

Gov. Pritzker And U.S. Senators Durbin And Duckworth Break Ground On \$86 Million Transportation Center In Sangamon

October 12 2021 2:30 PM



SPRINGFIELD – Governor JB Pritzker joined U.S. Senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth today along with stakeholders and local leaders to break ground on a new, \$86 million Hub Transportation Center that will service the Sangamon region.

Partially funded by \$15 million from Governor Pritzker’s bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital plan, the first in nearly a decade, the Hub is part of a larger \$122 million total investment through the Springfield Rail Improvements Project. The multi-phased project is a large-scale effort supported by local, state, and federal funding designed to alleviate rail congestion in downtown Springfield by consolidating train traffic from

Third Street to 10th Street and by constructing a series of overpasses and underpasses along the corridor.

“This is a monumental collaboration of the federal government, the state of Illinois, Sangamon County, the City of Springfield, and rail companies to create jobs, invest in vibrant community spaces, and build a better transportation system in our capital city,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Preserving and growing Illinois’ long legacy as a leader in the transportation sector is all the more important as we shape our economic recovery so we can vault ahead of others as we emerge from the pandemic. And Springfield is helping to lead the way.”

“Today marks the groundbreaking of a central piece of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project—the Springfield-Sangamon County Transportation Center will serve as the area’s hub, bringing together Amtrak trains and Springfield Mass Transit District buses at one location right in the heart of Springfield,” U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) said. “The Springfield Rail Improvement Project is a perfect example of state, local, and federal dollars working together to make our community better. I’ve been proud to work with Senator Duckworth to bring home much-needed federal support for this project, including nearly \$60 million in federal funding since 2014 to expedite construction. With today’s event, we are one step closer to a more efficient rail system in Springfield that will dramatically reduce delays and congestion and increase safety.”

“Projects like the HUB Transportation Center and the Springfield Rail Improvement Project are great examples of the multiplying effect federal resources can have on state and local infrastructure investments,” U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) said. “They show the impact these federal resources can have on our communities and the kind of work we can do when all levels of government come together. I’m proud to join Governor Pritzker and all of our state and local leaders today for this groundbreaking, and I’ll keep working with Senator Durbin to provide federal support for important infrastructure improvements all across our state.”

The Hub Transportation Center will serve as the new multimodal operating base for the Amtrak and the Sangamon Mass Transit District bus system. This will improve connectivity across the state by bringing public mass transit to Sangamon County communities Chatham, Sherman, Springfield, Rochester, and Riverton.

Once complete, the transportation improvements, made possible by the Springfield Rail Improvement Project, will not only alleviate congestion, but will ease the connection between Chicago, Springfield, and St. Louis. As Illinois shapes a robust recovery in response to the pandemic, the project will stimulate economic growth by attracting more residents and visitors to downtown Springfield.

More than half of the improvement projects are completed or under construction, including the recently completed Laurel Street underpass and the Ash Street Bridge, which were finished ahead of schedule. Projects also include the Union Pacific Bridges located at 5th and 6th streets in Springfield and the new ground rail segment between South Grand and Capitol Avenues in Springfield.

The Springfield Rail Improvement Project will also facilitate a major expansion of employment and services in the local Medical District Campus and surrounding areas, which can only be fully executed once the rail lines sit farther from the hospital. The multi-million-dollar private investment in the campus will add thousands of jobs in addition to the construction jobs created by Rebuild Illinois. Furthermore, the project will reduce residential and business flooding during severe rain by providing thousands of gallons of new floodwater detention.

“The Springfield Rail Improvements Project does more than create jobs; this project establishes a career path for a diversified Central Illinois workforce in the construction industry,” said Tim Drea, President of the Illinois AFL-CIO. “These construction industry careers result from business, labor, Federal, State, County, and Local governments working together to improve our aging infrastructure.”

“From the first, Governor Pritzker understood the critical safety, social equity, and economic development benefits of this project for our community,” said Andy Van Meter, Sangamon County Board Chair. “Equally important, he understood that this 6 mile stretch of tracks through Springfield was the major bottleneck on the entire state-wide corridor.”

“This Transportation Hub is a significant public-private partnership that will transform the travel experiences of our residents, businesses, and visitors in our capital city,” said Springfield Mayor Jim Langfelder. “We appreciate Governor Pritzker’s support, along with our federal and state legislative leaders, for the critical funding to make years of planning and preparation for this center a reality. Even through a pandemic, the Springfield Rail Improvements Project has continued to progress, and we are proud of this work that will positively transform our community.”

“The impact The Hub Transportation Center will have throughout the Springfield community cannot be overstated,” said State Senator Doris Turner (D-Springfield). “Springfield’s downtown, adjacent neighborhoods, medical district, local businesses, Union labor, and everyday lives will be generationally transformed”.

“The high-speed rail project is a game-changer for people traveling to and from central Illinois. Not only will travel time be greatly reduced, but also the people in the nearby neighborhoods will have a much safer and quieter place to live. I care about the people

of my district and have put my complete support behind this project,” said State Representative Sue Scherer (D-Springfield).

“Today’s funding announcement brings us one step closer to the completion of the Springfield Rail Improvements Project, which has been under development since 2014,” said State Senator Sally Turner (R-Beason). “Once finished, this project will have addressed several public safety and traffic congestion issues as well as enhanced livability and commercial activity within the city of Springfield.”

“This is an important and historic project that will provide benefits to the Springfield area for decades,” said State Senator Steve McClure (R-Springfield). “I’m thankful we were able to work to successfully secure this important funding for our region.”

In addition to the \$15 million in Rebuild Illinois funding for the Sangamon Mass Transit District Transfer Facility, another \$12 million from Rebuild Illinois as well as \$59 in county and federal funds will improve the Amtrak Station, parking garage, and County Square. The Springfield Rail Project is on schedule for completion in 2025.

The Hub Transportation Center builds upon the administration’s historic investment in infrastructure improvements to help Illinois maintain its status as a global hub for transportation, shipping, and logistics. Currently, Illinois is the only state where all seven Class 1 transcontinental railroads operate. To uphold this status, Rebuild Illinois dedicates more than \$1 billion to expand and improve Illinois’ rail systems. With the continued support of Illinois’ congressional delegation, Illinois remains an international leader in transportation.