

What Chicagoland needs right now is a second Burnham Plan: a bold, yet achievable, vision that leverages our current legacy infrastructure and strategic investments to dramatically enhance our passenger rail network. More than just a vision, we need a road map that tells us where we want to be, where we need to go, and how we can get there.

The 2034sight Plan, and its more recent CRCL Plan update, detail an ambitious – but attainable – capital plan to use our region's existing rail infrastructure combined with strategic investments to create a modern network of clean, safe, reliable, and frequent passenger rail service throughout Chicagoland called CrossTowners, a hybrid of our existing passenger rail operations to better serve the region by creating three distinct tiers of service to streamline operations and efficiently expand the reach of our existing network.

CrossTowners are "regional rail", a new type of operating paradigm that focuses on all-day service to and thru downtown using sleek, reliable, environmentally-friendly trains able to run quickly and efficiently. CrossTowners complement – not compete with – our current rapid transit, commuter rail, and long-distance train services to serve as the nexus of a single, cohesive, seamless transit network for all of Chicagoland.

What if...

- ...we basically doubled the number of 'L' stations in Chicagoland?
- ...we ran up to 8 trains an hour from Hyde Park to the north and northwest suburbs?
- ...we could operate an O'Hare Express service with no new infrastructure?
- ...almost every suburban train was an express, all day long?
- ...Soldier Field was the easiest stadium to get to, not the hardest?



Scan the QR code to read more, or visit the project website at:
yard-social.com/2034sight



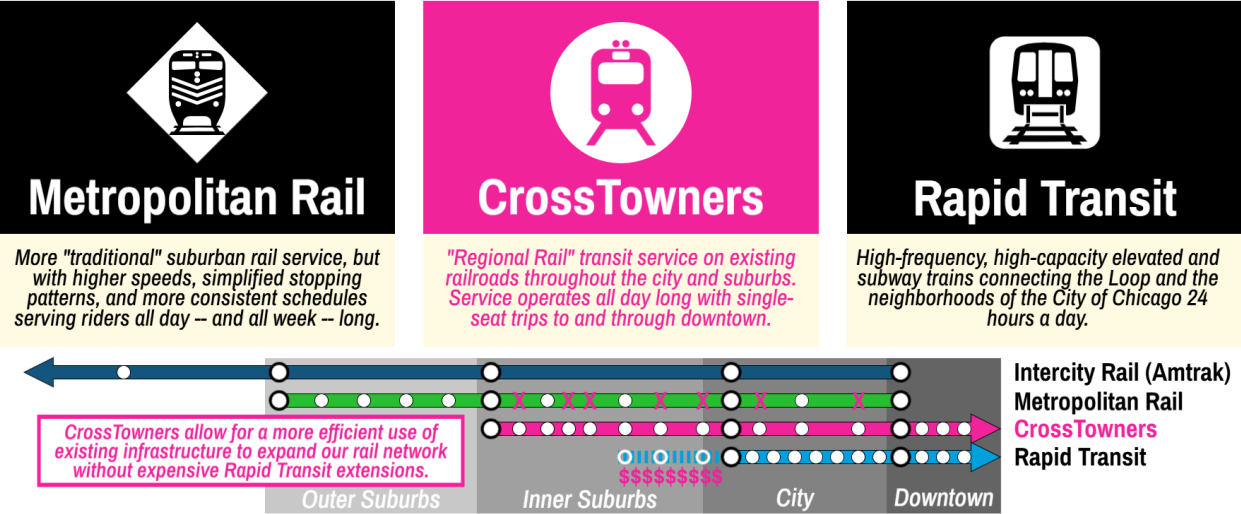
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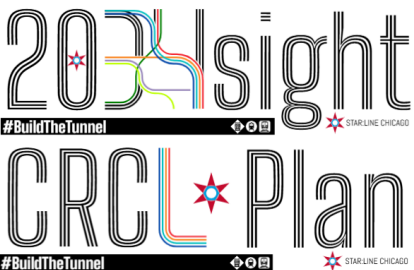
The "Missing Middle" of Transit

Urbanists often discuss the "missing middle" of the housing market, where our current regulatory and financial systems do not produce any new residential units that aren't either single-family housing or large-scale apartment buildings or condominiums, which affects both the affordability and walkability of our communities. In a similar vein, our current regional transit system is built for high-frequency, high-capacity Rapid Transit train service in the urban core and sprawling Metropolitan Rail designed primarily to bring suburban workers into downtown in the morning and back out to the suburbs in the evening. This creates a "missing middle" of regional transit, where Chicago-area residents in the inner suburbs and more far-flung parts of the city proper lack sufficient rail access: Rapid Transit trips are too far away and require longer travel times, but Metropolitan Rail trips are too infrequent to use any time outside of the weekday peak. Improving rail transit service to these areas required either expensive, cost-prohibitive Rapid Transit extensions or additional Metropolitan Rail stops that lengthen travel times for most riders while maintaining low frequencies that are only usable for "traditional" commutes to and from downtown.

CrossTowners, also known as "regional rail", serve as a hybrid option to better utilize our Metropolitan Rail infrastructure on service that more closely resembles Rapid Transit by connecting our Metropolitan Rail lines through the heart of downtown. CrossTowners would use smaller, more efficient trains better suited for more frequent all-day operations serving more closely-spaced stations compared to existing Metropolitan Rail trains, which are designed for higher capacities and higher-speed operations with fewer stops, all at a far lower cost than extending Rapid Transit lines further away from the urban core.



Two Visions for Chicagoland Regional Rail



First published in 2023, the 2034sight Plan was the original proposal for CrossTowner service. 2034sight focuses on leveraging Amtrak's planned Chicago Hub Improvement Program (CHIP) improvements to connect the Metra Electric and Metra Rock Island lines to Chicago Union Station, as well as a new Ohio-Columbus Tunnel to connect the Metra Electric lines to the Metra Union Pacific North, Metra Union Pacific Northwest, and Metra North Central Service lines via Grant Park, Lakeshore East, Streeterville, and River North. A second tunnel under Clinton Street would also connect the Metra BNSF Railway line with the Metra Union Pacific North and Northwest lines, with connections to both Ogilvie Transportation Center and Chicago Union Station.

In 2025, an update was published to create the CRCL Plan, a new more budget-conscious iteration that no longer requires use of the St. Charles Air Line (SCAL) bridge over the Chicago River and creates only a single primary piece of tunnel infrastructure, the Clinton-Roosevelt Connector Line (CRCL). Diagrams of both of these plans are available on the reverse of this brochure, and online at <https://www.yard-social.com/2034sight>.



CrossTowners



#BuildTheTunnel
March 2025

Unlocking Chicagoland with Regional Rail

Chicagoland is blessed with a far-reaching, expansive system of railroads that connect our entire six-county region – that all abruptly end just outside of the Loop. As a result, inbound trains have to dump all their riders off at once, wasting valuable time with additional "dwell" time at the station and leaving riders on their own to make inconvenient, uncoordinated connections or otherwise find their own way to their final destinations.

CrossTowners – a single brand for a new "regional rail" system of higher-frequency, thru-running, all-day train service – focus on making strategic investments and improvements to our existing passenger rail network to change that paradigm. CrossTowners allow us to create connections not only to downtown but thru it, with new direct routing options to connect our entire Chicagoland region. By concentrating these new regional routes on common corridors thru the city of Chicago, these routes can combine to create a new, high-frequency intra-city line through the urban core and function like a ninth 'L' rapid transit line between downtown and the South Side.

We've created two visions of what this new network could look like, each with six lines to serve nearly 150 stations reaching as far as Highland Park, Palatine, O'Hare, Elmhurst, Downers Grove, Blue Island, Harvey, and South Chicago, all fully integrated with existing commuter rail and rapid transit trains. By creating this new, higher-frequency system on top of our existing commuter rail network, we can also speed up service throughout the region including the collar counties, allowing existing trains to operate at higher speeds with fewer stops.

Regional rail can be the impetus to transform our region's transit system into a single, cohesive, integrated network rather than a series of connections by coincidence. We can boost regional mobility and connectivity like never before by simply maximizing the infrastructure we already have with strategic investments to unlock its full potential. CrossTowners are the first step towards a more sustainable, prosperous, livable future for Chicagoland.

#BuildTheTunnel

