



An Overview of Amtrak's Great American Stations Project

October 2018

Who We Are and What We Do

- Created in 2006 to educate communities on the benefits of redeveloping train stations, offer tools in this effort and provide the appropriate Amtrak points of contact.
- Amtrak does not own most of the 500+ stations it serves: multi-layered ownership patterns account for the land, structure, platform, rails and parking.
- Communities often drive station projects from start to finish, with Amtrak and other stakeholders providing guidance and feedback.
- GASP provides a clearinghouse for this info and makes it easy for communities to contact us before they invest significant time and money in a major station project.



Arcadia, Mo., joins the Amtrak network in 2016.

Community Tools: Case Studies

AESTHETIC IMPROVEMENTS | CUT BANK, MT
CUT BANK DEPOT



The wood frame Cut Bank depot was built in 1918. Its design is reminiscent of the architecture of early lodges and buildings.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS
When Cut Bank Mayor Doug Embody took office in 2010, one of his first initiatives was to re-establish the town's Beautification Committee in a drive to improve public areas. Following the renovation of a downtown park and installation of new sidewalks, attention turned to the condition of the old depot. Located in the heart of town and therefore highly visible to travelers, the building "was an eyesore," recalls Embody. Years of harsh winters and prairie winds had taken their toll, leaving the building with peeling paint and an overall shabby appearance. Embody and the Beautification Committee decided to refurbish the local landmark. "Our committee had a lot to offer, but that wasn't reflected in the depot," Embody says. A resident with experience in historic preservation took a photo of the building and over the next few weeks proposed changes.

AESTHETIC IMPROVEMENTS

CIVIC PRIDE | KIRKWOOD, MO
KIRKWOOD STATION



of their local communities for generations; historic buildings as focal points for highlighting community pride. The train station serves as the center of town. When the historic depot was threatened with demolition, residents worked together to preserve a piece of their history and identity.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DESIGN | ST. PAUL, MN
UNION DEPOT



Located in a neighborhood in the midst of a classic urban renaissance, Union Depot is emblematic of initiatives to integrate transportation, land use and environmental planning for robust development.

REVITALIZATION EFFORTS
In 2002, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) formed a group of stakeholders (LOCATE), made up of business and civic leaders charged with locating a potential multimodal transportation terminal in downtown St. Paul, Minnesota. Union Depot, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was envisioned as a viable building to provide integrated access to a robust transportation system serving the region and the Upper Midwest. RCRRA purchased the 33-acre site in 2005, and the building reopened as a multimodal transportation hub on December 8, 2012.

WORKING WITH A HISTORIC PROPERTY
In January 2011, the transformation from neglected train station to state-of-the-art multimodal transportation hub began. The RCRRA managed the holistic approach to the \$243 million construction project and worked closely with the city's Heritage Preservation Commission and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office throughout the renovation.

Design and engineering teams were charged with integrating passenger rail, local and intercity bus, pedestrian, bicycle, personal vehicle and light rail access.

Integrating modern electrical, telecommunication and mechanical systems throughout the historic building presented the project team with opportunities to be creative by using existing historic infrastructure. For example, radiator stations located throughout the head house were repurposed to hide electrical and telecom equipment.

“The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority made sustainability a priority for Union Depot’s renovation, restoration and construction. That required us to balance historical integrity with modern efficiencies. The LEED Gold standard achieved at Union Depot is a testament to creative and effective problem solving.”
- Rafael E. Ortega, chair
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

“More than ten years ago Kirkwood residents decided it was important to preserve our train station. It shows the true spirit of Kirkwood that we found a way to keep our station and share our love of the trains that have been so important to our town’s history.”
- Bill Burckhalter, Kirkwood Volunteer Coordinator

ngers and visitors and gladly tell them about the trains, shops and local attractions such as the Farmers Market.

greatamericanstations.com

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DESIGN | ST. PAUL, MN greatamericanstations.com

THEMES

- Architectural & Aesthetic Improvements
- Civic Pride
- Cultural Space & Museums
- Economic Development
- Historic Preservation
- Tourism Growth
- Commercial Use

Community Tools: Planning



GREAT AMERICAN STATIONS DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to help you and your community move forward in your renovation and/or restoration efforts. Additionally, please contact your Amtrak Government Affairs representative to inform him or her about your proposed project. The Government Affairs employee will bring the project to the attention of other relevant Amtrak departments and the host railroad to help ensure your project moves ahead.

- Notify your state Department of Transportation (DOT)** of your project to better understand how it may fit into the state's transportation plan.
- Check with your local historic commission and State Historic Preservation Office** to determine if your depot or parcel is designated historic.
- Work with Amtrak Engineering and Stations Planning personnel**, through the Amtrak Government Affairs representative, who can assess the feasibility of your project and provide guidance on platform length and height and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) matters.
- If rehabilitating an older structure, **schedule a building assessment** including:

<input type="checkbox"/> structural	<input type="checkbox"/> exterior	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input type="checkbox"/> civil
<input type="checkbox"/> parking	<input type="checkbox"/> roof	<input type="checkbox"/> HVAC	<input type="checkbox"/> electrical
<input type="checkbox"/> fire protection	<input type="checkbox"/> security	<input type="checkbox"/> ADA accessibility	<input type="checkbox"/> general code
- Direct the project architect** to the Amtrak Standard Program and Planning Guidelines and Signage Guidelines at www.greatamericanstations.com.
- Contact your municipal planning department** to ensure the station project adheres to local zoning and building codes; seek amendments if necessary.
- Contact the Great American Stations Project and your state DOT** for information about possible state and federal funding.
- Work with the host railroad** to determine how much liability insurance is needed since construction will take place near active tracks; be sure to factor the cost of a flagman into your project budget.


Amtrak Station Program and Planning Guidelines




SIGNAGE MANUAL

August 2018

Community Tools: Grants




Helping communities discover and develop the economic power of America's train stations.

START YOUR STATION PROJECT presented by 

[Home](#) [America's Stations](#) [Why Invest](#) [Restoration Tools](#) [Planning and Development](#) [News](#)

Funding Options


A combination of local, state and federal resources fund most station improvement and new construction projects.




The city of East Lansing, Mich., the Capital Area Transportation Authority and Michigan State University won a \$6.28 million grant in 2012 to support construction of a new multimodal facility served by Amtrak, local and intercity buses. The grant was funded through the Federal Transit Administration's Bus and Bus Facilities Livability Initiative.

Funds might be obtained through grants, loans, and tax credits. The purpose of each resource is different and the approach you take in planning your station project will determine your best option. A station owner might reevaluate a project to consider ways to make it eligible for greater funding.

Multimodalism, in which various transportation modes are linked together in one interconnected system, has long been a goal of federal transportation funding. When contemplating a station project, consider how it could benefit riders across many modes. For example, intercity passenger rail, commuter rail and local bus riders would all benefit



Helping communities discover and develop the economic power of America's train stations.

START YOUR STATION PROJECT presented by 

[Home](#) [America's Stations](#) [Why Invest](#) [Restoration Tools](#) [Planning and Development](#) [News](#)

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program: Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside

Filing Date:

Varies; contact your state DOT or local FHWA official for more information.

Eligibility:

Funds are allocated to the state DOT which in turn disburses the funds to project sponsors. In general, a sponsor is an organization with the authority to tax and could include local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, public land agencies, tribal governments and any other local or regional governmental entity. Under the FAST Act, nonprofit entities responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs are now able to apply for TA funds.

Oftentimes, non-profit organizations or community groups that wish to sponsor a TA project will submit an application in partnership with a local government. Consult your state TA officer for further information.

Description:

This program provides funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through 10 eligible activities related to surface transportation, including historic preservation and vegetation management in transportation rights-of-way. Funds can also be used for the construction, planning and design of transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Restoration Tools

[Preserving Your Depot](#)

[Getting Your Project Started](#)

[Funding Options](#)

[Grants, Loans and Credits](#)

—

[Surface Transportation Block Grant Program: Transportation Alternatives \(TA\) Set-Aside](#)

[Fixed Guideway Capital Investment Grants \(Sec. 5309\)](#)

[Urbanized Area Formula Grants \(Sec. 5307 and 5340\)](#)

[Formula Grants for Rural Areas \(Sec. 5311\)](#)

[Metropolitan and Statewide and Non-Metropolitan Transportation](#)

Community Tools: Station Host Volunteer Programs

Station Host Volunteer Manual


- Reflects best practices as developed by established programs.
- Assists local governments, transportation authorities and rail advocates.

Contents

- Getting Started
- Success Stories & Case Studies
- Sample Association Manual
 - Constitution and bylaws;
 - Station host role;
 - Safety in and around the station; and
 - General Amtrak policies.



Community Tools: News and Information



Revitalizing America's Train Stations NEWSLETTER

SPREAD THE WORD!
Know someone who would enjoy our Great American Stations newsletter? Click here to [forward this edition](#), or encourage them to sign up on our website.

Friend on Facebook
Follow on Twitter
Forward to a Friend




Image: Clearsoapes

Raleigh Transit Center Sparks Development

Work is progressing on a new \$79.8 million [multimodal transit center](#) in downtown Raleigh, N.C. Expected to open in early 2018, it will be an anchor for the city's revitalizing Warehouse District. It will include a large waiting room and enhanced amenities for Amtrak passengers, a center island platform with level-boarding, an enclosed concourse, commercial space and a public plaza.





Image: City of Sacramento


Sacramento Valley Station Unveiled



SOUTHERN PINES


Home America's Stations Why Invest Restoration Tools Planning and Development News

Great American Stations News




Centennial Celebration for Salem Depot

SALEM, ORE. – On Sept. 25, 2018, community members were joined by officials from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and rail enthusiasts to celebrate the centennial of the...




Art Gallery Moves Into Westerly Station

WESTERLY, R.I. – In August 2018, the Westerly depot became the new temporary home of the



The New York Times Highlights Station Revitalization

The New York Times recently published an article chronicling the lives of seven Midwestern communities and their train stations, including Cincinnati Union Terminal and Kansas City Union Station, which were transformed...



Sign up for our quarterly e-newsletter and check out recent station news from around the country.

Helping communities discover and develop the economic power of America's train stations.


Home America's Stations Why Invest Restoration Tools Planning and Development News

Telling Stories: Public Art In Train Stations

Train stations, by function and design, are often considered an extension of a community's "public realm": common spaces such as parks, streets and civic buildings where people interact with one another as they go about their daily activities.

Due to this public nature, these spaces act as local landmarks that help people navigate their community. A train station's public identity is further enhanced by its role as a gateway for visitors, which makes it an appropriate place to tell stories about the community's past and present – and future aspirations.

Public art is one way of conveying these stories, and pieces ranging from sculptures to murals can be found in stations across Amtrak's national system. Public input often helps define scopes of work, themes and artist selection. Funding sources include donations and set-aside programs. Below we take a look at a handful of recent station public art projects.



A 1984 installation at the Wilmington, Del., station was inspired by station architect Frank Furness. Artist Joyce Kozloff created hand-painted tiles arranged in geometric patterns – some replicate Furness' drawings.

Carlinville, Illinois

In addition to a bright and airy waiting room and covered porches, the new depot that opened in Dec. 2017 features an 8' x 17' exterior mural by Carlinville native David Bellm. The artwork depicts Abraham Lincoln – who occasionally came to town while a lawyer and later campaigned there for the U.S. Senate – tipping his hat to

NEWS
Civic Conversations
GAS Newsletters
Amtrak State Fact Sheets
Amtrak is Here to Help

STAY CONNECTED
Sign up for our newsletter to get all the latest opportunities for you to get involved with your local station project.

EMAIL ADDRESS *

SIGN UP

Prefer to be social? No problem. There are lots of ways to connect with Amtrak online.

[f](#) [t](#) [y](#) [s](#)

Success Stories: Norman, Okla.

- Depot is home to the non-profit Performing Arts Society
 - Creates fine arts programming including artist exhibitions, poetry readings, musical performances and educational programs
 - 50+ events/year
 - Depot remains open during business hours
- Waiting room available for rent; holds up to 100 people
 - Approx. 450 rental hours/year
 - Rental income helps fund PAS operations, programming and administration.
- Acts as a keystone for larger downtown events.



Images: Performing Arts Studio

Success Stories: Mystic, Conn.

- Since 2016, the building has housed Mystic Depot Roasters, a café and gift shop.
- Amtrak customers have access to interior including restrooms.
- Lessees undertook an extensive rehabilitation project to prepare the space for food service.
- Upgraded electrical, plumbing and fire protection systems; installed accessible restrooms; patched the roof; and installed exhaust fans.
- Workers also refinished the floors and walls, repaired windows and painted the building inside and out.





Contact Us

[GreatAmericanStations.com](https://www.GreatAmericanStations.com)

GreatAmericanStations@Amtrak.com