



IOWA RAILS

IOWA ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

January 2007

IARP to meet in Coralville

Our next meeting is Saturday, January 20, 2007, The Edge Restaurant, 807 1st Avenue, Coralville, Iowa 52241. The phone number is (319) 337-5680.

Attendees may enjoy an optional buffet lunch at 11:30 a.m. for \$10.00 including the tax and tip. The program and business meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. Meals will be paid for by each individual participating in the lunch.

The program includes:

Pat Hendricks, President, IARP
Passenger rail update

Dick Welch, member of the NARP Advisory Board and former Region 10 NARP Director.

Josh Schamberger, President of the Iowa City Coralville Convention and Visitors Bureau and co-chair of the 15 in 5 Light Rail Committee

Topics:

Federal legislation supporting the national rail passenger system

Midwest Regional Rail Initiative

Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission

Cedar – Iowa River Rail Transit Project

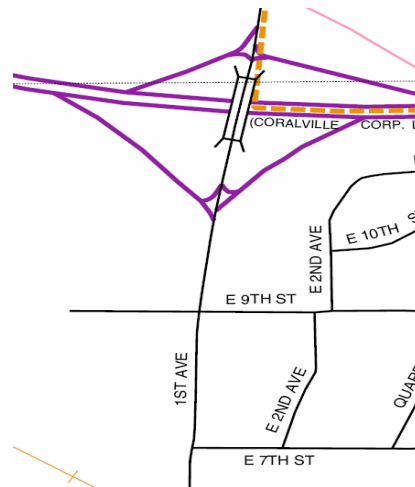
Election of Officers and Directors

The public is invited and welcome and encouraged to attend the program and meeting.



The Hawkeye Express runs between Coralville, Iowa and Kinnick Stadium during the football season.

The Edge Restaurant is located south of the 1st Avenue exit on I-80, Coralville, Iowa



Cedar – Iowa River Rail Transit Project Feasibility Study

The R.L. Banks & Associates report on the feasibility of rail service was released on December 7, 2006. A copy of this study is available at <http://jccog.org/headlines.asp?ID=74>

Quoting the study --

Findings of all technical tasks are summarized in Table ES-1. It is apparent that excursion service – either special event or regularly scheduled tours – is an option that is feasible to pursue immediately. The regular commuter service options between North Liberty and Iowa City, the Eastern Iowa Airport and Iowa City and on all three corridors between Cedar Rapids, Iowa City and the Amana Colonies are more expensive and the timing of implementation is a decision to be weighed by the communities as demand grows and funding becomes available.

Table ES-1
Summary Service Statistics
(In 2006 Dollars)

Service	Capital Costs				Ridership (2)	Annual Operating Costs
	Track/Bridges (1)	Equipment (Purchased or Leased)	Stations & Layover Facilities	Total		
Special Event Excursion Service	\$25,000	\$3,000+/- (Leased)	\$15,000	\$ 40,000	Up to 6,046	\$25,000
Vintage Excursion Service	25,000	400,000	15,000	440,000	Up to 75	20,000
Alternative 2. Eastern Iowa – Airport to Iowa City Commuter Service (2006)	4,107,000	4,500,000	12,800,000	21,407,000	837	5,014,000
Alternative 2. (2030)	14,981,000	7,500,000	12,800,000	35,281,000	1,991	11,960,000
Alternative 3. N. Liberty – Iowa City Commuter Service (2006)	1,448,000	8,400,000	8,800,000	18,648,000	742	4,078,000
Alternative 3. (2030)	6,615,000	12,600,000	8,800,000	28,015,000	1,336	6,797,000

Notes:

1. CRANDIC has reserved the right to consider whether rail must be replaced on the Hills Line prior to initiating 30 mph, 2006 commuter service. If so, capital costs would increase by approximately \$9,247,000.
2. Special Excursion Service ridership shown represents the estimated potential rail market. Actual ridership would be limited by train seating capacity and whether more than one trip was offered in conjunction with various events.

Below is a Passenger Rail Proposal to be sent to the Iowa Legislators.

ENHANCED RAIL PASSENGER PROJECTS BILL PROPOSAL FOR 2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

12/14/06

SUMMARY:

We propose that the Legislative Service Bureau draft a bill called "Enhanced Passenger Rail Service" which would approve support of existing Amtrak (National Railroad Passenger Corporation) service serving Iowa and Iowans and provide state funding for three other projects in Iowa.

Existing service is:

Amtrak *California Zephyr*
Burlington<>Mount Pleasant<>Ottumwa<>Osceola<>Creston<>Omaha (Council Bluffs)

Amtrak *Southwest Chief*
Fort Madison

Add New Service:

Moline to Council Bluffs
Four phases*
Moline<>Rock Island<>Davenport<>Iowa City
Iowa City<>Grinnell
Grinnell<>Des Moines
Des Moines<>Council Bluffs
[Possible partial Nebraska participation for this phase?]
*Note: Nebraska may want a fifth phase added at Nebraska's
expense:
Council Bluffs<>Lincoln

Cedar-Iowa River Rail Transit Project
Cedar Rapids<>Iowa City<>Amana triangle
(Funding would provide state funding for 80% of the project with the balance to be provided locally.)

Dubuque to/from Galena, Illinois

BACKGROUND:

Iowa currently has Amtrak passenger service to six communities (listed above) provided by two Amtrak routes.

The advertising/promotion/marketing component of this legislation would support the existing services as well as promote rail passenger travel on the three new projects.

The Moline<>Council Bluffs train would be an extension of the train which is anticipated to be funded by the State of Illinois. The Iowa funds would be used for necessary infrastructure (track improvements and signaling), motive power (engines) and rolling stock (passenger cars) which would be necessary to extend the train to Council Bluffs.

This would be a State of Iowa project which would be built in four phases following the establishment of the train to Moline from Chicago by the State of Illinois. It is anticipated the phases could take approximately five years total to complete.

The Galena<>Dubuque train would be an extension of the train anticipated to be funded by the State of Illinois. The Iowa funds would be used for necessary infrastructure (track improvements and signaling), motive power (engines) and rolling stock (passenger cars) which would be necessary to extend the train to Dubuque.

The Cedar-Iowa River Rail Corridor/Rail Transit Project connects Cedar Rapids, North Liberty, Iowa City and Amana in a four-county project. It would initially provide excursion passenger train service and eventually commuter rail service for the communities involved. The state funding would provide 80% of the monies needs for construction including necessary infrastructure (track improvements and signaling), passenger equipment (self-powered rail diesel units) which would be necessary to construct and operate the proposed system.

FUNDING:

Estimated necessary funding:

Moline to Council Bluffs Project	\$250,000,000.00
Dubuque to Galena Project	\$ 10,000,000.00
Cedar-Iowa River Rail Transit Project	\$ 80,000,000.00
Advertising/Promotion/Marketing Five-Year Project	\$ 2,500,000.00

Total Costs	\$342,500,000.00

NOTE:

Project estimates were developed by the Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers using best available information.

BLACKHAWK AREA RAILROAD COALITION

The Blackhawk Area Railroad Coalition (BARC) is a collection of individuals who have a very strong interest in returning rail service to northwestern Illinois and westward through northeastern Iowa and have created a "grass roots" effort to complete the goals of their mission.

The name "Blackhawk" was derived from the original rail line which served this region until it was discontinued in 1981. Several of our members have fond memories of riding the passenger rail before the service was removed.

They have come together for several reasons yet not restricted to the following:

- 1.) In order to lessen our dependence on oil, it is our goal to utilize existing rail lines for mass transit.
- 2.) To emphasize the advantages of personal time spent while riding on the train, creating a productive environment for the business commuter and a relaxing environment for the recreational passenger.
- 3.) Thirdly, to focus upon the positive environmental impact due to the reduction of the amount of automobile traffic within our communities.

The members include supportive city officials, committees, politicians and individual passenger rail enthusiasts gathered together to concert the efforts to return the service through letter writing campaigns, petitions, press releases and meetings to illustrate the magnitude of interest with our project.

The current goal is to gather as many interested individuals as possible in order to support our campaign. It is imperative that BARC members get active in sending the message out to the proper officials the real positive impact for to return passenger rail service to northwestern Illinois, northeastern Iowa and perhaps points beyond.

The website for BARC is <http://www.returnthetrain.com/Home.html>

*Information is from the group's website.

Illinois Senate Approves Midwest Interstate Rail Compact

On November 30, 2006, the Illinois Senate gave its final, unanimous approval to the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact! The bill now goes to the governor for his signature. He is expected to sign the measure.

OMAHA STREET CAR

The Omaha Street Car Collation continues its promotion.

The following is from the December issue of GROW OMAHA economic development group:

All Aboard!

A streetcar system may be coming soon to Omaha. The City is considering a \$55 million plan to build a 3.5-mile track, which would loop through downtown. Streetcars have produced a great deal of economic development in cities such as Portland, Memphis and Little Rock, Ark.

At the October meeting of Pro-Rail Nebraska, their minutes say that the activities of the Omaha Streetcar look promising.

Rail Development Corp acquires Council Bluffs operation & property

Railroad Development Corp. has acquired the Council Bluffs Great Western operation and properties from OmniTrak, for expanding and developing their rail operation, also they brought in or will have 22 passenger cars in their property down here in Council Bluffs.

Railroad Development Corporation (RDC) owns the Iowa Interstate Railroad.

*Information on the RDC purchase is provided by IARP member Roland Lynch

The website for Railroad Development Corporation is www.rrdc.com and the website for The Iowa Interstate Railroad is www.rrdc.com/op_iowa_iais.html

IARP will have a table on January 21, 2007 Central City, Iowa

The Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers will have a table at the Eastern Iowa Model Railroaders Association 15th Annual Train Show and Swap Meet in Central City, Iowa, on Sunday, January 21, 2007. The train show will take place at the Central City High School off of IA Highway 13 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. The purpose of the table will be to distribute IARP membership flyers and rail passenger information to the public. IARP members are invited to volunteer to staff the table. Contact Ken May by email at kemay59@hotmail.com or by telephone at 319-377-1379 to sign up for a shift.

Thursday, March 22, 2007

Environmental Law and Policy Council (ELPC) – 12th Annual Transportation and Land Use Meeting – Chicago, Illinois. Exact location will be announced later.

Information will be posted later at www.elpc.org

Friday, March 23, 2007

National Rail Passenger Advocates Leadership Summit, Chicago. This is a meeting of national, regional and local passenger rail advocates, including planners, government, environmentalists in support of rail passenger service.

IARP is a co-sponsor of this event. Exact location will be announced later.

Sign up for the email list at www.nationalrailpassengerrailsummit.org

Saturday, March 24, 2007

Midwest High Speed Rail Annual Meeting will be in Chicago. Location is yet to be determined.

Information will be posted later at www.midwesthsr.org

NARP MEETING – MARCH 31, 2007

IARP will host this year's NARP MEETING in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Speakers include –

George Chilson, NARP President

Barry Cleaveland, Vice Chair, Iowa Transportation Commission

The location in Council Bluffs is yet to be determined.

IARP CONTACTS

President: [Patrick Hendricks](mailto:utuiowa@qwest.net) <utuiowa@qwest.net>,
513 E. 6th St. Ste D, Des Moines, IA 50309-1917
Voice: 515-282-9289, FAX: 515-282-4642

Vice President: Gary Billmeyer,
4911 SW 19th Street, Des Moines, IA 50315, 515-285-2807

Legal Counsel: [George F. Davison, Jr.](mailto:n0zezgfd@juno.com) <n0zezgfd@juno.com>,
2746 Lynner Drive, Des Moines, IA 50310-5835
515-250-1553

Secretary: [Joe Buczek](mailto:gardenrail@gmail.com) <gardenrail@gmail.com>,
1422 West 9th Street, Davenport, IA 52804-4018 563-323-3390

Treasurer: [Mary Buczek](mailto:gardenrr1@gmail.com) <gardenrr1@gmail.com>,
1422 West 9th Street, Davenport, IA 52804-4018 563-323-3390

Director: John Ely, Jr.,
203 23rd Street, N.E., Cedar Rapids, IA 52402 319-363-3927 (term expiring 2009)

Director: Roland Lynch <rml3411@msn.com>,
P.O. Box 864, Council Bluffs, IA 51502-0864 712-323-0522 (term expiring 2007)

Director: [Judy Risvold](mailto:judy@mac.com) <judy@mac.com>,
1114 59th Street, Des Moines, IA 50311-2108, 515-277-4717 (term expiring 2008)

Excursion Chair: [Eliot A. Keller](mailto:Eliot@kzia.com) <Eliot@kzia.com>,
1244 Devon Drive NE, Iowa City, IA 52240 319-363-2061 (work) 319-337-9924 (home)

Newsletter Editor: [Mary Buczek](mailto:gardenrr1@gmail.com) <gardenrr1@gmail.com>,
1422 West 9th Street, Davenport, IA 52804-4018 563-323-3390

Membership Chair: Cathy Johnson,
242 Ferson Avenue, Iowa City, IA 52246-3509

Records Chair: Richard F. "Dick" Welch <Dick@rfwelch.com>,
3349 Southgate Court SW #108, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404-5424,
319-362-6824 Voice, 319-362-7734 FAX

General Correspondence:

IARP
3349 Southgate Court SW #108,
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404-5424
319-362-6824 (voice)
319-362-7734 (FAX)