



New high-speed rail train station on track for summer 2017 opening

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
February 14 2017 8:47 AM

Video and photos courtesy of the 1st MidAmerica Sky Cam. For more information about 1st MidAmerica Credit Union visit <http://www.1stMidAmerica.org>.



ALTON - The new 9,000-square-foot Alton high-speed rail train station is still on target to start operations by summer 2017, the city's Director of Development and Housing **Greg Caffey** said late last week.

Caffey said city officials are negotiating with Amtrak on a date to start service, but the new station should be ready for operation by late June.

“Things are going according to plan,” he said about construction work on the new station.

Alton Mayor Brant Walker said previously about the new train station: “It will look like a modern take on a Frank Lloyd Wright building with brick and stone working with the surrounding land.”

When completed, the station will act as the start and end point for a high-speed rail connecting Alton with Chicago. That trip's estimated time will be as short as four hours. Amtrak will be the passenger rail line utilizing the track and station.

The area around the new station will be utilized for retail after bids are taken before the end of the year, Walker said. Green space will also be integral to the new station.

The city is working with the **Sierra Club** to create walking and bike trails in the former **Robert P. Wadlow Golf Course**. He said the city and the Sierra Club would plant native vegetation, which is low maintenance.

Caffey said one of the keys to the project is the City of Alton will have control of the grounds of the train station and development of the project.

“There are 30 acres available to develop proposals from interested developers,” he said. “We control the grounds and that gives us a lot of leverage on what goes in there. We own the ground and what is ultimately placed out there. The administration’s goal is to have something that will be established unique near the train station site.”



