



IOWA RAILS

IOWA ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

*****March 2007*****

NARP Region 10 Meeting Council Bluffs, Iowa

Date: Saturday, March 31, 2007

Location: Lewis & Clark Rooms
Holiday Inn, Ameristar
2202 River Drive
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501
(712) 322-5050

Time 9:30 am Registration Opens
10:00 am – 3:30 pm Meeting

Cost \$15.00 (includes buffet lunch)

Confirmed speakers include:

- ✧ NARP President George Chilson
- ✧ NARP Vice President Dave Randall
- ✧ Iowa Transportation Commission Vice Chair Barry Cleaveland
- ✧ Nebraska State Senator Abbie Cornett (also MIPRC Commissioner)
- ✧ Executive Director Midwest High Speed Rail Association Rick Harnish
- ✧ Amtrak Manager of Media Relations Marc Magliari
- ✧ Omaha Streetcar President Gerald W. Kopiasa
- ✧ Iowa State Representative Paul Shomsor (Dist. 100) (invited)

Reservations need to be made by 3/23/07

Name(s): _____

_____ @ \$15.00 _____

Reservations need to be sent to
IARP % Mary E. Buczek
1422 West 9th Street
Davenport, Iowa 52804-4018
(563) 323-3390
(563) 391-8100 FAX
Gardenrr1@gmail.com

If sending email – put “Region 10 meeting” in subject line

National Rail Passenger Leadership Summit

www.nationalrailpassengersummit.org

Date: Friday, March 23, 2007

Location: Union League Club of Chicago
65 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604
312-427-7800

Time: 9:00 am – 4:45 pm

Cost \$75.00 (Breakfast & Lunch included)

Confirmed Speakers Include:

- George Chilson, President, National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP), "Sharpening the focus and honing the strategy."
- Jim Coston, Coston & Rademacher, P.C., and Corridor Capital LLC., former member of the Amtrak Reform Council, "Passenger rail vision."
- Tim Gillespie, Consultant for BGL Associates and former Vice President, Government and Public Affairs, Amtrak, "Financing the passenger rail effort."
- Rick Harnish, Midwest High Speed Rail Association, "The successes of the Illinois Plan"
- Stuart Nicholson, Public Information Officer, Ohio Rail Development Commission, "Ohio's vision and successes."

Midwest High Speed Rail Association Annual Meeting NARP Region 6 & 7 Meeting

www.midwesthsr.org

Date: Saturday, March 24, 2007

Location: Union League Club of Chicago
65 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60604
312-427-7800

Time: 8:30 am – 3:30 pm

Cost: \$55.00 (lunch included)
\$120.00 (for both events)

- **Keynote Speaker** - Anne P. Canby, President, Surface Transportation Policy Project
- **Book signing:** Alfred Runte, Author, *Allies of the Earth, Railroads and the Soul of Preservation*
- **DC Update:** George Chilson, President, National Association of Railroad Passengers

Our friends at the Environmental Law and Policy Council (ELPC) have generously arranged for a limited number of hotel rooms for Summit attendees.

The rate is \$122.32 single, \$136.63 for two double beds at Club Quarters (rates include taxes), plus a separate \$15 agency booking fee. These rates are only available for reservations made before March 8, 2007, are subject to availability, and there are a very limited number of double rooms. Reservations must be made through Mimi or Connie at the Travel Agency, 1-800-782-1715, to qualify. You must tell them the reservation is at the ELPC rate. Note that the agency also assesses a one-time \$15 booking fee.

Please do not contact the Club Quarters directly. The Club Quarters is located at 75 East Wacker Drive, Chicago. The hotel is about 9/10 of a mile from the Union League Club. (Note: There is more than one Club Quarters in Chicago. This is the one on East Wacker near Michigan Avenue.)

If you are not familiar with housing rates in downtown Chicago, typical rack rates are double or more.

Compact Legislation in Iowa

HF 278: A bill for an act relating to the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact and providing an effective date.

February 08, 2007 House File 278 is introduced
February 15, 2007 House File is assigned to subcommittee
February 24, 2007 House passes out of committee

SF54: A bill for an act relating to the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact and providing an effective date.

January 25, 2007 SF 54 is introduced
January 29, 2007 Senate File is assigned to subcommittee

What is the history of the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission - MIPRC?

In 1995 and 1996, state legislators across the region wanted to do something to further the development of high speed rail in the region. They asked the Midwestern Legislative Conference for help. The MLC formed a task force of interested legislators, who first met in December of 1996. Over the course of time and many discussions, amongst themselves and with federal, other state, and local officials, members of the private sector and advocacy groups, the task force decided that a compact among the Midwestern states was the best way for state elected officials to help spur better passenger rail service in the region. The Compact language was developed during 1998 and 1999, and first introduced in 2000.

Why a compact?

Intercity passenger rail development is usually a multi-state pursuit. The MIPRC brings the strength of elected state officials (the legislature and the executive branch, though the governor) in each state to bear. And, united among states, we are even stronger.

Because compacts must be passed by an eligible state's legislature, and signed by the governor, with identical language in each state, the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact brings structure and legitimacy to *multi-state* advocacy for passenger rail by state elected officials.

Who is eligible to join the MIPRC? How do they?

Midwestern states are eligible to join the MIPRC. The MIPRC is a compact agreement, which means that the language of the compact must be passed into law in an eligible state before a state can become a participating member. Four state leaders from each state are then appointed to the commission: two gubernatorial appointments (the governor or his/her designee and a member of the private sector); and a member from each legislative chamber.

More than half of the eligible states – Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota and Ohio – have joined the MIPRC and are active members.

To achieve the most effectiveness, the MIPRC hopes that the remaining four states – Iowa, Kansas, South Dakota and Wisconsin – will join. MIPRC commissioners promote the whole region, but don't have the same access in non-compact states as they do in those that have joined.

Which remaining states have introduced enabling legislation to join the MIPRC?

Two of the non-member states - Iowa and Wisconsin - considered enabling legislation in 2006. It is an active proposal in Iowa during the current legislative session.

Website for the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission is: www.miprc.org

Cedar-Iowa River Rail Transit Project Update

Future plans for excursion and commuter rail service in the Cedar Rapids-Iowa City corridor were announced at a meeting of the "15 in 5" Light Rail Committee held at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids on February 1, 2007. A feasibility study of public passenger rail transit service for the Cedar Rapids-Coralville/Iowa City-Amana Colonies area was completed in December, 2006. This study provided an evaluation of the potential for passenger rail service in the Cedar Rapids-Iowa City corridor and surrounding vicinity.

The study identifies the following timeline for implementing passenger rail service:

Immediately - special event passenger rail excursion service

Short range future (3 to 5 years) - North Liberty to Iowa City service

Long range future (10 to 20 years) - Eastern Iowa Airport to Iowa City service; downtown Cedar Rapids to Eastern Iowa Airport service

The City of Coralville is taking the lead on an initial project to begin passenger rail excursion service. The service would be oriented to special event trips in the Coralville-Iowa City metropolitan area, as well as special event excursion trips in the larger Cedar Rapids-Coralville/Iowa City-Amana Colonies area. It is intended to build off of the excursion service and eventually establish regular rail transit service as outlined in the recently completed study.

The project elements which have been identified for phase one service include:

1) Constructing a rail spur from the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway - CRANDIC - line into the Iowa River Landing redevelopment area in Coralville. This is currently the location of the Marriott Hotel and Conference Center, and will eventually be a multi-use entertainment, residential, and commercial district. Estimated cost is \$750,000.

2) Acquisition of rolling stock. The desire is to obtain either a locomotive-hauled passenger rail car or a self-propelled rail car which would be used exclusively for this service. Estimated cost is \$1.25 million.

3) Construct a layover track in the Iowa River Landing area for the acquired rolling stock. It is expected that the rail cars would be on display in the Iowa River Landing area when not in use. Estimated cost is \$100,000.

4) Upgrade of the CRANDIC line between Coralville and Iowa City to Federal Railroad Administration Class III standards. The upgrade of trackage is a key element of the recently completed passenger rail study, as it will ensure safe operation of passenger rail service while at the same time providing an incentive for the local private railroads to cooperate in the operation of passenger rail excursion service. Estimated cost is \$1 million

An agreement will be entered into with the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway for operation of passenger rail excursion service over their line. This will allow for the continued operation of rail freight service, as outlined in the recently completed study. The study identifies many existing opportunities for passenger rail excursion trips in the Cedar Rapids-Coralville/Iowa City-Amana Colonies area.

The intention is to use the excursion service as an initial step in building regular passenger rail transit service in the Cedar Rapids-Iowa City corridor over the next 20 years. Public transit is a successful, integral element of the transportation system in the Coralville-Iowa City metropolitan area, and the proposed passenger rail service is viewed as a logical extension of the existing system.

Thank you IARP Excursion Committee Media Relations Coordinator Ken May for this article.

IARP Endorses Cedar Rapids – Iowa City Light Rail Project

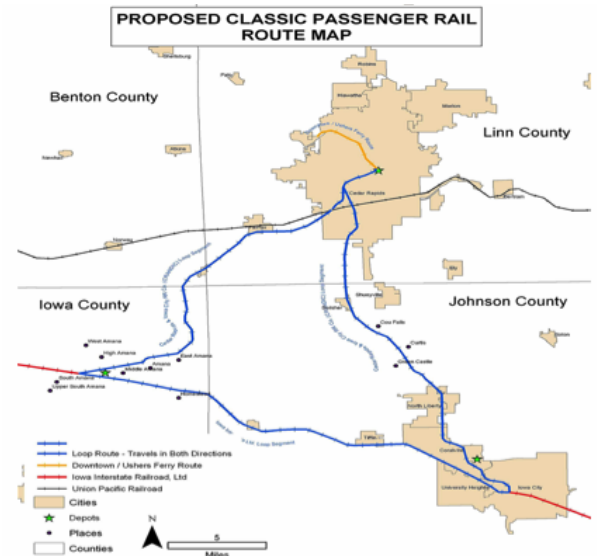
The Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers (IARP) strongly endorses the three major conclusions of the Cedar-Iowa River Rail Transit Project feasibility study announced by the “15 in 5” Light Rail Committee on December 7, 2006. IARP is ready to assist with special event train excursions between Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, and the Amnans on the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway and the Iowa Interstate Railroad using the Hawkeye Express passenger train equipment owned by the Iowa Northern Railway. Two IARP members, Eliot Keller and Kenneth May, are working with Joshua Schamberger, President, and Laurie Haman, Communications Director, of the Iowa City/Coralville Convention and Visitors Bureau to plan demonstration train rides in the spring. “We predict that there will be great public demand for different types of rail excursions in the future”, says IARP Excursion Committee Media Relations Coordinator Kenneth May of Marion.

IARP concurs with study conclusions by R. L. Banks and Associates of Washington, DC, that commuter rail service is feasible between North Liberty and Iowa City in three to five years and between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City in six to ten years. Rapid population growth in the “I-380 Corridor” will support future commuter rail service as traffic congestion and gas prices will in all likelihood increase significantly. According to the study, the total cost of high speed commuter train service between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City is estimated at \$70 million while the total cost of adding additional lanes to Interstate 380 between Cedar Rapids and Coralville is estimated at \$400 million. “Commuter rail is not only an environmentally friendly but also a cost effective transportation option for the region”, says IARP Excursion Chair Eliot Keller of Iowa City.

IARP urges area residents to contact their elected officials and ask them to support the Cedar-Iowa River Rail Transit Project. IARP requests that local, state, and national elected representatives pursue federal and state funding for this important project. IARP thanks the members of the “15 in 5” Light Rail Committee for their time and efforts since the project stated in 2005 as well as the feasibility study investors for their financial support and vision.

The advocacy group also thanks the Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway and the Iowa Interstate Railroad for their support of the project. “IARP believes that now is the time to give the residents of the ‘I-380 Corridor’ fast, frequent, dependable, and environmentally friendly rail passenger service”, says IARP Counselor to the President George Davison, Jr., of Des Moines.

Thank you IARP Excursion Committee Media Relations Coordinator Ken May for this article





California Zephyr Support Group

*Photo by IARP member Judy
Lancaster*

Richard I. Schmeling, past president of ProRail Nebraska has contacted IARP about starting a California Zephyr Support Group. This support group will hopefully be made up with members from all the states that the California Zephyr runs through. Currently this new group has representatives from Nebraska and Colorado.

This support group will be similar to the support group for the TEXAS EAGLE. The website for the Texas Eagle support group is www.texaseagle.com/home.htm

****Blackhawk Area Railroad Coalition (BARC)****

The Blackhawk Area Railroad Coalition met Tuesday, February 20, in Galena, Illinois. At the meeting, Midwest High Speed Rail Association Executive Director Rick Harnish said that the Amtrak study of the route should be released within the next couple of weeks. The study may be released as soon as next week. Website for the coalition is www.returnthetrain.com

****Quad Cities Passenger Train Study****

A letter from the Illinois DOT for a study of passenger train service between Chicago and the Quad Cities was sent within the last 14 days. It is expected that the study will begin by April and will be completed by late summer.



Mayor Gordon Canfield, Grinnell, Iowa (left) and Larry Goodrich, President of the Grinnell Area Chamber of Commerce

Photo by IARP Excursion Chair Eliot Keller

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 The Inaugural Special shows teamwork at its best. The Inaugural Special became a reality with less than one week's planning. In fact, the three sponsors agreed to make this idea a reality within less than two hours.

*Email from Henry Posner III, ,
 Chairman Railroad Development Corporation*

To all, I wish I could have been on this but had to be in Estonia. The consolation prize was my last ride on my favorite SCHEDULED passenger train, the private sector Tallinn-Moscow overnight train.

I am especially glad to hear that everything went safely, and that more people know about IAIS and railroads in general as a result.

Best wishes,
 Henry

Inaugural Special
 Des Moines – Iowa City – Des Moines

Thursday, January 11, 2007

Sponsored by
Iowa Interstate Railroad
Burlington Northern Santa Fe RR
Iowa Assn of RR Passengers

*Email from Dennis H. Miller,
 President of Iowa Interstate Railroad*

To: Jim, Eliot and George

Please pass on my sincere thanks to the volunteers for the train on Thursday. They were courteous, acted in a safe manner, passed on safety tips to the passengers, and professional. The trip was a success by all accounts (even though the violins were late).

Jim
Hope the Governor was pleased.

George and Eliot

You both have voices for radio, but look good on TV also.
It just shows what can be done in 4-5 days if you don't sleep.

Thanks again
Denny



IARP Excursion Chair Eliot Keller; IARP Past President Dick Welch; Rail Development Corporation Robert Pietrandrea; Iowa State Senator David Hartsuch (Dist. 41), Iowa; Interstate Railroad President Dennis Miller and IARP Car Host Jerry Mennenga

Photo by IARP member Jerry Droll

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