

Cross Border Rail Passenger Service Progress Report

**Transportation Border Working Group
Detroit, Michigan – April 23, 2013**



Governments

Vermont Agency of Transportation

New York State Department of Transportation

Quebec Ministry of Transportation

Washington Department of Transportation

Others

Agence metropolitaine de transport

VIA Rail Canada

City of Niagara Falls, NY

Niagara Falls Bridge Commission

Presentation Outline

- **Background**
- **Montreal Central Station**
 - Concept
 - Progress to date
- **Niagara Falls**
 - Whirlpool Rapids Bridge rail operations
 - Niagara Falls NY Station and Customs Facilities
- **Vancouver**
- **Requirements for Preclearance**

Background

- **Lack of Process for Border Security**
 - No standard process
 - Agency Issues with On-Board Inspection
 - Amtrak Issues with Enroute Off-Board Inspection
- **Characteristics of Two Cross-Border Route Types**
 - Single Canadian Station
 - Multiple Stops on Both Sides of the Border
- **Current International Rail Passenger Services**
 - New York – Montreal “Adirondack”
 - New York – Toronto “Maple Leaf” jointly with VIA Rail Canada
 - Portland – Seattle – Vancouver “Amtrak Cascades”
- **Potential Future International Services**
 - Northeast Corridor – Vermont – Montreal
 - Chicago – Michigan – Ontario - Quebec

Montreal Concept

- **Montreal Central Station**

- Serves Amtrak's New York – Montreal "Adirondack"
- VIA Rail Canada intercity hub – Halifax, Quebec, Ottawa, Toronto, etc.
- Agence Metropolitaine de Transport commuter train system
- Possibly add NEC – Vermont – Montreal "Vermonter" with preclearance

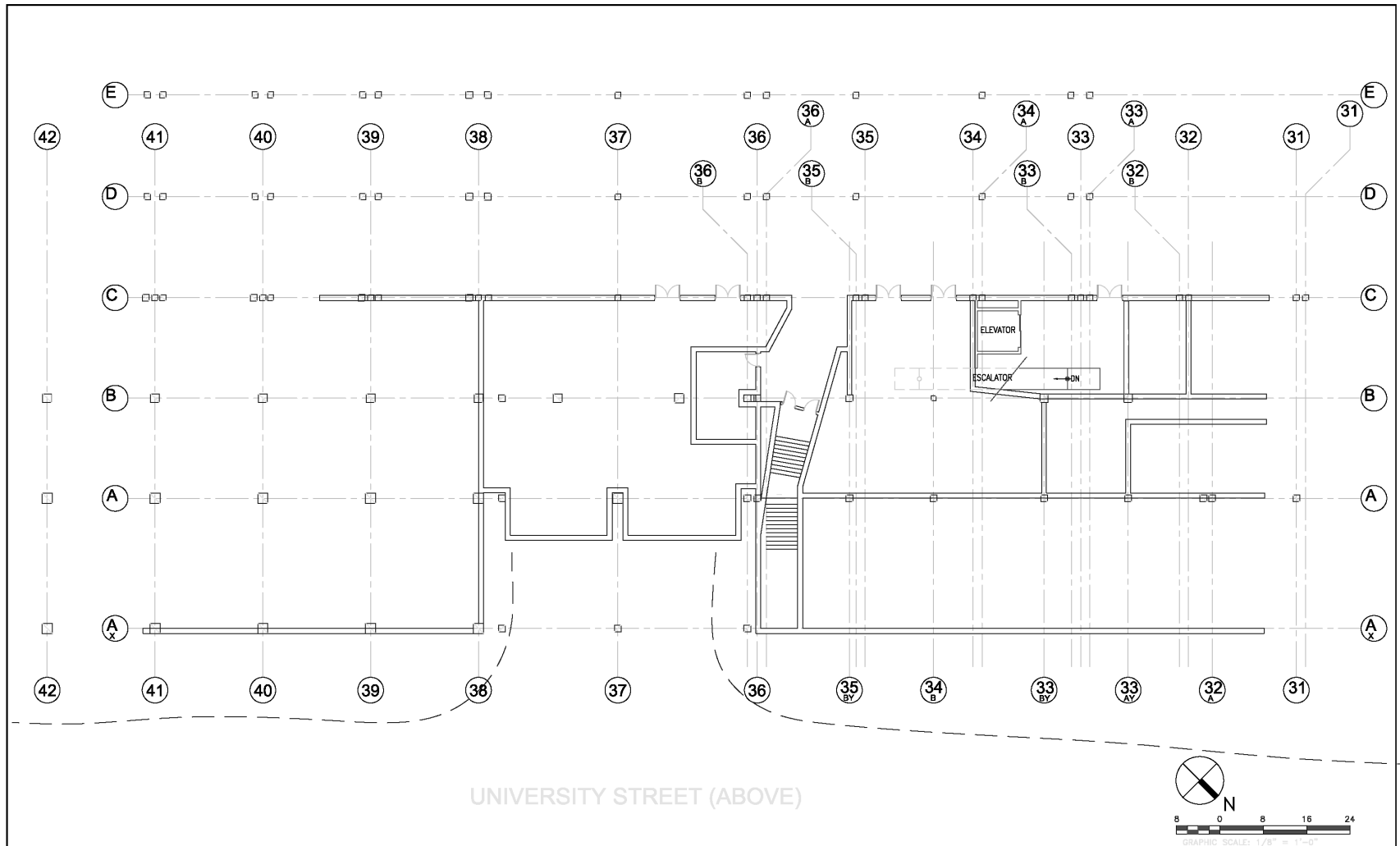
- **The partners want to build a joint customs and immigration facility in Central Station for both CBSA and USCBP**

- Replace CBSA facility at LaColle and USCBP operation at Rouses Point
- Discontinue Amtrak service at St. Lambert and operate non-stop, closed-door between Central Station and the border
- Serve the New York – Montreal "Adirondack" initially
- Be available to Vermont to serve an extended "Vermonter" although not at the times the "Adirondack" is in the station

- **Plans follow:**

- Concourse level
- Track level

Montreal Central Station Proposed Concourse Level



No.	Revisions	Date	By



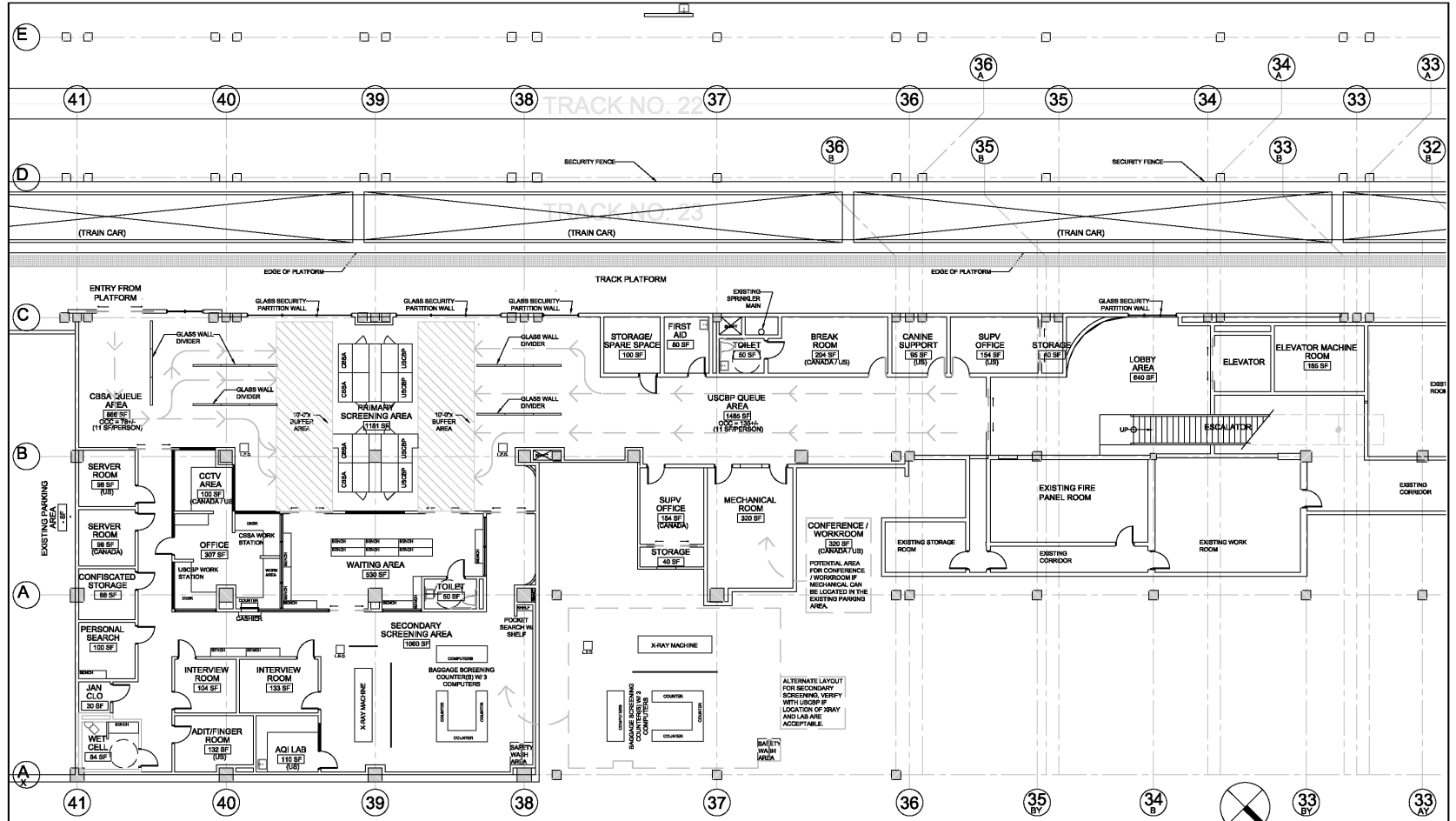
**Office of Chief Engineer
STRUCTURES**
National Railroad Passenger Corporation
30th Street Station, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

Approved	Date
DIR. STA./FACILITIES	XXXX
SR. DIR. STA./FACILITIES	XXXX
DCE - STRUCTURES	XXXX

MONTREAL PASSENGER PROCESS FACILITY FOR CBFA		QUEBEC, CAN		Revision No. 3501	
PROPOSED PARTIAL CONCOURSE LEVEL FLOOR PLAN		Designed RJK		Drawn RJK	
Checked ME		Date 01/11		Sheet No. 2 OF 3	
				SK-102	



Montreal Central Station Proposed Track Level



1 PROPOSED PARTIAL TRACK LEVEL PLAN
SK103 SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"

No.	Revisions	Date	By
1	ISSUE	03/09	RJK



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DIR. STA./FACILITIES	XXXX
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MONTREAL QUEBEC, CAN	Function No.	3501
PASSENGER PROCESS FACILITY	Work Item No.	274010
FOR CBSA	Sheet No.	0 OF 0
PROPOSED PARTIAL TRACK LEVEL FLOOR PLAN	Project No.	SK-105A
Designed: RJK	Drawn: RJK	Checked: MFC
Date:	03/09	



Proposed Underground Facility Location in Central Station



Concourse Level Above Proposed Facility Location



Central Station Concourse Facing Opposite Direction (West)



Current Outdoor Location at Lacolle, QC



- **Progress to date**

- Amtrak Engineering developed a conceptual facility plan
- CBSA and USCBP concurred in the concept subject to further review as the project advances
- Quebec, New York and Vermont agreed to share the cost of a Canadian architect's review
- Agence metropolitaine de transport (AMT), on behalf of Amtrak, retained the architect
- Architect has presented their preliminary report, in summary, stating there are no show-stoppers but more expensive than originally estimated
- Business case for Montreal preclearance being developed by the partners for presentation to Deputy Secretary Bersin of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- MTQ ongoing tracks study from Montreal to US Border (state of CN and CP tracks and cost to increase speed up to 100 mph) – report expected in July 2013

Niagara Falls – Whirlpool Bridge

- **Owned by Niagara Falls Bridge Commission (NFBC).**
- **Canadian National abandoned rail service on both sides of the border**
- **CSXT abandoned its track between CP28 and the bridge**
- **City of Niagara Falls is in Phase 2 of three phases to build / reconstruct a customs and immigration / station facility**
- **The NFBC, Amtrak and VIA have an agreement for continued operations on the bridge for a per train fee**
- **Canadian National and CSXT sold their assets to Amtrak and VIA for a nominal price**
- **Amtrak assumed responsibility for operations on the bridge for itself and VIA on December 1, 2012**
- **Amtrak and VIA will share the costs of bridge access and track maintenance in proportion to the benefits each receives**

Whirlpool Rapids Bridge – Niagara Falls Bridge Commission



Niagara Falls – Customs and Stations Facilities

- **A preclearance operation is not currently feasible because there need to be multiple stops on both sides of the border**
 - Unlike for Vancouver and Montreal, it is not currently possible to operate a “sterile” train
- **Passengers are now cleared at the border**
 - In Ontario screening is entirely off board in VIA’s Niagara Falls, ON, station
 - In New York, primary inspection is on the train at Amtrak’s Niagara Falls, NY, station with secondary screening in the station
- **City of Niagara Falls is building a new station and USCBP facility including the former Customs House plus a major expansion**
 - Amtrak will relocate to the new facility
 - USCBP will screen passengers entirely off board as now done in Canada
 - Facility will have a high level platform alleviating safety concerns but not train delays or passenger inconvenience

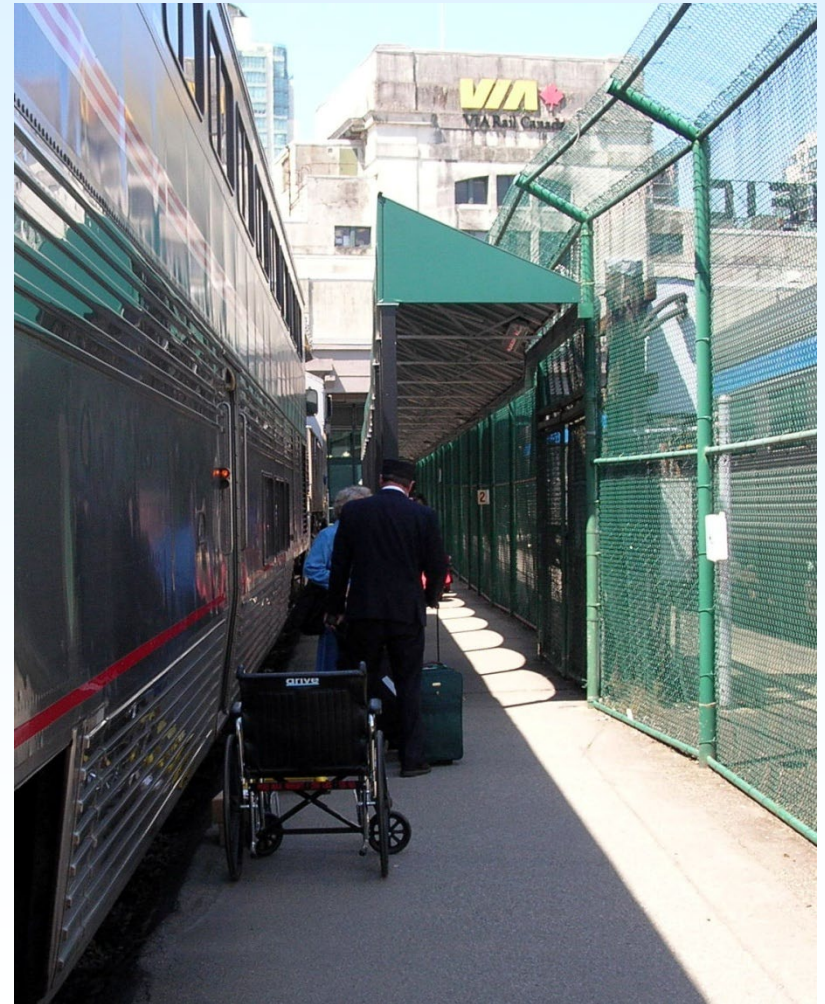
- **Pacific Central Station is owned by VIA Rail Canada and serves**
 - Toronto – Vancouver “Canadian”
 - Portland – Seattle – Vancouver “Amtrak Cascades”
 - Amtrak Thruway and other intercity bus carriers
- **Most advanced of the three border crossings**
 - Full customs and immigration processing by CBSA for inbound passengers to Canada
 - Immigration document pre-inspection and agriculture inspection for passengers to the U.S. are done in PCS although customs inspections remain on board at Blaine, WA
- **U.S. & Canada are currently negotiating a treaty to extend pre-clearance to passenger rail. Vancouver is identified in the Beyond the Border Action Plan as a site for full pre-clearance once treaty is signed. (Montreal would have to be applied for)**
- **Photographs of customs and immigration facility at Pacific Central Station follow**

Vancouver Pacific Central Station Facility

- Track and sterile compound



- Approach to customs facility



Requirements for Preclearance

- **A preclearance treaty ratified by both Canada and the United States providing for USCBP officers to work in designated rail stations in Canada**
- **Funding required to lease necessary space from Canadian National and other owners of the Central Station properties**
- **Capital funding to construct the facility on the track level plus vertical access to the concourse level**
- **Rescheduling of trains for connections due to faster trip times**
- **“Sterile” closed-door non-stop train operations in Canada**
- **Staff and other financial resources for USCBP and CBSA to operate the facility**
- **And, for the “Vermontier”, an additional pair of slots over Canadian National from the border to Central Station**

Questions and Discussion