

Colorado State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan

Presentation to Statewide
Transportation Advisory
Committee

February 10, 2012



Colorado's State Freight and Passenger Rail Plan

- 2008 : Passenger Rail Investment & Improvement Act (PRIIA) – Mandated Updating of State Rail Plans and Development of National Rail Plan
- Designed to Satisfy 12 Requirements of (PRIIA)
- 15 Month Project
- Rail Plan Links Rail Planning Activities/Projects to CDOT's 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan
- Considered Both Freight Rail and Passenger Rail



Why CDOT Developed A State Rail Plan

- Required by PRIIA as a Condition of Future Federal Funding
- Plan will be Framework for Future State Rail Plan Updates; Last State Rail Plan Update in Colorado Completed in early 1980s
- Provides Inventory of Freight and Passenger Rail infrastructure and Services
- Provides Future Direction for Improving/Expanding Freight and Passenger Rail Services
- Identifies Existing and Potential Funding Sources
- Serves as Educational Tool for Rail Transportation



Status of State Rail Planning Effort

- Study Initiated January 2011
- Extensive Outreach Effort August & September 2011
- Draft Rail Plan Posted on Website for 10-day Review
- February 10 – Review Comments Due Date
- February 15 – Transportation and Intermodal Committee Workshop
- February 24 – Final Steering Committee Meeting
- March 22 – Transportation Commission Approval
- April 2012 – Submittal to Federal Railroad Administration for Approval



Rail Plan Steering Committee Membership

- 2- BNSF and UP (Class I Railroads)
- 2- San Luis and Rio Grande (SLRG) and OmniTRAX (Short Lines)
- 2- Colo. Counties Inc. (CCI) and Colo. Municipal League (CML)
- 1- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
- 1- State Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC)
- 1- Amtrak
- 1 – Progressive 15, Action 22, Club 20
- 2- Transit (Colorado Assoc. of Transit Agencies [CASTA] and RTD)
- 1- Agriculture – Colorado Dept of Agriculture
- 1 – Colorado Office of Economic Development
- 3 – CDOT Project Manager, Deputy PM and Planning and Performance Branch Manager



Vision for Rail in Colorado

- The Colorado rail system will improve the movement of freight and passengers in a safe, efficient, coordinated and reliable manner. In addition, the system will contribute to a balanced transportation network, cooperative land use planning, economic growth, a better environment and energy efficiency. Rail infrastructure and service will expand to provide increased transportation capacity, cost effectiveness, accessibility and intermodal connectivity to meet freight and passenger market demands through investments which include public-private partnerships.



Stakeholder Outreach

- 5 Steering Committee Meetings – Spring 2011 to Winter 2012 (last meeting February 24, 2012)
- 3 Stakeholder Group Meetings - Spring to Fall 2011
- 6 Workshops/Open Houses – Summer 2011
 - Akron, Limon, La Junta, Denver, Grand Junction, Alamosa
- Other Stakeholder Related Meetings
 - BNSF, UP, Agriculture Groups, Coal Industry, MPOs, Office of Economic Development , Northern Colorado League of Women Voters



Rail System Description and Inventory

- Physical Descriptions and GIS Maps of Rail Lines and Rail Infrastructure, Million Gross Tons Carried, Rail Cars Originated /Terminated, etc.
- Rail Carrier Profiles for Class I and Short Line Railroads Operating in Colorado
- Commodity Flows Both Current and Projected
- Description of Existing and Potential Passenger Rail Services Both Within the State as well as Interstate Connections



Rail Funding/Financing Programs

- **Federal Funding/Financing Programs**
 - Intercity Passenger Rail Service Corridor Capital Assistance Program
 - High Speed Rail Corridor Development Program
 - Section 130 Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Program
 - Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA)
 - Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF)
- **State Funding programs**
 - State Rail Bank Fund
 - Colorado State Infrastructure Bank
- **Rail-related Funding Utilized by Other States**
 - Arizona, California, Florida, Kansas, Kentucky, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin



Rail System Improvement Program

- Project Categories – Freight Rail
 - Railroad/Public Safety Projects (37)
 - Railroad Overpass/Underpass Projects (44)
 - Corridor Preservation Projects (2)
 - Short Line Improvement Projects (13)
 - Rail Facilities/Relocation Projects (3)
 - Class I Rail Capital Projects (17)
 - Industrial Spur Tracks (2)



Rail System Improvement Program

- Project Categories – Passenger Rail
 - Existing Passenger Service (4)
 - Proposed Passenger Service – Commuter Rail (4)
 - Proposed Passenger Service – Intercity Rail (9)
 - Proposed Passenger Service – High Speed Rail (7)



Rail Plan Recommendations

- Position Colorado for Future Federal Funding for Freight and Passenger-related Infrastructure Improvements
- Explore New State and Local Funding Sources for Rail-related Programs, Infrastructure and Services
- Facilitate Improved Communication Between Communities and Railroads
- Coordinate to Ensure Integration and Connectivity with Other Existing and Planned Transportation System Improvements
- Develop and Explore Implementation Options for a Front Range Regional Commuter Rail System
- Maximize Use of Existing Infrastructure and Monitor Significant Rail Corridor Infrastructure to Ensure Future Corridor Preservation and Expansion



Rail Plan Recommendations (Cont.)

- Facilitate Meetings Among the Colorado Office of Economic Development, the Class I and Short Line Railroads, Regional Economic Development Agencies, and Representatives of Various Economic Sectors , such as Agriculture, Defense, and Energy to Explore Win/win Opportunities to Grow the Colorado and Local/regional Economies
- Develop and Implement a Short Line Railroad Assistance Program
- Support Linking of Colorado's Passenger Rail System to the Developing National Intercity and High-speed Rail Networks
- Use the Stakeholder Group Convened for this Plan as a Resource for the Upcoming Interregional Connectivity and Advanced Guideway System Studies and to Advise on Future Updates to the Plan



Questions/Comments

