

# COMMUNITY FACT SHEET

## Proposed Union Pacific – Norfolk Southern Railroad Merger

**What's Happening:** Union Pacific (UP) is seeking to acquire Norfolk Southern (NS) in an **\$85 billion merger** that would create the nation's first coast-to-coast transcontinental railroad under single ownership.

### WHY THIS MATTERS TO OUR COMMUNITY

#### Potential Local Impacts:

- **Increased Rail Traffic** — more trains through neighborhoods
- **Safety Concerns** — blocked crossings, longer wait times, increased hazmat risk
- **Noise & Vibration** — 24/7 operations, significant quality of life impacts
- **Property Values** — historical evidence of negative effects near rail expansion
- **Emergency Access** — longer, more frequent trains blocking emergency routes
- **Air Quality** — idling locomotives and increased diesel emissions

#### Market Concentration:

- UPRR would control nearly **50% of all U.S. rail freight**
- Only **3 major railroads** would remain (down from 30+ in the 1980s)
- Could trigger BNSF + CSX merger — reducing to just **2 companies**

#### Sen. Chuck Schumer:

*"hostile takeover of America's infrastructure"*

### MERGER TIMELINE

<b>Jul 28, 2025</b>	Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern reach merger agreement
<b>Jul 30, 2025</b>	STB receives Notice of Intent
<b>Nov 14, 2025</b>	Shareholders approve merger (99%+ from both companies)
<b>Dec 19, 2025</b>	UP and NS file 7,000-page merger application with STB
<b>Jan 16, 2026</b>	<b>STB REJECTS APPLICATION AS INCOMPLETE — missing required market share projections, incomplete merger docs, inadequate competitive impact analysis</b>
<b>Feb 17, 2026</b>	Deadline for UP/NS to notify STB if they will refile — UP has announced intent to refile
<b>Jun 22, 2026</b>	Deadline for revised application (if refiling)

## WHAT COMES NEXT: THE STB REVIEW

### If Application is Accepted as Complete:

- **Public Comment Period** — Communities, businesses, orgs can submit formal comments (60–90 days)
- **Discovery & Hearings** — STB reviews evidence, holds public hearings
- **Environmental Review** — Required environmental impact statement
- **Final Decision** — STB determines if merger is in the 'public interest' — considers competition, safety, service quality, environmental impacts, community effects

**Timeline:** Full STB review typically takes **18–24 months** or longer.

### Your Rights:

- File written comments with the STB
- Request public hearings in your community
- Testify at official proceedings
- Request STB impose specific conditions to protect your community

## LESSONS FROM HISTORY (1996)

### UP acquired Southern Pacific (\$5.4B) — what actually happened:

- Major traffic congestion and delays across western U.S. (1997–1998)
- Massive rail gridlock paralyzed Houston for months
- Thousands of workers laid off despite promises
- Billions in economic damage

### Industry Consolidation Pattern:

1980s: **30+** major freight railroads

Today: **4 railroads control 90%** of freight

1982 UP + Missouri Pacific & Western Pacific

1996 UP + Southern Pacific → **service crisis**

1996 Burlington Northern + Santa Fe → BNSF

2023 Canadian Pacific + Kansas City Southern

2025 UP proposes to merge with Norfolk Southern

*The current proposal combines railroads handling **43% of U.S. rail traffic** — unprecedented in scale.*

## KEY CONCERNS RAISED BY OPPONENTS

### Shipper Groups

*American Chemistry Council,  
Freight Rail Customer Alliance, Soy  
Transportation Coalition*

- Higher shipping costs
- Reduced service quality
- Fewer routing options
- Near-monopoly conditions in many markets

### Labor Unions

*Transport Workers Union,  
SMART-TD, BMWED*

- Union Pacific's poor safety record
- History of layoffs despite promises
- Crew fatigue and staffing shortages
- Worsening working conditions

### Competing Railroads

*BNSF, CSX, Canadian National*

- Unfair competitive advantage
- Market manipulation concerns
- Supply chain fragility from over-concentration

### Elected Officials

*Schumer, Baldwin, Marshall, and  
multiple state/local officials*

- Multiple senators from both parties oppose the merger
- State and local officials across affected regions have raised concerns