



State of Illinois  
Pat Quinn, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation  
Erica J. Borggren, Acting Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
October 21, 2014

CONTACT:  
Guy Tridgell 312.793.4199  
Paris Ervin 312.814.4693

## Construction Begins on Chicago-Moline Rail Service

*Eola Yard Improvements Add Capacity to Route, Create Jobs, Improve Travel Options*

**CHICAGO** – Governor Pat Quinn and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) announced today the start of construction on the new passenger rail route connecting Chicago and Moline. The \$23 million in improvements underway at the BNSF Railway’s Eola Yard in Aurora are made possible by funds from the Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) \$177 million grant toward the project, as well as \$78 million in matching funds provided by Governor Quinn’s *Illinois Jobs Now!* capital program.

“This project marks the start of better transportation between these two vital areas of the state,” Governor Quinn said. “Passenger rail is creating jobs and opening new economic development opportunities across Illinois, and will help travelers get to their destinations quickly and efficiently for years to come. I am proud that our state is leading the way on this transportation trend of the future.”

The work that just started consists of track improvements and all necessary signal and capacity upgrades to accommodate the additional trains that will be utilizing the Eola Yard each day once the Chicago-Moline service begins. Grading and drainage improvements also are included. The estimated completion date is Summer 2015.

“This truly is an historic day and one more major step toward reestablishing passenger service between Chicago and Moline,” said Acting Illinois Transportation Secretary Erica Borggren. “The improvements at the Eola Yard would not be possible without the hard work of our partners at the FRA and BNSF Railway. By working together, we are creating jobs and economic development, improving travel options for communities along the line and building a 21st century transportation system for Illinois.”

The Eola Yard project will facilitate additional passenger trains on the 109-mile stretch between Chicago and Wyanet and help improve operational efficiencies for existing service between Chicago and Quincy. Earlier this year, the state reached an agreement with the Iowa Interstate Railroad (IAIS) to begin designing the signal system, as well as the track and tie improvements, to permit passenger trains on the 53 miles from Wyanet to Moline. Once that process is completed later this year, IDOT can begin finalizing an additional agreement with the IAIS that spells out maintenance and operations responsibilities, as well as a construction timeline.

“Reestablishing passenger service between Chicago and Moline is critical to the development of a Midwest passenger rail network that will connect the 40 largest markets in the Midwest,” said Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph C. Szabo. “These improvements at Eola Yard will help make this new service to Moline a reality, while also improving existing passenger rail service to Galesburg and Quincy – a real benefit for the traveling public.”

The restoration of service to the Quad Cities for the first time since 1979 will begin with two daily round-trips, with stops in LaGrange, Naperville, Plano, Mendota, Princeton and Geneseo.

“BNSF Railway is pleased to be partnering with the State of Illinois on this important project,” said D.J. Mitchell, BNSF assistant vice president passenger operations safety and technical training. “We look forward to working with state and federal officials to complete this segment of the Chicago-Quad Cities Passenger Rail program.”

For more information on the project, visit [goo.gl/6W6YuS](http://goo.gl/6W6YuS).

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