

The Economic Forum™

712 Main Street, La Crosse, WI 54601

"High Speed Rail: A Conversation with Talgo & Amtrak"

The 47th sitting of LADCO's Economic Forum™, "High Speed Rail: A Conversation with Talgo & Amtrak" was held on Friday, April 16th in the Radisson Hotel Ballroom. Over 140 guests in attendance heard about the benefits of higher speed and more frequent rail service from two experts in the rail transportation industry.



Joshua Coran, Talgo (left) & Derrick James, Amtrak (right) present at the 47th Economic Forum™

Joshua Coran serves as Director of Operations with Talgo Inc. Talgo is a manufacturer of high speed trains headquartered in Spain with U.S. headquarters in Seattle, WA and a new manufacturing facility in the Milwaukee Area. Coran's presentation focused on the unique technology employed in Talgo's equipment that allows for very smooth rides at speeds of up to 125 miles per hour. Coran also spoke of Talgo's reliability which is evidenced by its service in the Pacific Northwest. Coran indicated that the existing Empire Builder Route is a part of a well established rail service network that will only grow in importance so increased frequency is as important as higher speeds along the existing Empire Builder Route.

Derrick James, Senior Government Affairs Director with Amtrak's Chicago Office, echoed Coran's comments regarding the importance of increased frequency as well as higher speeds and that Chicago serves as an important rail hub for the United States. The corridor between Chicago and the Twin Cities is one of the 10 busiest corridors and building on the success of the existing Empire Builder Route is critical to future success of high speed rail. James noted that Amtrak is committed to maintaining rail service along the Empire Builder Route regardless of the high speed route decision.

Those in attendance were the first to preview the Empire Builder High Speed Rail Coalition's video promoting the importance of high speed rail along the existing Empire Builder Route through La Crosse.