

# News Release



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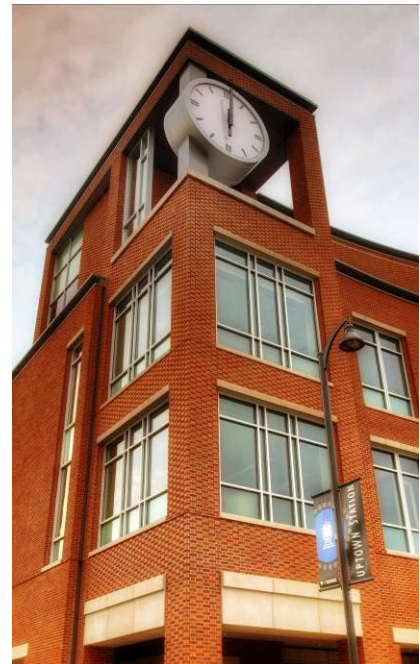
## TOWN OF NORMAL, ILLINOIS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND AMTRAK CELEBRATE NEW "UPTOWN STATION" Federally-funded project sparks economic development

NORMAL, Ill. – Federal and state officials today joined representatives of the Town of Normal and Amtrak in opening a multimodal transportation center to serve as a station for Amtrak rail and motorcoach passengers, local transit buses and as the focal point of a new urban center of a community that is among the top 50 Amtrak locations nationwide by ridership.

U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood -- along with Mayor Chris Koos and Amtrak Board Chairman Tom Carper -- participated in the ceremony that included a dedication of the building now called Uptown Station, followed by tours of the facility and the Amtrak Exhibit Train. The \$45.9 million project received a \$22 million grant under the Obama Administration's TIGER (Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery) program, as well as \$10.6 million in additional federal funding, and more than \$13 million in state and local contributions.

"Key to our Uptown master plan from the beginning was a transportation center designed to provide a multistory anchor for redevelopment," Mayor Koos said. "Uptown Station is something all Normal's citizens can admire and be proud of, an example of elegant design, sustainability and quality that will last for generations.

"The hundreds of jobs created during two years of construction invigorated the economy of the area, and now that Uptown Station is operational it



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will serve the public transportation needs of hundreds of thousands of people who live in Central Illinois,” added Koos, a member of the national Mayors Advisory Committee for Amtrak.

“Uptown Station is a prime example of a federal investment paying dividends for local taxpayers,” U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) said. “I have secured more than \$10.6 million in federal earmark funding for this state-of-the-art facility since 2003. Those earmarks, combined with additional federal support from a \$22 million TIGER grant through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, have helped Normal create what will become the national model for multimodal stations. Construction of this facility supported hundreds of jobs and generated millions in economic activity for the Bloomington-Normal region. Yet, today’s ribbon cutting is just the beginning.

“In the years to come, this station will continue serving as an economic engine for Bloomington-Normal and Central Illinois.”

“Thanks to President Obama, transportation projects like the Uptown Station that opened today are putting people back to work across the country building roads, rails, bridges and transit systems we need to keep our economy growing for years to come,” said Secretary LaHood. “Through the TIGER program, we’ve made it possible for communities to build the transportation infrastructure projects that best fit their needs, creating jobs today and a stronger economic future for the nation.”

“This is a national example of what a community with a vision can do with their core assets when paired with frequent, fast and reliable Amtrak service,” said Amtrak Chairman Carper. “Uptown Station will be a significant driver for continued redevelopment in the central business district, as well as have a positive impact on regional economic activity.

“Similar Midwest projects are underway in Minnesota and Michigan. In all these cases, the new stations will be enjoyed by more Amtrak passengers, our employees and by others in their regions,” Carper concluded.

### **About the Project**

The 68,000 square-foot Uptown Station features a restaurant, other retail and municipal office space, a community room and a 380-car parking garage. The Town anticipates the building will achieve a Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification and will provide free public WiFi service to its users.

In February 2010, Normal received a \$22 million TIGER grant made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Six months later, it was the first project in

the nation to break ground and begin construction. It is being completed on-time and within the estimated \$45.9 million budget. Monies were also obtained from Federal Transit Administration grants, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity grants, and bonds issued by Normal.

Similar to other new urbanist-inspired communities, Uptown Station's mass is tight to the street and engages with the surrounding streetscape through door and window glazing



transparency, and covered recessed areas. The building's contextual design features patterned brick masonry, smooth-cut limestone, contrasting metal panels and deep set windows arranged in a timeless form that is simultaneously traditional and modern.

The design embodies both permanence and movement. Larger and smaller window recesses, a wide-proscenium plaza window, a pedestrian-inspired loggia arcade, an attached curving paneled parking structure and a corner entry tower with suspended clock all work in concert to tell the story of the Town's storied past and vibrant future. At its crown, a roof terrace along three of the building's key facades reduces its scale.

Inspired by the users who will define the building's culture over time, indoor and outdoor transparency allows for welcome movement into and out of the structure.

With a station and train platform compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the new station replaces the Amtrak depot directly on the opposite side of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. Built in 1990 on the Town Hall parking lot, the small station was overwhelmed by increasing Amtrak ridership. With nearly 245,000 passengers last year – and growing – the station in Normal also serves neighboring Bloomington and is the busiest in Downstate Illinois.

Amtrak will begin serving Uptown Station, 11 Uptown Circle, starting tomorrow, July 15. Please see the attached Passenger Service Notice for more information.

### **Amtrak Service and Ridership**

More than a half-million Amtrak passengers have ridden the five daily *Lincoln Service/Texas Eagle* trains this fiscal year (529,003, Oct. 2011-June 2012) on the Chicago-St. Louis corridor, an increase of 16 percent from the same period a year ago.

The Illinois Department of Transportation was awarded \$1.2 billion in ARRA funds for high-speed trains on this corridor and was one of only three states to receive an award of more than \$1 billion. This facility is opening in advance of 110 mph (177 kph) Amtrak service on the

route, which is planned to start on a segment this September. When upgrades are complete, Amtrak trains will make trips to Chicago from Normal in about two hours and to St. Louis from Normal in less than two-and-half-hours.

In addition to ten daily Amtrak trains, Normal is also served by Amtrak Thruway Motorcoaches operated by Burlington Trailways as far east as Indianapolis, via Champaign-Urbana, and as far west as the Illinois-Iowa Quad Cities, via Peoria.

**About Amtrak®:**

Amtrak is America's Railroad®, the nation's intercity passenger rail service and its high-speed rail operator. A record 30.2 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2011 on more than 300 daily trains – at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) – that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces. Amtrak operates intercity trains in partnership with 15 states and contracts with 13 commuter rail agencies to provide a variety of services. Enjoy the journey® at [Amtrak.com](http://Amtrak.com) or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on [facebook.com/Amtrak](https://facebook.com/Amtrak) and follow us at [twitter.com/Amtrak](https://twitter.com/Amtrak).

**About Normal:**

The Town of Normal is a vibrant Midwestern community located in Central Illinois. Normal is the proud home of Illinois State University. Residents and visitors enjoy Normal's premiere educational institutions, exceptional recreational amenities and a diverse employment base. In 2010, the United States Census Bureau certified Normal's population at 52,497. For more information, visit [normal.org](http://normal.org).

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# Bloomington-Normal New Uptown Station Opens

**Sunday, July 15, 2012**

Starting July 15, Amtrak will begin serving Bloomington-Normal passengers at the newly constructed Uptown Station multimodal transportation center. The facility is located just across the tracks from the current station at **11 Uptown Circle, Normal, IL, 61761**.

In addition to Amtrak service, the 68,000 square foot station offers patrons numerous transportation options, including intercity bus, local mass transit, taxis, intra-community shuttles and airport shuttle service. Bicycle racks are also available at the station, and a bike repair stand is located across the street.

## Parking Information

The Uptown Station includes a 380 car parking deck. Complimentary electric vehicle charging is offered on Level II of the deck. Questions about parking can be directed to Heartland Parking at 309-451-5380 between 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Current parking rates are as follows:

- Under one hour - no charge
- One to six hours - \$1.00 per hour
- Seven to eight hours - \$6.00
- Over eight hours up to 24 hours - \$8.00
- Monthly rate - \$40.00 (Note: Passengers who will be away for more than a week may consider paying the monthly rate.)



## Project Information

Designed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification, the Uptown Station multimodal transportation center will be one of the most energy efficient public buildings in downstate Illinois. Among its many sustainable design features, Uptown Station uses energy efficient HVAC systems and green power sources; low construction waste and locally-sourced materials; and design features to enhance thermal comfort and natural light. Uptown Station will be a significant driver for continued redevelopment in Normal's central business district, as well as have a positive impact on economic activity.

The \$35 million facility houses the town of Normal's municipal offices on its second and third floors and city council chambers and multi-purpose rooms on its fourth floor. Additionally, a Subway Café is located on the main floor of the station.

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