



Gov. Pritzker Joins Federal, State and Local Leaders to Break Ground on Next Phase of Springfield Rail Improvements Project

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Springfield, Ill. – Governor JB Pritzker was joined by federal, state and local leaders to announce [the next phase of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project and break ground on the construction of double-track rail bridges at Fifth and Sixth Streets – also known as Business Loop 55 – as well as the Laurel Street underpass.](#)

The historic, bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital program invested \$122 million to fully complete the Springfield Rail Improvement Project, including nearly \$30 million to begin this phase.

“Illinois isn’t just making repairs to our infrastructure. Instead, our state is finally making real investments for the future with the historic, bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital plan – establishing Illinois as a leading supply chain hub of the nation for generations to come, making sure our roads are safer for drivers and passengers, and saving money for all of our residents,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “This initiative has been years in the making. The City of Springfield has long sought to address these problems, whether it’s waiting at a train crossing for what seems like forever, or the issue of noise at all hours of the night. Together, these projects address issues of public safety, traffic congestion and commercial development – and most of all, they honor the livability of this community.”

“This important investment will increase safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists while decreasing congestion and improving passenger rail. It also boosts economic development in our community,” said U.S. Senator Dick Durbin. “I am proud to have

helped secure \$36 million in BUILD grant funding the Springfield Rail Improvement Project. Senator Duckworth and I will continue advocating for strong investments in Illinois' transportation infrastructure.”

“Bipartisan rail projects like these are critical for improving public safety, reducing roadway congestion and creating good-paying jobs,” said U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth. “Today’s groundbreaking is an important step forward for Springfield, and I’ll keep working to secure infrastructure investments all throughout Illinois that help improve the lives of hard-working Illinoisans and keep our local and regional economies competitive.”

“Finalizing rail consolidation in Springfield will alleviate traffic congestion, mitigate a number of public safety hazards throughout the city, and reduce noise and commotion associated with railway transportation,” said Sen. Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill). “This is the culmination of years of hard work and joint planning by state, local, and federal leaders. These improvements were made possible because the Governor’s office and IDOT officials take seriously the economic and community benefits of investing in our infrastructure and have made it a top priority since day one.”

“The City of Springfield appreciates the commitment of our federal leaders, Senator Durbin, Senator Duckworth, Congressman Davis and Congressman LaHood, to this project. We also thank Governor Pritzker and the state legislature for passing this critical \$122 million Capital Bill allocation,” said Springfield Mayor Jim Langfelder. “The Springfield Rail Improvements Project represents true, non-partisan partnership on all levels of government. We are grateful that the momentum keeps building to complete the 10th Street Rail by 2025.”

The overall Springfield Rail Improvements Project will relocate all passenger and freight traffic from the Third Street corridor to Tenth Street, constructing underpasses and one overpass at critical rail crossings on both the Tenth and Nineteenth Street corridors. This project addresses issues of public safety, traffic congestion, community livability and commercial development. An underpass at Carpenter Street was completed in 2016 and an underpass at Ash Street opened Nov. 1. The project is being directed as a cooperative venture of IDOT, Sangamon County and the City of Springfield.

Both Fifth Street and Sixth Street – also known as Business Loop 55 – are major arterials on Springfield’s south side. Both streets carry public transportation-bus traffic and school bus traffic. The new double-track bridges will replace existing single track bridges with inadequate vertical clearance.

In addition to rail safety improvements, the vehicle height restrictions on Business 55 through the City will be constructed at a higher elevation thus eliminating this dangerous condition. The estimated cost for these bridges is \$44 million, with \$17.97 million coming from Rebuild Illinois, \$22 million from a federal BUILD grant and \$4.03 million from the City of Springfield. Completion of the bridges is scheduled for 2022.

The Laurel Street underpass is the second phase of the Ash Street and Laurel Street Grade Separation Project. The underpass consists of lowering Laurel Street between Sixth and Eleventh Streets and constructing new bridges, thus creating double tracks for the existing Norfolk Southern and proposed Union Pacific and Amtrak lines. This project includes grading, drainage and track work between South Grand Avenue and Sixth Street. The cost for the Ash Street and Laurel Street Grade Separation Project is \$48 million, with \$12 million coming from Rebuild Illinois, \$15 million from the Illinois Commerce Commission and \$21 million from federal and other sources. Completion of the Laurel Street Underpass is scheduled for 2020.

Additional information on these specific projects as well as the entire Springfield Rail Improvements Project can be found at www.springfieldrailroad.com.