

# NORTHERN LIGHTS EXPRESS PROJECT MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

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ATP

Duluth, MN

November 17, 2014



# Outline

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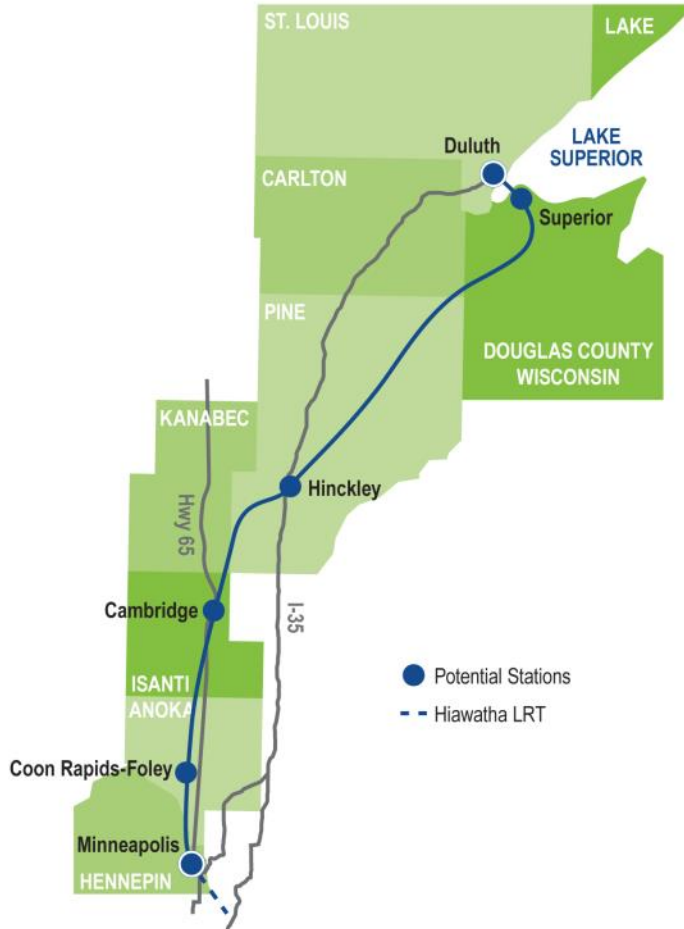
- Description of Overall Project
- Description of PE/NEPA phase

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# OVERALL PROJECT DESCRIPTION



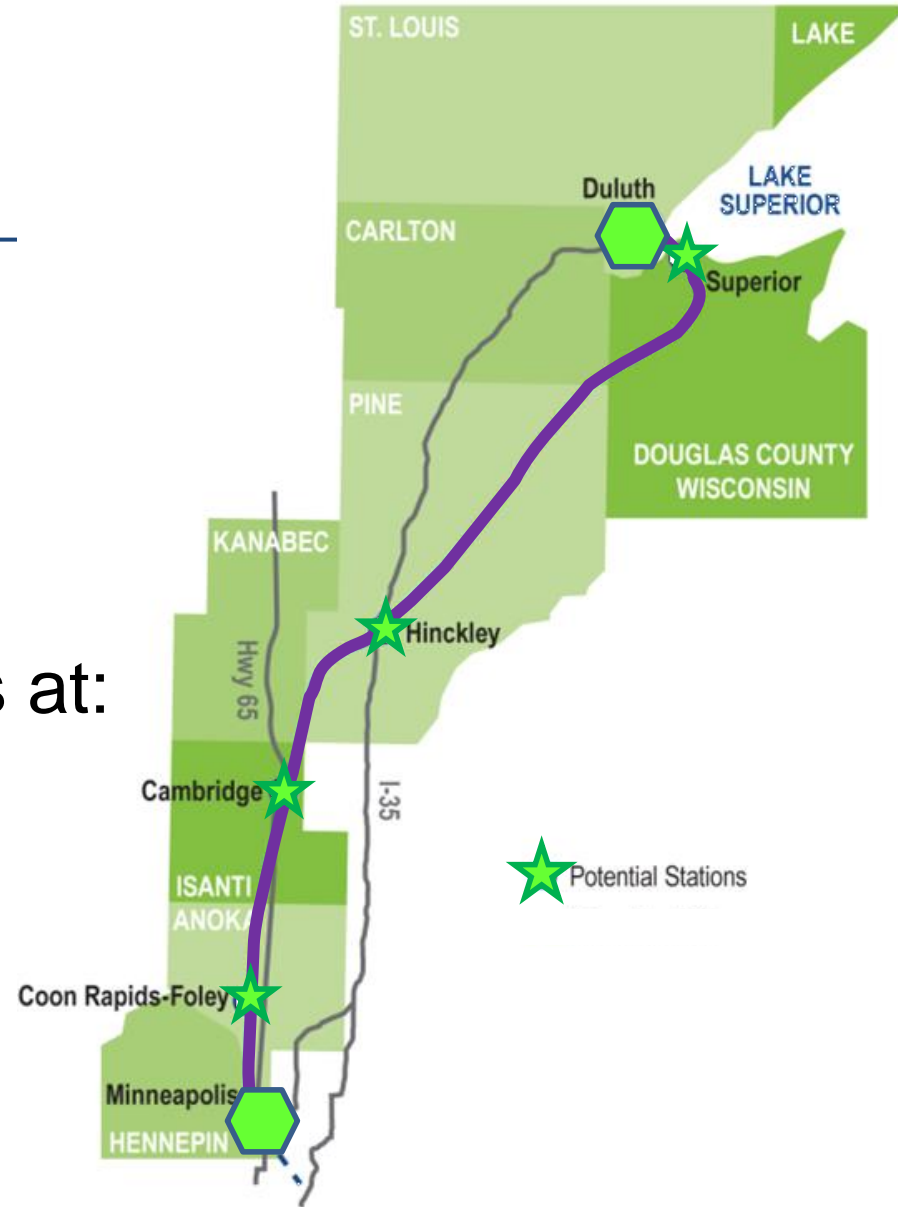
# Northern Lights Express



- Intercity passenger rail service between Minneapolis and Duluth
- 155-mile corridor on existing BNSF Railway track
- Train speeds up to 110 mph
- 4 - 8 round trips per day

# NLX

- Terminals at:
  - Target Field Station
  - Duluth Depot
- Intermediate Stations at:
  - Coon Rapids,
  - Cambridge,
  - Hinckley
  - Superior WI



# Intercity vs. Commuter Rail

## Intercity Rail

- Connects two distinct metropolitan areas
- All day service – both directions
  - **Federal Railroad Administration**



## Commuter Rail

- Connects metropolitan core to surrounding suburbs
- Peak period – peak direction
- **Federal Transit Administration**



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# CURRENT PROJECT PHASE



# Previous Work

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- Minneapolis-Duluth/Superior Restoration of Intercity Passenger Rail Service Feasibility Study and Business Plan (St. Louis and Lake Counties RRA)
  - Completed in 2007
- Tier 1 Service Level Environmental Assessment
  - FRA Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
    - August 21, 2013
- Service Development Plan (SDP)
  - FRA approved May 2013



# Current Work -- PE/NEPA Phase

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- Project Phase Objectives:
  - Complete Environmental Review
  - Complete Preliminary Engineering
  
- Project Phase Funding
  - ARRA funds \$5 million
  - State Bond funds \$3 million
  
- Consultant Contracts
  - PMO Quandel Consultants
  - Financial Planning Steer Davies Gleave
  - Environmental HNTB
  - Roadway Engineering AECOM

# Project Management Oversight

- Quandel Consultants
  - Staff support for management of project
  - Technical support
    - Operational Planning
    - Operating Costs
    - Horizontal geometry of rail alignment
    - Railroad capacity analysis
  - BNSF
    - Negotiation support



# Financial Planning Consultant

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- Steer Davies Gleave
- Scope of Work
  - Ridership Forecasts
  - Revenue Projections
  - Estimates of Public Benefits
  - Financial Plan
- Model development complete
  - Initial model outputs reviewed by Peer Review Panel
- Alternative operating plans are being tested
  - Round Trips
  - Fare
  - Maximum Speed
  - Station
- Preliminary results available in January.

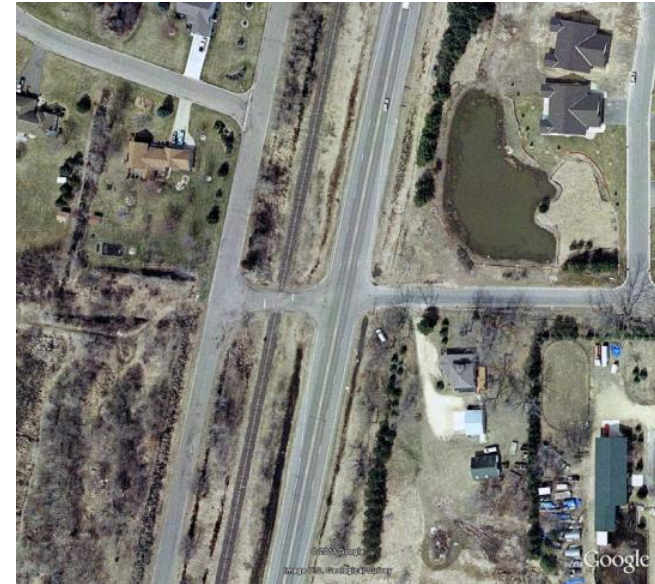
# Environmental Consultant

- Scope of Work
  - Stations and facilities
    - Design Criteria
    - Selection of final locations
    - Functional analysis
    - Preliminary engineering (PE)
  - Tier 2 EA (NEPA)
- HNTB Team selected
  - Concept plans being prepared.
  - Review by city staff in Nov
  - Open houses in Dec



# Roadway Engineering Consultant

- Preliminary engineering
  - Parallel and intersecting roadways and bridges
  - Grade crossing warning devices



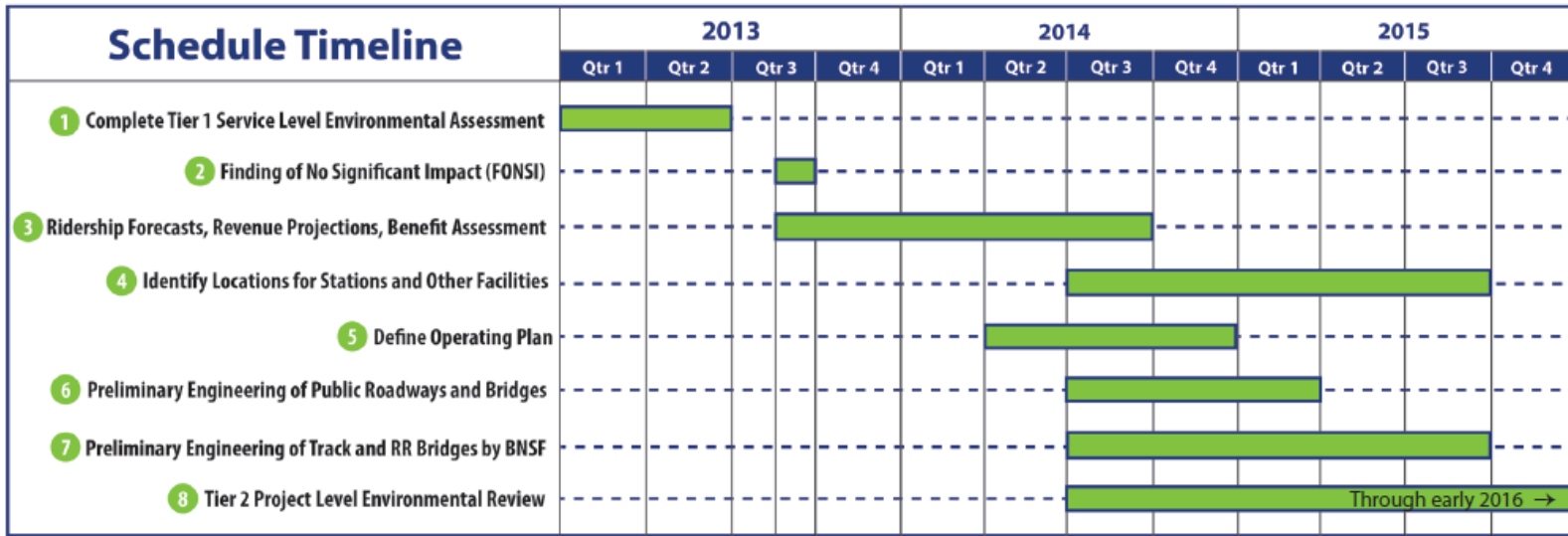
- AECOM selected
  - NTP anticipated in early December

# BNSF Railway

- BNSF will be responsible for PE of track within the BNSF Right-of-Way



# Schedule



- ▶ Completion of PE/NEPA -- February 2016