

# Wisconsin DOT Intercity Passenger Rail Update

2023 WisDOT Freight Railroad Conference  
November 7, 2023



# Hiawatha Service

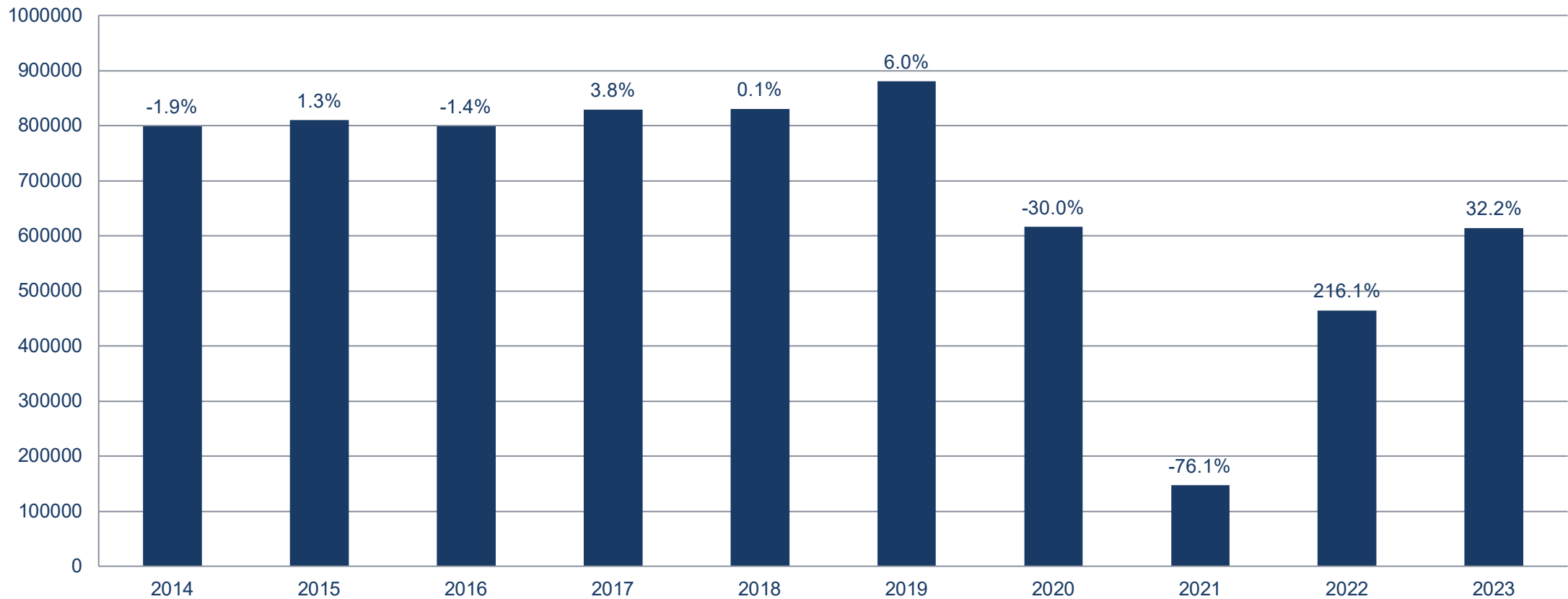
- Wisconsin (75%) and Illinois (25%)
- 7 Round-trips daily
- Ridership recovering from pandemic
  - State FY2023 ridership 614,464, up 32%
  - Federal FY2023 ridership 636,902, up 27%
- Two consists of five cars each: one with Venture cars, other with legacy Horizon cars





# Hiawatha Ridership, SFY 2014–2023

Amtrak Hiawatha Service State Fiscal Year Ridership & Percentage Growth from Prior Year



# Amtrak Thruway I-41 Bus

- Service launched July 2019
- Two round-trips daily
- Enables same-day round-trip Green Bay, Fox Cities to/from Chicago
- Timed connection to Hiawatha trains to/from Chicago and MKE airport service
- Ridership growing strongly
  - CY 2023 42% higher than 2022



# Wisconsin Equipment Acquisition

- Equips Hiawatha trains with new passenger rail cars
- Six Siemens Venture coaches and three cab-coaches
  - Coaches identical to other Midwest equipment
- Fully incorporates Hiawatha into Midwest equipment pool
- Expected in service early 2026
- **Midwest Equipment Pool**
  - 33 Siemens Charger Locomotives in Service
  - 88 Siemens Venture Cars – coaches and café cars
    - Delivery in progress
    - Revenue service expected completion Winter 2023-24
    - One Hiawatha consist equipped with 5 Venture coaches (Other consist equipped with 5 Horizon coaches)





# Twin Cities–Milwaukee–Chicago (TCMC) Intercity Passenger Rail Project & Service

Adds a second, daily round-trip between Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul on the corridor used by Amtrak’s long-distance Empire Builder and Hiawatha routes.

- 411 route miles from Chicago to St. Paul
- 79 mph, 7.5-hour travel time
- 231,900 riders forecast in first full year
- 13 station stops





# Twin Cities–Milwaukee–Chicago Intercity Passenger Rail Project & Service

- TCMC Project in Final Design
- Construction 2024-25
- \$53M estimated cost
  - \$31.8M FRA CRISI Grant
- Service Start Date — Spring 2024
- Current pre-BIL FRA Restoration and Enhancements Grant
  - \$12 million towards first 3 years of operating costs

# Hiawatha Expansion Projects: MARS Expansion

- Milwaukee Airport Rail Station (MARS) Expansion Project adds 2nd platform with overhead access and elevator towers
- \$21.3M est. project cost
  - \$5.05M FRA CRISI Grant
- Improves capacity, reliability, accessibility, and safety
- Construction has begun; 2025 completion



BEFORE



AFTER





# Hiawatha Expansion Projects: Signal Upgrade MIS

- Upgrades signaling on 2 miles of track in and near Milwaukee Intermodal Station (MIS) to Centralized Train Control (CTC)
- \$5.2 million project is fully funded
  - \$2.6M FRA CRISI Grant
  - \$2.6M WI
- Benefits reliability, safety, and train speeds
- Project required for increased frequencies
- Status: Environmental complete; preliminary design refinements underway; preparing for grant agreement and final design
- Final Design 2023; Construction 2024



# Hiawatha Expansion Projects: Muskego Yard

- Freight Bypass of Milwaukee Intermodal Station (MIS) through CPKC **Muskego Yard**
- Two new mainline signalized freight through-tracks and new or upgraded bridges
- Adds capacity at MIS for passenger trains
- Project required for increased frequencies
- Status: Conceptual design complete, environmental clearance complete
- Final Design 2024; Construction 2025-26
- \$91M estimated cost
  - FRA Federal-State Partnership Grant Application





# FRA Corridor ID Applications

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Milwaukee to Chicago Hiawatha Service Corridor Expansion | Increase frequencies from 7 to 10 daily round trips                        |
| 2. Twin Cities Milwaukee Chicago – Second Round Trip        | Add a second daily frequency to that state supported TCMC                  |
| 3. Milwaukee – Madison – Eau Claire – Twin Cities           | Establish new passenger rail service between Milwaukee and the Twin Cities |
| 4. Milwaukee to Green Bay Hiawatha Service Extension        | Extend Hiawatha service from Milwaukee to Green Bay                        |





# Thank You

Rich Kedzior

Passenger Rail Program Manager

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

[Richard.Kedzior@dot.wi.gov](mailto:Richard.Kedzior@dot.wi.gov)