



# MIDWEST REGIONAL RAIL INITIATIVE

RAIL PLANNING & ENGINEERING • ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING • GEOSPATIAL TECHNOLOGY

## Project Description

Quandel Consultants has provided program management services, including engineering planning, alternatives analysis, environmental studies, and implementation strategies to the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) since June 1, 2009. The MWRRI is an on-going effort to develop an improved and expanded passenger rail system in the Midwest. The sponsors of the MWRRI are the transportation agencies of eight Midwest states – Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin. The Midwest Regional Rail System (MWRRS) would use existing rights-of-way shared with existing freight and commuter services and would connect the Midwestern states and their growing populations and business centers.

The key elements of the MWRRS plan will improve Midwestern travel well beyond currently available train service. These elements include:

- Upgrading existing rail rights-of-way to permit frequent, reliable, high-speed passenger train operations. These generate significant improvements in rail efficiency, reliability and on-time performance for both passenger and freight rail systems.
- Operation of a hub-and-spoke passenger rail system providing through service and connectivity in Chicago, to locations throughout the Midwest region.
- Introduction of modern train equipment with improved amenities operating at speeds up to 110-mph.
- Provision of multimodal connections and feeder bus systems to improve system access.
- Development of a rail service that satisfies the “Vision for High Speed Rail in America”.

The MWRRS would encompass a rail network of more than 3,000 route miles and serve nine states with a combined population of 60 million people. About 80 percent of the region’s population lives within an hour drive of either an MWRRS rail station or a feeder bus station.

