



# Amtrak Fact Sheet Fiscal Year 2018 *State of Minnesota*

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## Amtrak Service & Ridership

Amtrak operates one National Network train through Minnesota:

- The **Empire Builder** (daily Chicago-St. Paul/Minneapolis-Fargo-Shelby-Spokane Seattle/Portland)

During FY18 Amtrak served the following Minnesota locations:

<b>City</b>	<b>Boardings &amp; Alightings</b>
<a href="#">Detroit Lakes</a>	4,877
<a href="#">Red Wing</a>	8,263
<a href="#">St. Cloud</a>	9,566
<a href="#">St. Paul-Minneapolis</a>	85,627
<a href="#">Staples</a>	5,723
<a href="#">Winona</a>	14,711
<b>Total Minnesota Station Usage:</b>	<b>128,767</b>

## Host Railroads & On Time Performance

Amtrak relies heavily on the cooperation of other railroads to operate routes using tracks that are not owned or controlled by Amtrak. Host railroads are statutorily required to provide Amtrak trains “preference” over freight transportation. However, on time performance on most host railroads is poor and continues to decline largely due to hosts ignoring their statutory responsibilities.

Listed below are the Amtrak services that operate in Minnesota with each service’s host railroads and on-time performance (OTP) in FY18:

Service	Host Railroads	FY18 OTP
<b>Empire Builder</b>	BNSF, Canadian Pacific, and Metra	<b>46.1%</b>

“On-time performance” represents the percentage of stations at which the train arrives within 15 minutes of the scheduled arrival time.

## Amtrak Guest Rewards

At the end of FY18, there were **57,941** members of the Amtrak Guest Rewards program in Minnesota. This is a 12% increase from FY17.

## Station Improvements

St. Paul: Amtrak provided guidance in the redevelopment of the St. Paul Union Depot. Ramsey County acquired the facility and secured \$238 million in federal, state, and local funds to remake the structure as a multi-modal passenger station for downtown St. Paul. Union Depot opened in 1923 and closed to rail traffic in 1971. Amtrak returned passenger rail service to Union Depot in 2014. Construction on non-rail aspects of Union Depot was completed earlier and included light rail, local transit, and intercity buses.

Improving ADA Accessibility: Amtrak has recently completed projects to improve path of travel from the public right-of-way to the train platform, restroom upgrades, signage and doorways at Detroit Lakes, Red Wing, St. Cloud, and Winona.

## Expansion Planning and Service Improvements

Additional Twin Cities-Chicago service: Amtrak conducted a feasibility study for the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation of potential ridership, revenue, and operating costs for a second, daily, state-supported round-trip between St. Cloud, St. Paul-Minneapolis, and Chicago, supplementing the existing **Empire Builder** National Network train. The report also provided a "high-level" examination of capital start-up costs, including equipment acquisition and infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate the additional service. The study was delivered to Minnesota Department of Transportation in 2015.

Along with that study, the Federal Railroad Administration announced that the existing route is the preferred alignment for possible, future high-speed service between St. Paul and Chicago. This determination allows the next phases of project development to begin, including preliminary engineering, once additional funding is identified.

Northern Lights Express: A joint powers board of counties between Minneapolis and Duluth continue to spearhead an effort to establish intercity passenger rail between the two cities. The Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Passenger Rail Alliance was successful at securing Federal grants and Minnesota state bonds to pay for environmental studies and preliminary engineering for the Northern Lights Express (NLX). As proposed, NLX service would operate on 152 miles of existing railroad right-of-way with four daily round trips at speeds up to 90 miles per hour with an end-to-end trip time of approximately 2.5 hours. Projected development cost is in the \$500-\$600 million range. Amtrak has been retained by Minnesota Department of Transportation to provide advice on advancing this project.

# AMTRAK ROUTES IN MINNESOTA

