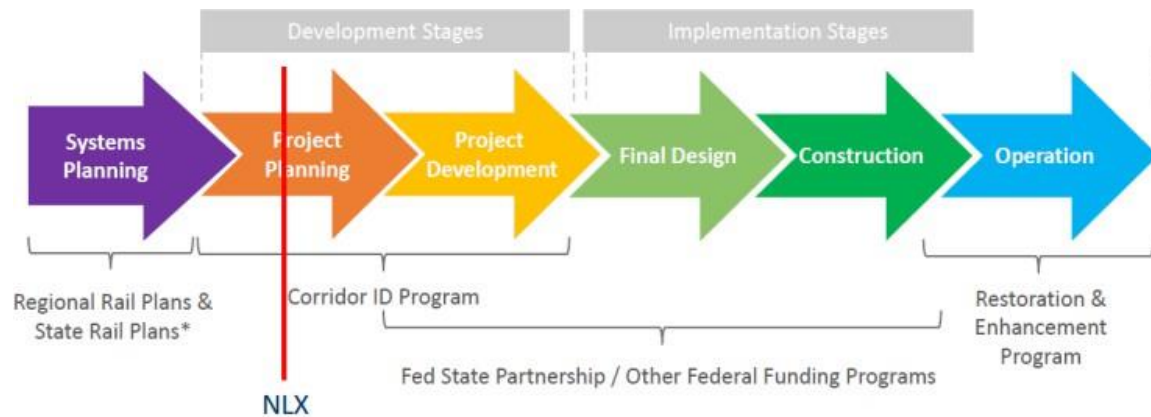


Project Brief

Addressing current community questions

NLX Passenger Rail, Mpls to Duluth. Current Phase May 2024 - Project Planning.



*Regional Rail Planning and State Rail Plans may be funded through other FRA funding programs.

Source: FRA

Implementation Stages

- *Apply for Federal capital grant*
 - May need to apply for multiple grants
- **Final Design**
 - Advance engineering to 100% design
 - Public engagement
 - Determine letting method
 - Construction agreements with BNSF
 - Prepare construction documents
- **Construction**
 - Letting
 - Construction – stations, track improvements, signals, grade crossing improvements, etc.
 - Inspection, systems testing and certification
- **Equipment Procurement**
 - Concurrent to final design and construction

<p>Where are we in the planning of this rail project?</p>	<p>MnDOT is currently working through the Project Planning phase with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Many of the following questions will be addressed as the project gets further along in the process and into the Implementation Stages.</p>
<p>At the Cambridge stop – if it is at the City Center – will the passenger train hold up traffic on Hwy 95 when it is boarding?</p>	<p>Cambridge station boarding will not be stopping traffic on Hwy 95. Most passenger trains are 4–5 cars (10 cars max). Some are double decker train cars. Bi-level cars can hold 96 people per car. Single level cars seat 60–70 passengers. We don't know what types of cars will be purchased for this line yet.</p> <p>Passenger trains operate faster than freight trains. Depending on the Service Development Plan and Final Design phases (which are next), an estimated number of riders will determine the number and type of cars to be purchased.</p>
<p>Will the train extend across Hwy 95 in Cambridge and sit for any length of time?</p>	<p>No, not expected that this will happen as it isn't long enough.</p>
<p>How many cars will there be attached to the engine?</p>	<p>Possibly up to 6. This is yet to be determined.</p>
<p>What are the steps necessary to finalize the locations of the Cambridge and Hinckley transit stations?</p>	<p>Planning is not to this point yet. We need to go through the Service Development Plan (SDP) and Final Design phases to finalize station plans. These phases will include community engagement and dialogue.</p>
<p>Will there be risk to businesses, houses and city property adjacent to the existing tracks with a second line being installed?</p>	<p>There will be no second line or double tracks installed. Modifications will be made by installing 'passing sidings' that allow trains travelling in opposite directions to pass and for modifying curves if necessary, etc. Any modification plans needed will be informed and determined by the SDP.</p>
<p>Tell us about the impact on local transit systems serving the proposed stations.</p>	<p>Service area and access development will be determined by each location. Stops are 50 miles apart in rural areas for speed and timing of trains and to help balance cost effectiveness.</p>
<p>Tell us more about the wayfinding at stations that could allow rural residents to access metropolitan destinations (like the</p>	<p>This project is not far enough along in the development stage to address these pieces. There will be efforts made to assist coordination of transit connections including buses, RideShare, and micromobility with local companies. East Central Transportation Coordinating Council (ECTRCC), East</p>

<p>VA, Abbott, Southdale Hospital, UofM, airport, etc.)</p>	<p>Central Regional Development Commission (ECRDC), and local companies will connect at the appropriate time.</p>
<p>What is a ticket price expected to be and the frequency of trips?</p>	<p>The ticket price is not set yet. This will be determined through SDP. Current estimates discussed are \$35 each way for the full ride from Mpls to Duluth. And 4 round trips a day are currently being planned with a 2.5-hour travel time.</p>
<p>What are the plans for how the different stations will operate (manned, ticketed, monitored cameras)?</p>	<p>Plans for operations of transit stations are not far enough along in the planning process. This will take place in one of the upcoming phases.</p>
<p>What type of security will be available for passenger safety and medical emergencies?</p>	<p>Passenger safety and security will be addressed by the service operator. It's anticipated that Amtrak will be the service operator. The service operator will hire and manage the employees operating and managing the train. They will be coordinating with local law enforcement and medical personnel.</p>
<p>With a growing drug epidemic in smaller towns in northern Minnesota, what assurances do residents have that this project won't increase drug trafficking into our communities?</p>	<p>Security for passenger safety, vagrancy, property will be addressed by crews on the train and local law enforcement. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) laws apply and will be enforced.</p>
<p>Are there any alternate sites being explored for Hinckley? At what stage of the project will the final site be identified and will the community have input? We are wondering when this will be so we can decide whether to tie in any City building, facility at the site or look for additional funding.</p>	<p>There will be time for public engagement during the Implementation Stage. Station location and design will not be addressed until other phases of the project have been worked through and are complete, following the FRA processes.</p> <p>That being said, MnDOT has allocated a design budget that will afford for a basic structure and design. If the cities in which NLX stations will be located envision/want/need more than what will be provided, they can choose to put additional funds toward the station structure. There has been no timeline given by MnDOT so continued monitoring of progress will be important.</p>
<p>Are the State funds that were used to unlock the Federal funds just slated for NLX or could they be used for the TC- MIL-CHI project (Borealis line)?</p>	<p>All \$194.7M was authorized for NLX except for the procurement of equipment (which includes train cars). \$15M (of the \$194.7M) is for Borealis purchasing, to provide for purchasing economies of scale.</p>

<p>Is there any competition for funds between the two rail projects? If so, what are the ramifications of that?</p>	<p>State funds of \$194.7M opens the door to secure the additional Federal funding that will be necessary for the NLX. \$15M of the \$194.7 has been allocated for the purchasing of equipment necessary for the Borealis line that runs from St. Paul to Milwaukee, and on to Chicago. Purchasing of equipment allows for better pricing, and the ability to share equipment needed by both NLX and Borealis will aid in keeping both fleets strong and maintained.</p>
<p>How long would a full round trip take and is there a possibility of additional stops to be installed in the future?</p>	<p>Multiple stops slow the speed and travel time. This is an EXPRESS train which means it's designed for higher speeds with 2.5-hour travel time from Mpls to Duluth.</p>
<p>Will the NLX be a 'gun free' zone or will concealed guns be allowed?</p>	<p>Safety is a high priority. State and local laws will apply. TSA laws will also apply. Security will be provided by the service operator and local law enforcement.</p>

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS DOCUMENT WAS CURRENT IN MAY 2024