

**Resolution # TC-2027**

**SB 37 Report to the TLRC for Prioritization of Railroad Corridors for Preservation**

**Approved by the Transportation Commission of on: September 22, 2011**

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, as well as the “market”, including shippers, receivers and consumers; 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, the Colorado Department of Transportation 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, 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 Department has responded to the provisions set forth in Senate Bill 09-094 by implementing the creation of the Division of Transit and Rail who shall, in coordination with other transit and rail providers, plan, promote, and implement investments in transit and rail services statewide ; and

WHEREAS, the Department will continue its participation on the DUSPA Board 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 is, in conjunction with other interested parties, is conducting a State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan, the Colorado Interregional Connectivity Study and an Advanced Guideway Feasibility Study as a means of better planning passenger and freight rail improvements into the future; and

WHEREAS, the lease purchase agreement with the Towner Line will be concluded; 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 Transportation Legislative Review Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Transit and Rail has examined rail lines that meet the preservation criteria that have been abandoned, or have been proposed to be abandoned, during the past year and determined that none were Rail Corridors of Statewide Significance, 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:

The first priority is to administer the purchase of the Towner line or offer the line for lease/purchase if current rights are not exercised. If Victoria and Southern (V&S) notifies CDOT of its intent to sell or abandon the line the appropriate steps will be taken the legislative intent of Section 43-1-1307, C.R.S.

The second priority is to monitor the status of the Tennessee Pass line. While there is no indication that the UP will abandon this line in the near future, the line has not been used for over fourteen years. If this line is abandoned, the State should purchase it to preserve it for freight service in the future.

The third priority is to monitor the status of the Fort Collins Branch line. While this line does not appear to be at risk of abandonment at this time, it is identified as a rail corridor of state significance since it connects Greeley and Ft. Collins to the North I -25 Corridor.

  
Herman Stockinger, Secretary  
Transportation Commission of Colorado