the GN car.

Thompson said the museum has spent the last couple of years trying to recover from tornado damage the museum suffered a few summers ago. He hopes to have a new website designed early in 2020 and plans to have the museum open for visitors and offering short rides on museum track next summer.

Neighbors Express Concern about CP Plan to Expand Intermodal Facility

Land at Minneapolis' Shoreham Yard had been sought for redevelopment

December 2, 2019 From the TRAINS Newswire Provided by Rick Krenske Metro News



Canadian Pacific plans to use the Minneapolis land formerly occupied by its Shoreham Yard roundhouse, torn down earlier this year, to expand an intermodal facility is meeting with some local opposition. Steve Glischinski

MINNEAPOLIS — Community officials have been caught off guard by Canadian Pacific plans to redevelop a portion of its Shoreham Yard facility, [the Minneapolis Star-Tribune reports](#), with one city council member citing an "uneven relationship" between the city and railroad. Some officials and area residents had hoped that the land formerly occupied by the Shoreham roundhouse could be used for redevelopment. But when the roundhouse was torn down earlier this year, the railroad said it would be used to expand its intermodal facility. [See "[Former Soo Line Shoreham roundhouse, diesel shop being demolished](#)," *Trains News Wire*, Aug. 1, 2019.] Approximately 12 acres will be used for containers and an additional track to load them, Canadian Pacific spokesman Andy Cummings said, along with an second entrance to the intermodal facility. He told the newspaper, "Shoreham has been a railroad facility for more than a century, and CP is performing this upgrade to meet the demands of the 21st century Upper Midwestern economy." Officials and neighbors are concerned the project will increase traffic and pollution, and will be an eyesore. One area resident, who described the project as "basically creating a massive parking lot for empty containers," has created a petition asking the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board to review the project.

Union Pacific Completes PTC Implementation on Its System

December 18, 2019 Provided by Chuck Lavallee



Union Pacific recently completed Positive Train Control (PTC) implementation, activating its final track segment. The technology is now implemented on all the company's federally mandated rail lines, including required passenger train routes. Union Pacific will continue working with partner railroads on their interoperability efforts, ensuring seamless operation onto the company's tracks.

PTC is designed to prevent four specific types of incidents:

Train-to-train collisions

Derailments caused by excessive speed Accidents that can occur if trains are routed down the incorrect track

Unauthorized train movements on tracks undergoing maintenance

PTC will not prevent incidents involving pedestrians or vehicles.

"PTC is one of the biggest rail industry breakthroughs, designed to keep our crews and communities safer through technology," said Greg Richardson, [Union Pacific](#) general director Operating Systems and Practices. "While Union Pacific began its first PTC operations nearly four years ago, we have now completed our initial implementation and continue supporting other railroads in our mutual efforts to achieve interoperability and safely operate on our rail lines."

PTC monitors trains based on a custom analysis of specific factors, including weight, location, speed and a five-mile look down the track. Locomotive engineers respond to computer screen messages, prompting them to take action, such as slowing down. If they do not respond in a timely manner, PTC automatically stops the train.

Union Pacific currently hosts 25 freight and passenger railroads, which must achieve PTC interoperability by December 2020. Sixteen of these railroads are compliant, encompassing 85% of Union Pacific's interoperable PTC train miles. While the company's PTC infrastructure is in operation, Union Pacific continues working with its remaining partner railroads, which are expected to take necessary steps to reach interoperability by mid-2020.



U.S. Steel to Idle Detroit-area Steel Plant *Energy and Mining*

Written By: Jimmy Lovrien | Dec 20th 2019 - 2pm. Provided by David Shauer

The 2020 closure of Great Lakes Works isn't likely to impact the Iron Range.

U.S. Steel will idle a Detroit-area steel plant next year, a move that could lay off up to 1,500 people at the plant.

In a news release Thursday, the company said it would "indefinitely idle a significant portion" of its Great Lakes Works plant in Ecorse and River Rouge, Michigan, and move any production currently at Great Lakes Works to its Gary Works steel plant in Gary, Indiana. The announcement comes less than a year after [a July move by U.S. Steel that idled three of its blast furnaces](#) — at Great Lakes Works, Gary Works and in Europe, amid low steel prices and low demand.

A U.S. Steel spokesperson told the News Tribune that moving existing production from Great Lakes Works to Gary Works should preserve the company's steel-making capacity and the demand for taconite from the Iron Range.

"We have no other operational adjustments that are coming in the very near future," the spokesperson said.

U.S. Steel owns the Keetac and Minntac mines and taconite plants in Keewatin and Mountain Iron. It also owns a 14.7% interest in Hibbing Taconite.

It's been a tough year for the company.

U.S. Steel lost \$84 million in the third quarter of 2019 amid "challenging market conditions." The company laid off non-union workers across the company in November, including [at least 30 at Keetac and Minntac](#), as part of a \$200 million reduction to its annual fixed costs, and idled one production line at Minntac in October.

And on Thursday, the company said it was expecting a fourth-quarter loss of \$1.15 per share.

The company said in a news release Friday that the idling of Great Lakes Works would begin with the iron- and steel-making facilities around April 1 and the hot strip mill-rolling facility before the end of 2020.

Although more than 1,500 employees will receive layoff notices, the company said it expects fewer employees will actually be laid off.

"This decision is another step to advance U. S. Steel's strategy to become a world-competitive, 'best of both' company by combining leading integrated and mini-mill steel technology," the company said in the news release Thursday. "The decision also illustrates U. S. Steel's capacity to be nimble and accelerate key aspects of its strategy when market conditions warrant."

After a few years boosted by anti-steel-dumping measures by the Obama administration and steel tariffs by the Trump administration, the steel industry and the taconite industry are beginning to [show signs of a minor slowdown as demand and prices fall](#).

ALL ABOARD MINNESOTA



More Passenger Trains To More Places!

Please make a year end gift to All Aboard Minnesota! Since this is a Bonding Bill year, we will need to be more active than ever to put pressure on the State Legislature from citizen advocacy to fund passenger rail. We have built off the great momentum these past few years educating citizens around the state for more passenger rail, and plan many more activities for 2020.

Your generous donations allow us to do this work, and we need your help to continue. If you have already contributed, we sincerely thank you!

Consider all that happened in 2019 due to your support:

- First ever **Rally at the State Capitol** which generated over 100 letters to State Legislators about the need for more passenger rail. Outstate newspapers even covered the event!
 - **We attended** numerous events, such as **National Train Day**, and the **UP Big Boy event in St. Paul**, and connected with hundreds of citizens to get the word out!
 - Conducted an **Outreach Forum in Fargo/Moorhead**, which resulted in possibly our greatest participation yet at one of these forums! Several North Dakota and Minnesota Legislators attended, and the event was covered by two TV stations, a radio station, and the Fargo Forum (that article is posted on our website, Blog section)
 - We **"testified"** at several **Minnesota House Transportation Committee and Bonding Committee hearings**, including sessions held in St. Cloud and Winona
- Meetings and outreach with our US Congressional delegation**, asking for their support to fund Amtrak and a truly national system

Your gift will move us forward in 2020. We plan:

- **More outreach events throughout the state, and a spring Rally at the State Capitol** to educate Legislators and get money in the Bonding Bill for passenger rail in Minnesota!
 - Continuing **outreach within the Minnesota State Legislature and US Congress** urging their support to fund passenger rail
 - **Communication through multiple media channels** that can influence decision makers such as Mayors, Chambers of Commerce, Business Leaders, and others
- Coordinate efforts with like-minded groups** through conferences, events, and meetings
- All Aboard Minnesota relies on your generous financial support** to continue and expand this work.
- Click here to donate on our site;** [Donate Here](#)

Or, use the form below for mailing a donation. Remember, your gift is tax – deductible!

Thank you for your support, we can't do it without you!

Check payable to All Aboard Minnesota

PO Box 4212

St Paul, MN 55104

The Board of Directors - All Aboard Minnesota

Vinternatt Event

Fri, Dec 6, 2019 Provided by Rick Krenske Metro news



Minnesota Streetcar Museum (MSM)

Looking Back: Here we find a wintry streetcar scene at 42nd Street & Queen Avenue near the west shore of Lake Harriet in Minneapolis. This early 1950s view shows the Chalet-style station that was located here during the last decades of the streetcar system. If this location looks familiar, you are exactly right as this is where the museum's depot is now! Further, if you like wintry scenes, please come to our Vinternatt event tomorrow (Saturday, December 7th) at 6:00pm to experience a winter's night ride along our line!

UP Minnesota Branch Loses Major Customer

By Steve Glischinski | December 13, 2019 From the TRAINS newswire:

NEW PRAGUE, Minn. – Employees at Miller Milling in New Prague got coal in their Christmas stocking this month when the company announced it was shutting down its mill in New Prague served by Union Pacific. The flour mill, which will be shuttered Dec. 31, is the largest shipper on the railroad's 24-mile former Minneapolis & St. Louis Montgomery Subdivision. For years UP and predecessor Chicago & North Western had a dedicated switch job to serve the mill.

The closing of the New Prague mill comes on the heels of Ardent Mills closing its flour mill in Rush City, Minn., a major shipper for the St. Croix Valley Railroad.

The New Prague mill was first established in 1896. Miller Milling took over the mill in the 1980s. In 2012, Miller became a part of the Nisshin Seifun Group of Japan.



UP's local arrives at the old M&StL depot in New Prague on Sept. 4, 2012.

The company says the age and location of the mill are primary factors in the decision to shut it down. The mill is served by a week-day UP local that connects with the former Omaha Road main line at Merriam, Minn.

When the mill shuts down there will be two customers remaining on the branch: Seneca Foods in Montgomery and Chart Industries in New Prague, which designs and manufactures cryogenic equipment for liquid gas.

The branch was once part of M&StL's main line from Minneapolis to Marshalltown and Oskaloosa, Iowa, and east to Peoria, Ill. The other remaining portion of this route in Minnesota is a short stretch in Minneapolis and Canadian Pacific's 19-mile Hartland Spur from Waseca to Hartland, which has not been used for several years. Other remaining Minneapolis & St. Louis trackage in Minnesota is operated by Minnesota Prairie Line and BNSF between Norwood and Madison 129 miles.



*UP 4014 on display in West Chicago in July. Trains:
Jim Wrinn*

Crowd Estimates for Big Boy 4014: 1.1 Million Plus

By Jim Wrinn | December 18, 2019 From the TRAINS Newswire:

OMAHA, Neb. — How many people saw Union Pacific Big Boy No. 4014 run in 2019?

That is a question whose answer we'll never know with full certainty, but estimates are coming in. UP says it counted 115,000 visitors who went through its Experience the Union Pacific exhibit car during layovers on the three tours that began May 4 and ended Nov. 26. The company places the overall size of the spectators at 1.1 million people. Meanwhile, a railfan club with close ties to the UP steam program has a more optimistic view of how many people witnessed Big Boy No. 4014 on its multiple tours in 2019. The Camerail Club in its monthly Mixed Train newsletter also says the huge public relations bonanza of the steam train means that No. 4014 will operate next summer.

Continued on next page:

Continued from previous page: “The bottom line is that the tour was just one grand success by any measure of standards that can be applied,” the newsletter says. “In view of the overwhelming successful tour, the Union Pacific will operate another for next summer. The route and details are yet to be worked out, but as they say in TV land, ‘stay tuned.’” UP spokeswoman Kristen South told Trains the company has no details on possible 2020 operations. But some sources say Pacific Northwest, California, or St. Louis tours may be possible.

The Camerail Club, which supplied staff for the “Experience the Union Pacific” exhibit car, says 112,500 people went through the car, or about one-third of the people who visited the locomotive and train. The club went on to say that number is a quarter to an eighth of the people who witnessed No. 4014’s operations from May through November. Using that as a guide, they estimated spectators at 1.35 million to 2.7 million.

UP restored No. 4014 to operation this year to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first transcontinental railroad. It is the first time a Big Boy locomotive has operated in 60 years. Trains covered the restoration in its special issue, Big Boy Back in Steam, and the corresponding video documentary of the same name. A second video, Big Boy on Tour, 2019 Part II, 4014 in the Midwest, Southwest, and South, will be available in January. The fall tour is covered in the January issue of Trains, available now, and in the February issue, available shortly after the new year. All are for sale at www.kalmbachhobbystore.com

AAR Calls for Swift Passage of Trade Deal

By **Justin Franz** | December 10, 2019 From the TRAINS Newswire:



WASHINGTON — The Association of American Railroads is calling on Congress to quickly pass a new North American trade agreement.

On Tuesday, it was announced that House Democrats had reached an agreement with President Donald Trump to pass the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the president’s replacement for the North American Free Trade Agreement.

AAR President and CEO Ian Jefferies applauds the deal and says it will help American railroads. According to AAR, international trade accounts for 42% of U.S. freight railroads’ carloads and intermodal units, and more than 35% of rail revenue is directly associated with international trade.

“As the backbone of the North American supply chain, freight railroads applaud today’s announcement, which provides much-needed certainty with our two largest trading partners,” Jefferies says. “Congress should move with haste to ratify USMCA before the end of the year and provide an economic shot in the arm to U.S. businesses. With renewed trade ties, freight railroads stand ready to deliver for rail customers throughout North America and move the goods that allow the U.S. economy to grow and compete in global markets.”

According to media reports, the House could vote on the deal next week.

NSSR Storage Trains

From: Dave Schauer Date: Mon, 16 Dec 2019 11:11:45 PST



The NSSR is getting five empty coal train sets for temporary winter storage. Here GN Hustle Muscle clears the line prior to shoving one of the sets north. A very nice revenue boost for the museum in a traditional slow time.

<https://www.railpictures.net/viewphoto.php?id=719731>

Dave Schauer



In this issue we will use some of Gene Huddleston's photography around 1960 on the Chicago Division. This area of the C&O gets little attention from railfans, historians, or modelers, yet it formed an important part of C&O's system, especially in the era from about 1930 to the late 1960s. During that period the line was used not only for some coal business, but for a great deal of fast freight headed to and from the Chicago gateway. The route ran diagonally across Indiana between Cincinnati and Hammond, Ind. where it made various connections over the years into Chicago's sprawling terminals. It was built late in the railroad-construction era, between about 1900 and 1910. The Chicago, Cincinnati & Louisville was its last corporate name before it was purchased by C&O in 1910. C&O operated it as a subsidiary company with the name of "Chesapeake & Ohio Railway of Indiana" until finally fully merging it in the 1930s. Known subsequently as the Chicago Division, it consisted of two subdivisions, the Wabash between Cincinnati and Peru, and the Miami between that point and Hammond.

After WWII C&O spent a lot of effort developing the fast freight operation over this line, at one time boasting of 12 manifest freights per day. Some coal was transported over the route, but it was definitely a much smaller element of the traffic. The route touched no major cities along its route, and therefore had little local business. This was a weakness when mergers began and as new routings of freight traffic became viable in the C&O/B&O and Chessie System period. In fact, it was initially the preferred route for C&O/B&O traffic between Cincinnati and Chicago because it was considerably shorter than using B&O, but because of several steep grades and the lack of sufficient yard facilities and double tracks, the B&O route was finally used instead.

It had only local passenger traffic, served during most of its existence by a single pair of local trains, the last of which was discontinued in 1949. During the traffic pattern adjustments after CSX the Chicago Division was left stranded, its overhead traffic diverted to other lines. Most of its route has been abandoned.

The Chicago Division was chosen by C&O for early dieselization. Many said this was because it was far removed from the coal fields and thus the diesels would be less noticed. ABA sets of EMD F7 units were used and remained in service here until the early 1960s when the F's were transferred to B&O. GP7s and GP9s were also common power, followed by second generation engines. Gene Huddleston took a number of photos on the Chicago line around 1960, a few of which are reproduced in this album.

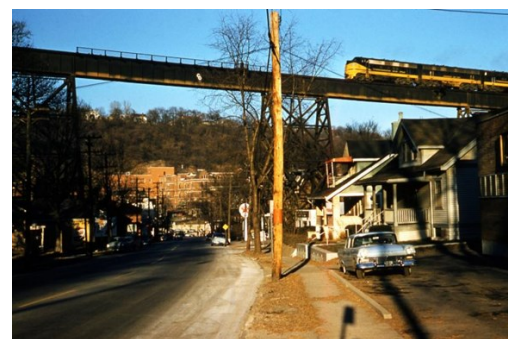
Editors note: Photos follow on the next three pages:



During an April, 1960 trip, Gene snapped this overhead view of the Cheviot terminal area with AS-616s Nos. 5543 and 5539 present, one with a work train and Burro crane. (C&OHS Collection, COGH 9)



F7 No. 7005, one of the first units to dieselize the Chicago Division, is seen here, still working hard, with eastbound manifest No. 98 on a curve near Marion, Ind., in May, 1960. (C&OHS Collection,



Gene captured F7s with a train on the high bridge above Queen Avenue in Cincinnati. (C&OHS Collection,



(C&OHS Collection, COGH 7)



During Gene's June 1960 trip he captured two sets of F7s at Cheviot terminal from an overhead bridge, one set was headed by No. 7075 and is seen leaving with an eastbound freight. We understand that the terminal area was redeveloped after the line's abandonment and is now a retail shopping area. (C&OHS Collection, COGH 8)



F7 No. 7078 and GP9 No. 5905 with an eastbound fast freight headed upgrade out of the Wabash valley near Peru, Ind., in June, 1963. The F7s were in their last days in this service as most were transferred to B&O service in the next two years. (C&OHS Collection, COGH 31)



Gene liked scenic photos and composed this unusual and interesting view of a pair of F7s switching cars at the Peru yard in Sept., 1960. Both units have the second paint scheme used on them by C&O, with the "bow wave" removed from the nose and the new lettering in the modernistic Futura Demi Bold font. The revised paint began to be used on units begin shopped in 1955 and after. (C&OHS Collection, COGH 46)



C&O's bridge over the Wabash River east of Peru was a great spot for photographs and was used often by the two people whom we know to have taken numerous pictures on this line: William A. Swartz, and Gene Huddleston. Here, Gene found FP7 No. 8001 heading an ABA set with No. 98 leaving town for eastern points. This was in November, 1959, still a time when C&O was routing a large fast freight traffic over the Chicago Division. (C&OHS Collection, COGH 32)



GP9s and GP7s led by GP7 No. 5839 are seen here bringing a manifest freight across the Wabash bridge at Peru in June, 1960, showing that F-units were not the only power for these trains. (C&OHS Collection, COGH 34)



The nose of F7 No. 7089 is at the Peru terminal on No. 98 while heavy-weight coaches rest in the background in September, 1960. Passenger trains had been gone from the line since 1949 but the coaches were there to take veteran C&O employees to their annual picnic, a tradition begun by George Stevens in 1910 and carried on into the 1960s. (C&OHS Collection, COGH 48)

Continued: A Last Hurrah for the Chicago Division

For about two years in the mid-1970s Amtrak ran its C&O-routed Chicago-Washington-Newport News passenger trains on C&O's Chicago Division, giving the line a last great hurrah before its end a decade later. At that time Amtrak had added a new train called the Mountaineer that ran on N&W east of that line's junction with C&O at Kenova, W. Va. Therefore, both it and the Chicago-Washington C&O-routed trains were combined between Chicago and Russell, Ky. They were sent over the Chicago Division to Cincinnati. The trains were huge 11-14 car affairs with Amtrak's heritage equipment. The Chicago-Washington trains bore two different names: The eastbound train (No. 50) was called The James Whitcomb Riley, while the westbound train (No. 51) was The George Washington. Later they would be renamed The Cardinal. I (TWD) was at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis for six months in 1975 for schooling, and on weekends visited Peru to photograph the big passenger trains. Here are a few views:



Dec. 5, 1975 finds Amtrak SDP40F No. 549 with its long train on the 15.5-degree curve east of the Wabash bridge out of Peru. (T. W. Dixon, Jr. photo, C&OHS Collection, COHS 34252)



This is The James Whitcomb Riley near Peru in June, 1975 sporting two domes originally built for western trains. For several wonderful years, Amtrak operated domes on the C&O through to Newport News. How great they would be today on the Cardinal. (T. W. Dixon, Jr. photo, C&OHS Collection, COHS 34337)



Two SDP40Fs with No. 51 stopped at the C&O yard office, which served as the passenger station in this period on Dec. 2, 1975. (T. W. Dixon, Jr. photo, C&OHS Collection, COHS 36162)



H-8 2-6-6-6 No. 1636 emerges from Alleghany Tunnel still working hard to get its train of 125 loaded hoppers to the top of the grade. It will go on about a mile and stop at East Alleghany to set up retainers. Meanwhile the pusher will cut off. This photo was taken in 1951 as the era of the H-8s dominance was closing. (B. F. Cutler photo, C&OHS Collection, COHS 5551)



(Right) An H-8 emerges from Lewis Tunnel at the eastern end of Alleghany in 1950. The train is westbound with empties, and though the westbound grade from Covington to Alleghany was much steeper at 1.14 percent, only empty trains had to conquer it. The tunnel was equipped with huge fans that blew the smoke ahead of the locomotive. Otherwise the crews would have a very bad time of it with gases in the cab. (B. F. Cutler photo, C&OHS Collection, COHS 46478)



Continued: **An Alleghany album - Diesels:**



GE U25Bs lead a westbound empty train into Alleghany Tunnel in November, 1970. (T. W. Dixon, Jr. photo, C&OHS Collection, COHS 36248)



October 1980s find Chessie System B30-7 No. 8274 roars out of Alleghany Tunnel with a coal train, just as its predecessor GP9s and H-8s had done in years before. (Kurt Reisweber photo, C&OHS Collection, COHS 22383)

SW Light Rail Progress

Tuesday, December 17, 2019 Metro Council News

Provided by Rick Krenske

2020 construction schedule by corridor city

These schedules highlight major construction activities and provide a general timeline when these activities are planned to occur. The schedules will be updated quarterly to reflect a year look ahead; please note, they are subject to change.

Eden Prairie (PDF) Minnetonka (PDF) Hopkins (PDF) St. Louis Park (PDF) Minneapolis (PDF)



Construction activity updates

The Met Council provides information on construction activities every Friday throughout construction. [Subscribe to receive construction activity updates by email or text.](#)

Southwest LRT Construction Update: December 20, 2019

Winter Holiday Schedule

Work along most of the project corridor will be suspended during the week of December 23. Sheet piling work for the Kenilworth tunnel will continue next week, except for Christmas day and New Years day. Crews will conduct site inspections and regular maintenance activities throughout the entire time. The remainder of winter work will resume the week of December 30.

The Southwest Project Office is closed on Wednesday, December 25 and Wednesday, January 1. Only urgent calls about active construction issues will be responded to by on-call staff.

Weekly Construction Photo: CenturyLink



Glenwood Ave in Minneapolis

Crews have completed a move of the CenturyLink duct bank on Glenwood Avenue in Minneapolis. Moving this major utility allows crews to begin work on the west abutment of the Glenwood Bridge in 2020. Crews have begun to backfill the trench, pictured above.

Highlights

A second press-in-piler is on the way from the east coast to the Kenilworth Corridor and will be set-up on site the week of January 6.

Mark your calendars for the Southwest LRT Construction Training Fair on January 22, 2020, from 3:00 to 6:00 PM at the Minneapolis Urban League, more information is available [here](#).

On-going Activities Update

SouthWest Station Area in Eden Prairie

Pile driving will continue into 2020 as crews focus on different elements of the station site and the LRT bridge. Retaining wall work for the LRT guideway is also continuing in the area. Crews are constructing a temporary passenger waiting area for bus riders that will be completed in January. Transit riders will shift to the temporary facility once it is complete in mid-January.

The right turn lane on the eastbound Highway 212 ramp to Prairie Center Drive remains closed until Summer 2020.

Crews are working near the intersection of Technology Drive and Prairie Center Drive to build bridge piers. The sidewalk is closed on the northwest corner of Technology Drive and Prairie Center Drive; please follow detour signage to the southwest sidewalk next to Purgatory Park. Crews will be moving around in this area as they shift to build various bridge piers. In mid-January, work on the piers for the LRT bridge over Technology Drive will begin.

Eden Road Area in Eden Prairie

Retaining wall work is concluding for the winter; backfilling will resume in the spring.

LRT Bridge at I-494/Flying Cloud Drive in Eden Prairie

Crews will resume work on the north abutment in January. Expect pile driving activities in the area over the next few months. Traffic control barriers continue to be in place. The I-494 eastbound ramp to Highway 212 remains closed until Spring 2020. [See all detour maps here.](#)

Valley View Road/Flying Cloud Drive in Eden Prairie

The lane restriction on the ramp from Valley View Road to Highway 212 remains. Traffic is being diverted onto the HOV lane and will remain in this configuration through the winter. Crews are constructing multiple piers for the new LRT bridge. The various piers are at different stages of completion, with crews working on pile supports and formwork. *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: Nine Mile Creek

Pile driving for the LRT bridge structure and abutments at Nine Mile Creek will continue through the winter. The sidewalk on the west side of Flying Cloud Drive is closed; pedestrians can use the east side.

Golden Triangle Station in Eden Prairie

Night work will continue for a couple of months in the area to install piles and sheeting. Additional night work may be scheduled in the future as work between the Golden Triangle Station to a bridge over Shady Oak Road and Highway 212 continues. Related activities will occur during the daytime in the surrounding area as crews work on bridges, retaining walls, and relocating utilities simultaneously.

Highway 62 in Minnetonka

The traffic lanes have been shifted to the south side of the highway to accommodate tunnel construction on the north side of the highway. This traffic configuration will be in place through 2020. Crews continue excavation for the LRT tunnel, with sheeting starting after the holiday break.

Red Circle Drive and Yellow Circle Drive in Minnetonka

Yellow and Red Circle Drives have been reconfigured. Yellow Circle Drive is temporarily dead-ended with a cul-de-sac where it connects to Red Circle Drive, and Yellow Circle has become a two-way roadway in the area south of Blue Circle Drive. A temporary by-pass road has also been completed on Red Circle Drive. This roadway configuration will allow for ongoing tunnel construction on Highway 62. **See all detour maps here.**

Smetana Road in Minnetonka and Hopkins

Smetana Road from Feltl Road to Nolan Drive is closed through 2020. A temporary bypass is in place west of the intersection of Smetana and Feltl roads to accommodate traffic in this area. **See all detour maps here.**

Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail in Hopkins

The Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail in Hopkins is closed between Shady Oak Road and 5th Avenue South. **See all detour maps here.**

The section between Shady Oak Road and 11th Avenue South is closed due to storm sewer construction activities. This portion of the trail is closed until summer 2020.

The section between 11th Avenue South and 5th Avenue South is closed until Fall 2021.

Downtown Hopkins Station

Foundation work for the station is complete. Work on the station structure will start in January.

Excelsior Boulevard Area in Hopkins

Crews continue to work on bridge piers and underground utilities in the area.

South Cedar Lake LRT Trail

The South Cedar Lake Trail from just east of the North Cedar Lake Trail connection in Hopkins to France Avenue in St. Louis Park is closed until Fall 2021. The South Cedar Lake Trail will remain open between France Avenue in St. Louis Park and Kenilworth Trail/Midtown Greenway intersection in Minneapolis. The Midtown Greenway will remain open. Currently, cross streets remain open to automobiles, bikes and pedestrians, with separate closures of roadways upcoming at various dates. **See all detour maps here.**

Blake Road in Hopkins

Crews are constructing a cut and cover tunnel for the regional trail under Blake Road. Southbound traffic will continue to be diverted to the east side of the road, with one lane in each direction, through the winter. Next spring, crews will move to the east side of the roadway and traffic will remain reduced to one lane in each direction.

Minnehaha Creek in St. Louis Park

Work on the new freight and trail bridge abutments continues in this area. Flaggers are monitoring recreational water use during times that construction activities make it unsafe to travel through the creek.

Louisiana Avenue in St. Louis Park

Vehicle traffic will continue to use one southbound lane and both northbound lanes. Bridge abutment and retaining wall construction has concluded and the crane will move to another area of the project. Later this winter crews will begin work to place bridge beams.

Wooddale Avenue in St. Louis Park

Utility work started in the area to make way for upcoming work on the regional trail underpass and Wooddale Station. There will be minor impacts to roadways in the surrounding area.

Highway 100 in St. Louis Park *Continued on next page:*

Continued from previous page: The project will be re-positioning the existing freight rail bridge and will build a new LRT bridge over Highway 100 in the spring/summer of 2020. Work on bridge abutments will resume after the holiday break.

Beltline Boulevard in St. Louis Park

Work on the new South Cedar Lake Trail Bridge continues. Crews are working on bridge piers and beams. Crews are also working on retaining walls in the area, which includes pile driving.

Kenilworth Trail Closure

The Kenilworth Trail is closed in Minneapolis at the intersection with the Midtown Greenway to just south of West 21st Street until Summer 2022. Access for automobiles, bikes and pedestrians remains open at Cedar Lake Parkway and at West 21st Street. **See all detour maps here.**

Chowen Avenue to Lake Street in Minneapolis

Storm sewer and watermain work will occur during the winter months. Work is anticipated in this area in January and is not expected to impact the trail.

Kenilworth Area Construction in Minneapolis

Sheet piling for the Kenilworth tunnel continues, moving north from Park Siding Park. Sheeting will stop short of Cedar Lake Parkway and the press-in-piler will return south, working towards Lake Street. Sheeting installation is expected to last until summer 2020. A second press-in-piler will begin work in the Kenilworth Corridor in early January.

Tunnel excavation is currently anticipated to begin Spring 2020. For more information about tunnel construction, see the **tunnel FAQ** information under the construction tab of our webpage: swlrt.org. A short **video** of the press-in-piler construction technique is also available.

Cedar Lake (Kenilworth) Channel and Works Progress Administration (WPA) in Minneapolis

Crews placed the first set of beams last week for the new freight bridge. Pile driving for the last of the four piers for the freight bridge will begin after the holiday break. Work on the abutments also continues.

21st Street in Minneapolis

Retaining wall activities are being completed in the area. Intermittent work will continue.

North Cedar Lake Trail in Minneapolis

The North Cedar Lake trail in Minneapolis from Linden Yards located west of Van White Boulevard to east of Royalston Avenue is closed for approximately two years until mid-2021. **See all detour maps here.**

Crews constructed a temporary trail bypass in the area where the North Cedar Lake Trail connects to the Kenilworth Trail. New signage is in place to direct trail users onto this newly constructed segment. This work is in preparation for station construction in Spring 2020.

Please note, construction vehicles cross the trail as they enter and exit staging areas. Construction vehicles yield to trail users but please be aware that you may encounter construction traffic in this area.

Glenwood Avenue in Minneapolis

Glenwood Avenue between Lyndale Avenue North and 11th Street North is closed until mid-2021. Local access to businesses will be maintained. Generally, vehicle detours will use Lyndale Avenue, Olson Memorial Highway and 7th/10th Streets. The pedestrian detour continues to utilize Border Avenue, Holden Street and Royalston Avenue sidewalks. Utility work, retaining wall installation and freight track preparation continues. **See all detour maps here.**

Royalston Avenue in Minneapolis

Work on the LRT bridge piers on the east side of Royalston Avenue is ongoing and will continue through the winter. Expect pile driving activities in this area. Northbound Royalston Avenue is reduced to one lane and southbound Royalston Avenue is closed between Border Avenue and 5th Avenue. **See all detour maps here.**

Passenger News, Amtrak honored for Chicago Union Station Restoration Project



AARPCO News: December 2019

Amtrak's project to restore the Great Hall at Chicago Union Station has been recognized with six awards from architectural, engineering, construction, and real estate organizations or publications. Photo - amtrak.com

[Amtrak's](#) \$22 million project to restore the Great Hall at Chicago Union Station has reaped recognition in the form of six awards from architectural, engineering, construction and real estate organizations or publications.

The awards are the:

- * 2019 Interior Architecture Award - American Institute of Architects, Chicago Chapter
- * 2019 Overall Transformation of the Year - GlobeSt Real Estate Forum Magazine
- * 2019 Silver Reconstruction Award - Building Design & Construction Magazine
- * 2019 Best Project, Government/Public Building - ENR Midwest Magazine
- * 2019 Best Renovation/Retrofit Project - Structural Engineers Association of Illinois
- * 2019 Metamorphosis Award, Whole Building - Retrofit Magazine

"We appreciate the awards to our team from our industry colleagues. But most rewarding to us is the constantly positive comments from those who use our station," said David Handera, Amtrak's vice president of stations properties and accessibility, in a press release.

Now under construction at the station is a new Clinton Street entrance to improve station accessibility with an elevator from street level, including both tiers of a food hall to be ready for tenant leasing and finishing next fall, Amtrak officials said. Chicago Union Station serves 37.6 million Amtrak and Metra passengers annually, and handles about 120,000 on a typical weekday.



Brightline's existing station in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Photo - Brightline/Virgin Trains

Brightline to Build Rail Station in Boca Raton

AARPCO News: December 2019

[Brightline](#), soon to be known as Virgin Trains USA, will locate a train station in Boca Raton, Florida, now that the Boca Raton City Council has approved a long-term land lease for the construction of the station and parking garage near the city's Downtown Library.

By the end of 2020, the Boca Raton facility is expected to be the third new station in Brightline's south corridor, joining Aventura and PortMiami hubs in connecting the privately owned intercity passenger rail system, city and Brightline officials announced yesterday.

Current stops on the rail line include West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale and Miami.

The public private partnership between Brightline and Boca Raton meets long-term policy goals of adding a parking garage, train station and transit options to the city's downtown, according to Boca Raton Mayor Scott Singer.

"We pursued an opportunity to be included in this major transportation network and have seized the moment," said Singer in a press release. "Many community partners have discussed how this train station is a game changer and puts us on the map."

Brightline will fully fund and operate the station, which will be constructed on a 1.8-acre site near Palmetto Park Road and Dixie Highway in 2021. The city will fund most of the design and construction of a 455-car parking garage for train riders and the public. Brightline will be responsible for all operating expenses of the garage and the parties will split the profit, city officials said.

Railfan Events (Thanks to Rick Krenske, Bill Dredge)

Twin City Model Railroad Museum (Friday Nites are Back)	Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays 10:00 am—3:00 pm Saturdays 10:00 am—5:00 pm Sundays 12:00 pm—5:00 pm	668 Transfer Road Suite 8 St Paul MN 55114 651-647-9628 (see Night Trains on Page 17 too)	\$15 (special rates for groups)
Hennepin Overland Model Railroad Club open house	Most Saturday's and Sunday's Oct 2019 thru January 2020. 1:00 pm— 4:00 pm	62501 East 38th Street Minneapolis MN 55406 (612) 276-9034	\$5 \$15 family
Randolph Railroad Days (15th annual)	March 28th, 29th 2020 10:00am—3:00 PM	Randolph Minnesota High School Randolph MN 55065	\$6
Newport Model RR Club Train Flea Market	Jan 18 2020 9:00 am –2:00 pm	Woodbury High School 2665 Woodlane Drive Woodbury MN 55125	\$5
Great Tri-State Rail Sale	Saturday Jan 25 2020 9:00 am— 3:00 pm	La Crosse Center 2nd and Pearl Streets Lacrosse WI	\$5
Worlds Greatest Hobby on Tour	Feb 29 and March 1 2020 10:00 AM—5:00 PM	RiverCentre St Paul MN (next to Excel Arena)	\$10

Northstar News
1515 Creek Meadow Dr NW
Coon Rapids MN 55433 3768
Address Correction Requested

