Midwest Connect Gap Analysis Summary

This gap analysis for the Midwest Connect corridor is being submitted to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for its review. The analysis examines studies that were conducted for various passenger rail routes along the corridor and compares these existing studies to FRA requirements. The name of each study included in the analysis is listed on the "Submitted Documents" tab of the spreadsheet. On the "Checklist" tab, documents are referred to by their number.

The following summary provides high-level comments on each of the main tasks in the analysis and gives an estimation of the level of fulfillment.

2.1 Draft Purpose and Need Statement

Level of fulfillment: Medium-High

Purpose and need statements have been established through previous work in the *MORPC Rapid Speed Transportation Initiative - Draft Purpose & Need Statement* (Sept 2019) and *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail - Purpose and Need* (Nov 2017). An updated purpose and need statement that combines previously studied routes and incorporates updated data is needed.

2.2 Market Analysis

Level of fulfillment: Medium-High

Market analysis was conducted through the *NIPRA Northern Indiana/Ohio Passenger Rail Corridor Feasibility Study and Business Plan* (Dec 2012) and *Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Passenger Rail Corridor Study Preliminary Forecasts* (April 2017). An updated market analysis that covers the entire Midwest Connect corridor is needed.

2.3 Railroad Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Level of fulfillment: Low

High-level engagement was completed through the *Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study* (Oct 2021). Engagement specific to the Midwest Connect corridor is needed.

2.4 SDP Agency Coordination Plan

Level of fulfillment: Low

High-level agency coordination was completed through the *Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study* (Oct 2021). Agency coordination specific to the Midwest Connect corridor is needed.

2.5 Public Coordination Plan

Level of fulfillment: Low

High-level public engagement was completed through the *Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study* (Oct 2021). Public meetings were held while developing the *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor - PreNEPA Studies Summary* (Jan 2019). Engagement specific to the Midwest Connect corridor is needed.

3.1 Route Options Analysis

Level of fulfillment: High

Detailed route options analysis was completed through *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor - Route Alternatives Analysis Report* (Aug 2017) and *MORPC Rapid Speed Transportation Initiative - Draft Alternatives Report* (Nov 2019). Some work is needed to combine the route alternatives into a single analysis for the Midwest Connect corridor.

3.2 Service Options Analysis

Level of fulfillment: Medium

Service options analyzed in *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor - Service Alternatives Analysis Report* (Nov 2017) for Gary – Lima route. Additional analysis needed for entire Midwest Connect route.

3.3 Investment Packages Options Analysis

Level of fulfillment: Medium

Capital investments were identified for Chicago – Fort Wayne – Lima route through *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor - PreNEPA Studies Summary* (Jan 2019). Additional investment package option analysis needed for entire Midwest Connect corridor.

3.4 Design Options Analysis

Level of fulfillment: Low

No design options analysis completed.

4.1 Operational Requirements and Existing Physical Conditions Data

Level of fulfillment: Low

Limited railroad coordination completed in previous studies. Some existing physical conditions data available through various previously completed studies. Comprehensive coordination and inventory of existing physical conditions needed for entire Midwest Connect corridor.

4.2 Operations Analysis

Level of fulfillment: Low

Operating plan and costs developed for Chicago – Fort Wayne – Columbus corridor through *Northern Indiana Ohio Passenger Rail Corridor Feasibility Study and Business Plan* (Dec 2012). Operations analysis needed for entire Midwest Connect corridor.

4.3 Travel Demand and Ridership Forecasting

Level of fulfillment: Medium-High

COMPASS model used to develop 2035 ridership forecasts for Chicago – Fort Wayne – Lima corridor through *Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Passenger Rail Corridor Study Preliminary Forecasts* (April 2017). Statewide Traffic Forecasting Model used to develop 2040 ridership forecasts for Chicago – Columbus – Pittsburgh through *MORPC Rapid Speed Transportation Initiative - Existing Conditions* (June 2019). Some updated analysis may be needed for the Midwest Connect corridor.

4.4 Revenue Evaluation Analysis

Level of fulfillment: Low

Basic forecasted revenue for Gary – Lima route through *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor - Service Alternatives Analysis Report* (Nov 2017). More extensive evaluation for the entire Midwest Connect corridor needed.

4.5 Station Area and Access Analysis

Level of fulfillment: Medium

Potential stations within Ohio identified in *MORPC Rapid Speed Transportation Initiative - Route Alternatives Report* (Nov 2019). In-depth station analysis for City of Hilliard, OH, conducted through *City of Hilliard Passenger Rail Station Feasibility Study* (Mar 2024). In-depth analysis needed for stations throughout the Midwest Connect corridor.

4.6 Conceptual and Early Preliminary Engineering (Investment Options)

Level of fulfillment: Medium

Conceptual schematics developed for Chicago – Fort Wayne – Lima route through *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor - PreNEPA Studies Summary* (Jan 2019). Conceptual and early preliminary engineering needed for entire Midwest Connect corridor.

4.7 Capital Cost Estimation

Level of fulfillment: Medium

Some capital costs developed for Chicago – Fort Wayne – Columbus corridor through *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor - PreNEPA Studies Summary* (Jan 2019) and *Northern Indiana Ohio Passenger Rail Corridor Feasibility Study and Business Plan* (Dec 2012). Capital costs needed for entire Midwest Connect corridor.

4.8 Operations and Maintenance Cost Estimation

Level of fulfillment: Medium

Preliminary operations and maintenance costs developed for Chicago – Fort Wayne – Lima route through *Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor - PreNEPA Studies Summary* (Jan 2019). Updated operations and maintenance costs needed for entire Midwest Connect corridor.

5. Environmental Planning

Level of fulfillment: Medium

Initial list of resources identified as part of *MORPC Rapid Speed Transportation Initiative - Existing Conditions* (June 2019) for Lima – Pittsburgh corridor. More extensive environmental planning needed for entire Midwest Connect corridor.

6.1 Financial Planning

Level of fulfillment: Low

No financial plan has been developed.

6.2 Benefit-Cost Analysis

Level of fulfillment: Medium

Benefit-cost analysis completed through *Benefit Cost Analysis of Northern Indiana Passenger Rail* (Mar 2020) for Chicago – Lima – Columbus. Updated benefit cost analysis for entire Midwest Connect corridor should be completed.

7. Governance

Level of fulfillment: Low

No governance structure has been established.

8. Phased Implementation Plan

Level of fulfillment: Low

No phased implementation plan has been created.