Today, 60 million people are within 20 miles of a future 1,075-mile-long high-speed rail corridor. Tomorrow, no two people will be more than 5 hours away from each other.* *and most people will be much closer than that.
Linking populous regions more than 500 miles apart with high-speed rail once seemed unthinkable. That was before China deployed new advances in technology for its 818-mile Jinghu high-speed railway between Beijing and Shanghai, opening in 2011. Trains cruising at 220 mph with top speeds of 240 mph have brought China’s two largest cities to less than four hours apart. Just as importantly, the rail line has linked them to 18 populous business centers in between, like Tianjin, Nanjing and Jinan.

This report proposes a high-speed rail corridor in the United States of similar length and with similar population, economic and travel affinity characteristics. Two of America’s most populous regions are the Northeast and Midwest. Their economic capitals are New York City and Chicago, also two of America’s largest cities – 880 miles apart. Add in the nation’s capital plus five other metropolitan areas of more than 2.3 million people each, and you have a potent high-speed rail market.

In fact, in 2009, the group America 2050 identified 50 travel markets in the United States, each which could be suitable for developing high-speed rail. A single high-speed rail corridor linking the Midwest and Northeast would be able to serve one-fourth of the top 50 city-pairs America 2050 identified. Also, four of the Air Transport Association’s top 40 airline travel markets, including #3 Chicago-New York, would be served (see charts at right).

### America’s top 50 high-speed rail markets:
(lists only those in proposed Midwest-Northeast HSR Corridor)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>City-Pair</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>New York-Washington</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Chicago-Detroit</td>
<td>91.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Chicago-Columbus</td>
<td>89.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Chicago-Cleveland</td>
<td>88.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Columbus-Washington</td>
<td>88.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Cleveland-Washington</td>
<td>88.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>New York-Pittsburgh</td>
<td>88.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Detroit-New York</td>
<td>87.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Detroit-Washington</td>
<td>87.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Cleveland-New York</td>
<td>87.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Philadelphia-Pittsburgh</td>
<td>87.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Pittsburgh-Washington</td>
<td>86.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Detroit-Philadelphia</td>
<td>86.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Cleveland-Philadelphia</td>
<td>85.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Columbus-Philadelphia</td>
<td>85.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: America 2050

### America’s top 40 airline travel markets:
(lists only those in proposed Midwest-Northeast HSR Corridor)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>O&amp;D* Market</th>
<th>PDEW**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chicago-New York</td>
<td>3,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Chicago-Washington</td>
<td>1,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Detroit-New York</td>
<td>1,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Chicago-Philadelphia</td>
<td>1,267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* O&D = Origin and Destination  
**PDEW = Passengers Daily Each Way

SOURCE: Air Transport Association, 2010
Above: South Korea’s KTX high-speed rail line opened in 2004 between Seoul and Busan, with a branch now under construction to Gwangju-Songjeong. KTX moved mountains and built cities, including at this once-rural station at Cheonan-Asan near Seoul.

Left: Berlin’s new $1 billion central train station, or hauptbahnhof, unites high-speed and conventional trains on multiple levels. When this station opened in 2006, it became the largest in Europe. It sees 1,800 trains and 350,000 passengers daily.
Comparing HSR Corridors in China and the United States

**Jinghu (Beijing-Shanghai) High-Speed Railway**

Stations and their county-level city or district populations:
- Beijing = 13.3 million
- Langfang = 0.7 million
- Tianjin = 3.8 million
- Cangzhou = 0.5 million
- Dezhou = 0.4 million
- Jinan = 2 million
- Taishan = 0.6 million
- Qufu = 0.1 million
- Zaozhuang = 0.5 million
- Xuzhou = 1.8 million
- Suzhou = 0.2 million
- Bengbu = 1.1 million
- Chuzhou = 0.1 million
- Nanjing = 3 million
- Zhenjiang = 0.6 million
- Changzhou = 1 million
- Wuxi = 1.1 million
- Suzhou = 1 million
- Kunshan = 0.7 million
- Shanghai = 19 million

**TOTAL = 51.5 million people along 818 miles
(62,958 people per route-mile)**

**Midwest-Northeast (Chicago-New York + branches to Detroit and Washington DC) High-Speed Railway**

Potential stations and their Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area populations:
- Chicago = 9.7 million
- Fort Wayne = 0.6 million
- Toledo = 0.7 million
- Detroit = 5.7 million
- Cleveland = 2.3 million
- Akron-Canton = 1.1 million
- Youngstown-Warren = 0.7 million
- Pittsburgh = 2.9 million
- Altoona = 0.1 million
- Harrisburg = 0.5 million
- Baltimore = 2.7 million
- Washington DC = 5.4 million
- Philadelphia = 5.8 million
- New York = 22.2 million

**TOTAL = 60.4 million people along 1,075 miles
(56,186 people per route-mile)**
Service Endpoints: Fastest Trip
Milwaukee-Gary Airport Local: 1 hour, 15 minutes
Chicago-New York City Express: 4 hours, 20 minutes
Chicago-Washington DC Express: 4 hours
Chicago-Detroit Regional: 2 hours
Chicago-Pittsburgh Regional: 3 hours, 40 minutes
Detroit-Washington DC Express: 3 hours, 50 minutes
Detroit-New York City Express: 4 hours
Pittsburgh-New York City Regional: 3 hours, 15 minutes
Connecting routes

Other city pairs: Fastest Trip
Chicago-Cleveland: 2 hours
Detroit-Cleveland: 1 hour, 5 minutes
Detroit-Pittsburgh: 2 hours
Chicago-Philadelphia: 3 hours, 50 minutes
Detroit-Philadelphia: 3 hours, 30 minutes
Cleveland-New York City: 3 hours
Cleveland-Washington DC: 2 hours, 45 mins
Detroit-Baltimore: 3 hours, 30 minutes

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Implementation

All Aboard Ohio is first seeking a high-level feasibility study of linking the Midwest and Northeast-based high-speed rail systems with a rail corridor designed for up to 240 mph but regular cruising speeds of 220 mph as is now permitted by steel-wheel on steel-rail technologies. These speeds are comparable to maglev but offer far lower costs and much greater operational flexibilities. Feasibility studies of advanced high-speed rail have been undertaken or about to get underway for the Northeast Corridor, four Chicago-based Midwest routes (including to Cincinnati, Toledo and Cleveland), as well as an extension 110-mph Keystone train service west from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh.

Because of the timelines associated with a project of this magnitude and the need for evolving the expansion of local, regional and intercity transit links, as well as scaling up center city densities, All Aboard Ohio seeks an interim service. This could constitute 4-8 daily round trips at 90 mph over enhanced rail freight corridors. After the 220 mph rail corridor is built, the interim service could remain in place as a local feeder service, or be reduced/removed to leave a greatly improved rail corridor for freight customers.

After planning, design, funding procurement, property acquisition and construction are completed, segments may enter service in phases, below.
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