

Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE)

What is CREATE?

CREATE is a first-of-its-kind public/private partnership between the State of Illinois, City of Chicago, American Association of Railroads (BNSF, CN, CP, CSX, Norfolk Southern, UP), National Railroad Passenger Corp (Amtrak), and the Commuter Rail Division of the RTA (Metra).

The CREATE program was formed a decade ago and offers a common sense, comprehensive and regional solution to numerous rail issues to the program may be shifted towards costs accrued by the CN acquisition, making them a direct competitor for already scarce state and federal funding.

The goals of the program are to:

- Reduce rail and motorist congestion
- Improve passenger rail service
- Enhance public safety
- Promote economic development
- Create jobs
- Improve air quality
- Reduce noise from idling or slow-moving trains

For area residents, CREATE means reduced traffic congestion, shorter commuting times, better air quality and increased public safety. For workers and businesses, it means more jobs and economic opportunity.

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Why CREATE?

Chicago is the busiest rail gateway in the United States, accounting for one-third of the nation's freight rail traffic. Each day, about 1,200 trains pass through the region leading to an increase in traffic jams, commuter delays and rail shipping times.

Over the next 20 years, demand for freight rail service in Chicago is expected to nearly double. That means more jobs for Illinois workers and increased economic opportunity for Illinois businesses, but only if we can meet the growing need for rail service.

If rail capacity and infrastructure issues are not addressed, studies show the Chicago region will miss out on 17,000 jobs and \$2 billion in annual economic production within two decades.

CREATE: A Project of National Significance

CREATE will invest \$1.5 billion in critically needed capital improvements to increase the efficiency of the region's rail infrastructure by focusing rail traffic on five rail corridors. The work includes:

- 25 new roadway overpasses or underpasses at locations where auto and pedestrian traffic currently crosses railroad tracks at grade level
- 6 new rail overpasses or underpasses to separate passenger and freight train tracks
- Viaduct improvements
- Grade crossing safety enhancements
- Extensive upgrades of tracks, switches and signal systems