

- **Chicago Union Station Master Plan Study** (*David Phillips – TranSystems | Jeffrey Sriver, Chicago Department of Transportation*)

Chicago Union Station (CUS) is the third-busiest rail station in the United States, with 15 million passengers annually. It is a dual stub-end station built in 1925, primarily to serve long-distance train operations, including extensive mail and package express service. Today, the primary user of the station is Metra commuter rail, although it is the hub of Amtrak's rapidly growing Midwest regional services and the terminal for the largest concentration of Amtrak's long-distance trains with eight trains (most operate every day) to destinations on the East Coast, West Coast, and the Gulf of Mexico. The Station operates at/near capacity during peak periods for train handling, passenger handling, and street level access. Since the 1968 demolition of the original concourse part of the Station, navigation has been very difficult, particularly for occasional travelers not familiar with the facility.

In an effort to understand CUS's potential for increasing capacity, TranSystems was asked to conduct a study of the existing conditions and to determine what cost-effective options were feasible. This presentation will report of the process and the results of this study for the City of Chicago DOT. It identified opportunities to assist Amtrak, Metra, and other Station stakeholders in preparing for future improvements to increase CUS's capacity and quality of service. Preliminary simulation modeling analysis shows a potential capacity increase of over 50 percent.

This required a creative approach and, working closely with a variety of stakeholders, a number of engineering design solutions were identified to reconfigure the existing facilities at CUS.

