

**Transportation Commission of Colorado
September 16, 2010**

**Resolution # TC-1907
SB 37 Report to the TLRC**

WHEREAS, the abandonment of rail lines in Colorado is considered to be of statewide importance because of the impacts these abandonments may have on local communities and the rest of the transportation system; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Commission of Colorado has been given statutory responsibility by the State for approving the acquisition of rail lines or railroad right-of-way under C.R.S. 43-1- 1303(2); and

WHEREAS, preliminary analysis has been performed by the Colorado Department of Transportation staff to determine which rail lines are in jeopardy of being lost due to potential abandonment; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Transportation Development has identified a list of criteria for prioritization of rail corridors for preservation in a Rail Corridor Preservation Policy dated June 22, 2000; and

WHEREAS, the Department will continue its participation with RTD, DRCOG, and the City and County of Denver in the implementation of the master plan developed for Denver Union Station for its use as a major multimodal transportation hub; and

WHEREAS, the Department will, in conjunction with other interested parties, develop a State Rail Plan and conduct an Interregional Connectivity Study as a means of better planning passenger and freight rail improvements into the future; and

WHEREAS, the Department will continue to provide oversight of the North Avondale Towner Line in order to help ensure that freight rail service options are available in portions of southeastern Colorado; and

WHEREAS, the Department will respond to the provisions set forth in Senate Bill 09-094 by implementing the creation of a transit and rail division ; and

WHEREAS, C.R.S. 43-1-1303(3) requires the Executive Director of CDOT to submit a prioritized list of proposed railroad acquisitions and their proposed uses to the TLRC; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Transportation Development has examined rail lines that have been abandoned, or have been proposed to be abandoned, during the past year and determined that none were rail lines of statewide significance and none met the criteria for requiring preservation or acquisition by the State, and

WHEREAS, there are no rail lines of statewide significance that are at immediate risk of abandonment and in need of acquisition; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Commission wishes to keep the TLRC informed of rail activities that could impact rail service in the State.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Executive Director is hereby directed to submit the following list of recommendations to the Transportation Legislation Review Committee:

First priority: NA Towner Line

The first priority is to continue to maintain oversight of the NA Towner line for freight service.

Second priority: To conduct the State Rail Plan and the Interregional Connectivity Study

The results from these studies will provide guidance regarding future opportunities and partnerships for projects to enhance freight and passenger rail service, including high speed rail.

Third priority: Tennessee Pass Line

Monitor the status of UP's Tennessee Pass Line. It does not appear UP will abandon this line in the near future; however, it has not been used for over nine years. If this line is abandoned, the State should purchase it to preserve it for freight service in the future.

Fourth priority: Fort Collins Branch Line

Monitor the status of the Fort Collins Branch line. While this line does not appear to be at risk of abandonment in the near future, it is identified as a rail corridor of state significance since it connects Greeley and Fort Collins to the North Interstate 25 corridor.