Amtrak Expansion Feasibility Study

Regional Rail Symposium
June 10, 2008
Purpose of the Study

Identify the potential impacts of expanding passenger rail service from Oklahoma City to Kansas City

Facts and estimates – not recommendations
Need for Study

- Current information for decisions about expanded passenger rail service in Kansas and Oklahoma
- Public and local government interest
- Kansas is nearing the end of its Comprehensive Transportation Program
Study Timeline

2-11-08
Request to Amtrak

Underway

Spring 2008
Draft scope

Agree on study cost

$150,000 to $200,000

Mid-late 2008
Begin study

At least six months

2009
Release Study Report

Next Steps?
Factors to Evaluate Include:

- Capacity, track condition
- Infrastructure
- Equipment
- Ridership/revenue
- Schedules and connections
- Operating subsidies
- Crossings
- Train sets
After the Study

• Legislative decisions
• Update study
• Passenger rail plan
• Secure funding
  – State
  – Federal
• Improve infrastructure

• Improve stations
  – Local responsibility
• Improve rail crossings
• Procure train sets
• Negotiate agreements
  – Amtrak, BNSF Railway
  – OK and KS
Securing Funding

- Legislatures must decide
- KS Legislature
  - 2/3 vote of members to fund operating subsidy
- Federal funding
  - States will pursue what they’re eligible for
  - Two recent initiatives
    - $30 million matching grant program through the Federal Railroad Administration
    - House subcommittee is considering legislation for passenger rail
Share and Share Alike

- Service would share tracks owned by BNSF Railway
- Freight traffic is increasing and is important to economy
- Freight trains are slower than passenger trains
  - Freight 65 mph max
  - Passenger 79 mph max
- Freight corridor runs from Gulf to Chicago
  - Congestion anywhere on corridor can affect passenger rail
Goals of Passenger Service

1. Maximize potential ridership
2. Reasonably time-competitive with vehicle travel between the anchor cities
3. Reliable and convenient

• Sound forecasts depend on realistic scenarios that are likely to meet the goals of the service
Scenarios Include

• Station stops still being determined
  – Ridership forecasts depend on where and when the train stops
  – Not possible to stop at all cities that want a station

• Segments
  – Night: OKC to Newton
  – Night: OKC to KC via Newton connection
  – Day: OKC to KC
  – Day: FTW to KC via OKC

• Coach and Café Cars

• Top speed of 79 mph when possible (avg. will be slower)
Study Contact

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