

And we think we know big projects...

Dulles Transit Extension Construction began on the long-awaited expansion in 2008. The new line, almost all of which is above ground, consists of 11 new stations and 23 miles of new track. Who's paying the estimated \$6.2 billion cost of the project? The federal government is footing \$975 million, and the state is kicking in \$200 million. The rest will be funded by the airport itself, local county governments and through fee increases on the existing toll road leading to the airport. The first phase of the line, connecting D.C. to Reston, is scheduled to open in 2013. If all goes according to plan, the second phase, extending the Metro to Dulles and outlying Loudon County, will be finished in 2016.

Washington, D.C., residents often try to avoid flights out of Dulles International Airport, located more than 20 miles from downtown. With no Metro rail access, trekking to Dulles often involves a long car ride, an infrequent bus or an expensive taxi. That will soon change, thanks to the biggest expansion in the history of the Metro system. Upon completion, the Silver Line will provide public transportation access from downtown D.C. to Dulles, as well as the Northern Virginia suburbs of Tysons Corner, Herndon, Reston and Ashburn. In addition to connecting the airport to the region's transit system, the new line should help reduce traffic congestion on the Beltway.

O'Hare Modernization More than 65 million passengers pass through Chicago's O'Hare International Airport each year, and those travelers have experienced their fair share of delays. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation, almost a quarter of the flights both in and out of the nation's second busiest airport weren't on time. As O'Hare traffic grew during the 1970s and 1980s, the airport's capacity couldn't keep up. But now a major modernization project is increasing the facility's efficiency and capacity, helping to reduce flight delays. In 2008, O'Hare finished a new runway, extended another and built a new air traffic control tower. The Chicago Department of Aviation hopes to complete two more runways in 2013 and 2016.

The modernization effort -- estimated at \$8.8 billion -- is being paid for with a mix of airport revenue bonds, grants from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and passenger fees. According to a recent report from the Eno Center for Transportation Policy, a national think tank, Chicago "has managed to finish key aspects of the work under budget and ahead of schedule."

Crescent Corridor Expansion The existing system for moving most goods across the country has long been based on railroads and an array of interstate highways. But increasing congestion on the nation's roads has sparked renewed interest in intermodal transportation and an increasing role for methods other than trucking. Spurred by interest from freight companies eager to save money on costly long-haul truck routes, railway company Norfolk Southern is working to upgrade the Crescent Corridor, a freight rail network that runs through 13 states and connects New Orleans to New Jersey. A series of projects will lay 300 new miles of track and build or expand intermodal terminals in 11 markets. Construction has already begun on terminals in Memphis, Birmingham, Ala., and two Pennsylvania communities.

The estimated \$2.5 billion expansion will enable shippers and trucking companies to move more of their goods using rail, instead of relying on trucks, which are more expensive and produce more pollution. Because of the public benefits of the cleaner air and reduced highway congestion that will result from the upgrade, the U.S. Department of Transportation has chipped in more than \$136 million to support the project, with the rest of the funds coming from states and Norfolk Southern itself. The company hopes to finish the upgrade by 2030 but says the timing depends on how easily it can obtain enough public funds for the project.

THINK SAFETY!

A Consumer Reports National Research Center study conducted in January 2012 asked 895 Americans to score 20 common driver gripes on a 1-to-10 scale, with 1 meaning a behavior “does not annoy you at all” and 10 means it “annoys you tremendously.” This fits in with our monthly safety topic because most of the items listed in the study are areas we need to make sure we are not doing ourselves. Enjoy!

Texting on a cell phone while driving	8.9
Tailgaters	8.4
Drivers who cut you off	8.3
Speeding and swerving in and out of traffic	8.2
Talking on a cell phone while driving	7.6
Not letting you merge into a lane	7.6
Not dimming high beams when approaching	7.6
Not using turn signals	7.5
Jaywalkers stepping in front of your car	7.3
Not turning on lights when it’s raining or at dusk	6.8
Drivers who are indecisive about where to turn	6.6
Cranking up the radio volume	5.7

Happy Birthday to...

Bill Bates	4-21
Doug Culbertson	4-22
Tyler German	4-28
Gary Hogue	4-28
Tim Luallen	4-7

Happy Anniversary to...

Jeff Dunlap	21 years
Chris Fostor	23 years
Jason Hatfield	12 years
Jeff Hill	7 years
Mike Jordan	10 years
Chris Kelly	5 years
Mike Means	21 years
Denis Swierz	10 years
Andy Swinehart	22 years
Don Wildermuth	10 years