

# STATE RAIL PLAN GUIDANCE

## FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION

September 2013

### Summary

#### *About this Guidance*

This guidance provides an explanation of the process to be followed in developing State rail plans (SRPs), the procedure to be followed by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for review and acceptance of submitted State rail plans, the standardized State rail plan format, a list of the minimum State rail plan content requirements, and procedural requirements for State rail plan preparation, as established by the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). An overview of PRIIA and the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program is also provided.

#### *Effect on Existing State Rail Plans*

State rail plans completed before publication of this guidance that substantially meet the requirements of PRIIA as determined by FRA (acting for the Secretary of Transportation), will be accepted by FRA as satisfying the State rail plan requirement for States seeking capital grants under Sections 301, 302, and 501 of PRIIA. Because individual State rail plans must be updated at least every five years and State update cycles vary, there is no set schedule when States will submit rail plans to FRA for review and acceptance.

Further, State rail plans that are the product of planning efforts underway prior to issuance of this final guidance, and that substantially meet the requirements of PRIIA, will also be deemed by FRA to satisfy the State rail plan requirement for States seeking capital grants under Sections 301, 302, and 501 of PRIIA. A State rail plan effort that has reached the “notice-to-proceed” (NTP) stage between a State Rail Transportation Authority and a consultant will be considered “underway”.

#### *Standard Format for State Rail Plans*

With this guidance, FRA is establishing a standard format for State rail plans submitted by States to FRA. States are also encouraged to adopt this standard format for State rail plans that are currently underway to make it easier to integrate State rail plans with other plans including those of neighboring states, to assist FRA in reviewing individual State rail plans for acceptance in a timely and efficient manner, as well as for preparing national program needs assessments.

The State rail plan format, addressing content and organization, is shown below with a detailed description of each chapter provided in Section V of this Guidance.

#### Executive Summary

1. The Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation (Overview)
2. The State's Existing Rail System:
  - 2.1. Description and Inventory
  - 2.2. Trends and Forecasts
  - 2.3. Rail Service Needs and Opportunities
3. Proposed Passenger Rail Improvements and Investments
4. Proposed Freight Rail Improvements and Investments
5. The State's Rail Service and Investment Program
6. Coordination and Review

#### Technical Appendix

The State rail plan may be published and presented to FRA either as a stand-alone document or as an element of the State's Long-Range Transportation Plan, as required in 23 U.S.C. 135 and 49 U.S.C. 5304, in accordance with the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). Incorporation of the State rail plan within the statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan may provide an opportunity for States to more fully envision and present their rail program within a broader context of the State's multimodal statewide transportation system. If the State rail plan is incorporated within the State's Long-Range Transportation Plan, it is important that the State rail plan standard format be used (for the State rail plan section of the statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan) and that the State Rail Plan Approval Authority, as described in Section III of this Guidance, explicitly approves the State rail plan element.

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## I. Introduction to this Guidance

The U.S. Census estimates that by 2050, the nation will add another 100 million people, most of them in already-congested “megaregions.”<sup>1</sup> According to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) analysis, the domestic U. S. economy requires the movement of approximately 40 tons of freight per capita per year, meaning that 4 billion additional tons of freight will need to be transported annually by 2050. Significant increases in passenger travel will also be generated by this projected population growth. At the national, regional, and state levels, proper planning and strategic investments in transportation infrastructure will be necessary to accommodate this growth in order to maintain the Nation’s global economic competitiveness and quality-of-life. Rail will play a pivotal role in the Nation’s transportation future, especially given the financial and environmental challenges associated with increasing capacity on other modes.

The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008<sup>2</sup> (PRIIA) reauthorized the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) and strengthened the U.S. intercity passenger rail network by directing Amtrak, the FRA – an operating administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), States, and other stakeholders to improve service, operations, and facilities, and by authorizing funding for these activities. Section 303 of PRIIA<sup>3</sup> provides for enhanced State involvement in rail policy, planning, and development efforts, including requiring States to develop FRA-accepted SRPs in order to be eligible for the capital grants authorized in PRIIA.<sup>4</sup>

State rail plans must reflect both the primarily private ownership of the rail network and the fact that, in most cases, some form of private/public partnership arrangement must characterize planning for and investment in that network, both in States and in metropolitan areas. Successful private/public partnerships create situations where both freight and passenger operations can expand and flourish.

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<sup>1</sup> The “Megaregion” concept was addressed on page 5 of FRA’s 2010 National Rail Plan Progress Report. The megaregion concept is a framework for planning investments within those regions. However, FRA realizes that megaregions cover only portions of the United States and many vital transportation investments are necessary in all States.

<sup>2</sup> Public Law 110-432.

<sup>3</sup> 49 U.S.C. Ch. 227.

<sup>4</sup> Although PRIIA requires a State to have a rail plan to be eligible for the capital grants authorized in the Act, Congress has made exceptions and, for example, waived this requirement when appropriating funds for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5, enacted February 17, 2009) as well as the FY 2010 appropriations act (Public Law 111-117, enacted December 16, 2009).

In order to be eligible for capital grants authorized under PRIIA, States must establish or designate a State Rail Transportation Authority to develop State rail plans that set policy involving freight and passenger (intercity and commuter) rail transportation within their boundaries, establish priorities and implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest, and serve as the basis for Federal and State rail investments within the State. PRIIA requires USDOT to establish minimum standards for the preparation and periodic revision of State rail plans. FRA has developed this Guidance to assist States in fulfilling that requirement.

In brief, State rail plans should address a broad spectrum of issues, including an inventory of the existing passenger and freight rail transportation system, rail services, and facilities within the State. Plans should also include an explanation of the State's passenger and freight rail service goals and objectives within the context of the State's overall transportation system; an analysis of the public benefits of freight and passenger rail to the State; and a long-range investment program for current and future freight and passenger rail infrastructure in the State. State rail plans are to be coordinated with, and incorporated within, as appropriate, other State transportation planning programs for the purpose of considering a statewide multimodal context when identifying the long and short-term rail service and investment needs and requirements of States. In addition, where appropriate, State rail plans should be coordinated with the transportation planning programs of neighboring States and others within the megaregion.

## II. Overview of PRIIA and the State Rail Plan Requirement

The enactment of PRIIA served to strengthen the U.S. passenger rail network by encouraging a long-term view of the rail system. It also engaged stakeholders in considering the potential benefits that flow to the public and private entities by including passenger and freight rail into the transportation planning processes conducted at the statewide and metropolitan levels. PRIIA authorized the Secretary of Transportation, through FRA, to make grants to assist in the financing of capital costs to improve intercity passenger rail transportation. PRIIA also required that consideration be given to the important role commuter rail and freight rail play in meeting the transportation needs of the Nation. Therefore, States should address all markets and types of passenger and freight rail service in formulating their State rail plans.

### *A. State Rail Plan Requirement*

Under Section 303 of PRIIA, States must develop their State rail plans according to specific requirements as a condition of eligibility for high-speed and intercity passenger rail capital assistance grants authorized in Section 301 and Section 501 of PRIIA. High priority corridors that are candidates for congestion grants (Section 302) also must be included in the State rail plan. Submittal of a State rail plan that conforms to PRIIA and this Guidance is a key element in project eligibility under these capital grant programs authorized by the legislation.<sup>5</sup>

Requiring State rail plans as a prerequisite to eligibility for rail improvement funding under the FRA programs noted above enables States to develop strategies and policies for enhanced passenger and freight rail service on a comprehensive scale, in consideration of benefits to the public at large. There are many public benefits from rail that can be calculated. A broad view of these public benefits should encompass how rail transportation improves transportation safety, economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability, energy efficiency, state of good repair, and livability. These benefits represent the Department of Transportation's strategic goals which are in parallel with the language in PRIIA that states:

“[A] benefit accrued to the public, including Amtrak, in the form of enhanced mobility of people or goods, environmental protection or enhancement, congestion mitigation, enhanced trade and economic development, improved air quality or land use, enhanced public safety or security, transportation efficiency

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<sup>5</sup> Intercity passenger rail projects funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and by the Fiscal Year 2009 and 2010 Transportation Appropriations Acts were exempted from the State Rail Plan requirement.

or infrastructure preservation, and any other positive community effects as defined by the Secretary[.]<sup>6</sup>

Accordingly, to identify and maximize strategic opportunities to serve communities and the public at large, FRA encourages all States to develop State rail plans, including States that do not intend to pursue Federal funding for rail capital projects under the programs established by PRIIA in sections 301, 302, and 501.

### *B. Capital Grant Programs*

PRIIA established three new competitive capital grant programs (Sections 301, 302, and 501) for funding high-speed and intercity passenger rail improvements, each of which, as authorized, requires a 20 percent non-Federal match. The grant programs are described below:

- Section 301 of the Act creates the framework for a new intercity passenger rail service corridor capital assistance program.
- Section 302 of the Act authorizes the appropriation of funds for “congestion grants” to States or to Amtrak (in cooperation with States) for capital projects to reduce train delay and increase ridership on high priority rail corridors.
- Section 501 of the Act authorizes the USDOT to establish and implement a high-speed rail corridor development program.

### *C. Federal Funding for Rail Planning*

FRA’s High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program (HSIPR) consolidates all three PRIIA-authorized grant programs into a single, coordinated program. FRA recognizes the strategic importance of State rail plans and other supporting planning activities to the long-term success of the HSIPR program and, to the extent possible, makes HSIPR funding available for rail planning activities.

As mentioned previously and described later in this Guidance, States are required to coordinate their State rail plan development activities with the applicable Statewide/Nonmetropolitan and/or Metropolitan Transportation Planning processes administered jointly by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Beyond the importance of demonstrating policy and program consistency with the State’s overall transportation vision, preparing State rail plans in full coordination with – or as part of – broader multimodal planning programs may provide access to additional funding sources to support the preparation of successive State rail plans and related planning activities. FHWA/FTA may consider funding rail-related intermodal planning activities, particularly for terminal and

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<sup>6</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22701(2)(A)(i).

station area activities that require coordinated highway and transit planning focused on travel within or between metropolitan areas or States. Funding available through FHWA's metropolitan transportation planning (PL) program<sup>7</sup> and State Planning and Research (SP&R) Program<sup>8</sup>, as well as FTA's Metropolitan Planning Program (MPP)<sup>9</sup> and State Planning and Research Program<sup>10</sup>, may be used by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and States to augment FRA funding, provided there is a clear nexus between State rail plan development and preparation of metropolitan and statewide transportation plans, including State freight plans.

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<sup>7</sup> 23 U.S.C. § 134

<sup>8</sup> 23 U.S.C. § 505

<sup>9</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 5305(d)

<sup>10</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 5305(e)

### III. Role of State and Local Officials and Other Stakeholders

States are called upon to prepare State rail plans and to assume four primary responsibilities, as set forth in PRIIA:

- A. Establish a State authority to develop the State rail plan and designate officials with approval authority of the plan;
- B. Coordinate with other planning activities being carried out in the statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan transportation planning processes funded by FHWA and FTA;
- C. Involve the public and key stakeholders in the planning process; and
- D. Coordinate with, and secure program implementation commitments as needed, from neighboring States, especially where multi-state corridors and transportation systems are involved.

#### *A. State Authorities*

PRIIA requires States to establish or designate, by State law or the direction of the Governor, a “State Rail Transportation Authority” (SRTA). The SRTA is a State agency or official responsible for preparing, maintaining, coordinating, and administering the State rail plan. Usually, the SRTA is the State department of transportation. The SRTA establishes priorities and implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest and works to ensure that the State rail plan fully reflects the State’s policy on freight and passenger rail transportation, including commuter rail.

PRIIA also requires States to establish or designate a “State Rail Plan Approval Authority” (SRPAA), with responsibility to review and approve the State rail plan. The SRPAA serves as the State approval authority for investment of public funds in rail projects. In most cases, the State Secretary of Transportation is designated as the authority that provides the final approval of the State Rail Plan. As with the SRTA, States have flexibility to designate the most appropriate official or organization within their State government as the SRPAA. It is allowable for the SRTA and SRPAA to be the same State entity or official.

#### *B. Coordination with Statewide/Nonmetropolitan and Metropolitan Transportation Planning*

State rail plans are an important part of a comprehensive approach to identifying and addressing a State’s future mobility needs for passengers and freight in a coordinated and integrated fashion across modes. Therefore, PRIIA requires States to coordinate State rail plan efforts with statewide/nonmetropolitan transportation planning goals and programs and to set forth policy for the role of rail within the State’s transportation system. State rail plans must prioritize public investment in rail transportation on a comprehensive, system wide level,

ensuring that those investments are integrated with other State and metropolitan transportation plans and priorities.

Coordination of the preparation of a State rail plan with other transportation planning efforts at both the statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan area levels, and vice versa, offers the potential for States to leverage the effectiveness of their combined rail and non-rail public infrastructure investment programs, as well as to identify opportunities for integrated operation and management across services and systems, including passenger and freight rail. Coordination at both the capital investment and operations levels can enable rail, as well as service providers across other modes, to collaborate on a comprehensive strategy to maximize the public benefits delivered. PRIIA directs States to prioritize options to maximize service integration and efficiency between rail and other modes of transportation within the State.<sup>11</sup> An effective method of accomplishing this is for States to prepare State rail plans as integral parts of the State's Long-Range Transportation Plan. Components of State rail plans affecting urbanized areas should be included as integral parts of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan prepared by the MPO for that area.

State rail plans should be coordinated with the policies and programs of the statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan transportation planning documents required under 23 U.S.C. §§ 134 and 135 and 49 U.S.C. §§ 5303 and 5304. These sections require continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning processes at the statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan levels, including the development of statewide and metropolitan long-range transportation plans, and short-range Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs) and metropolitan area Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) for States and metropolitan areas respectively. Preparing the State rail plan in coordination with, or as part of, the multimodal planning process will ensure consistency across the programs.

With the enactment of Public Law 112-141, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21), on July 6, 2012, Section 1118 directs the Secretary of Transportation to encourage each State to develop a comprehensive State freight plan. As part of the coordinating requirement for State rail plans noted previously, States should coordinate the freight provisions of the two plans. In addition, as other planning requirements are put in statute, States should work to continue to coordinate State Rail Planning efforts with additional statutory requirements.

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<sup>11</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(8)

For information and coordination purposes, States are encouraged to list FRA-funded rail planning studies in the approved Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) Work Program and/or Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) of the State and/or applicable MPO. Together, the UPWP and SPR Work Program should list the key data collection and analysis tasks, as well as public and stakeholder involvement activities associated with preparation of the State rail plan, identifying opportunities for coordination with other data collection and planning analysis activities.

For information and coordination purposes, States are encouraged to incorporate the policies, visions, and priorities of the State rail plan, as one of many transportation modes, in the statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan. This could be presented within the narrative directly or as an addendum to the plan. Similarly, short-range rail improvement priorities could be included in the TIP/STIP for information and coordination purposes only.

Among the many benefits of integrating preparation of the State Rail Plan with transportation planning conducted at the statewide and metropolitan levels is the opportunity for identifying potential environmental concerns and mitigation during early systems planning. MAP-21 calls for the transportation plans of States and MPOs to include a discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities that could, under certain conditions, provide information that could be incorporated into subsequent work conducted in accordance with the environmental review requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

In addition, the freight planning provisions enacted in MAP-21 provide another important opportunity area for coordination with State rail plan development. States are strongly encouraged to coordinate development of their State rail plans with their freight planning efforts, including preparation of the State freight plan, considering shifts in the nature of freight demand and the type of freight in assessing emerging freight markets for rail. Similarly, coordination of State rail plan development and freight planning, including the state freight plan, can allow States to leverage the benefits of investments in either mode, such as the ability of a highway investment in an intermodal facility to add value to the rail network.

MAP-21 also calls for establishment of a performance-based approach to statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan transportation planning, supporting the achievement of locally established performance targets related to national performance goals, as well as other measures deemed appropriate by State and local officials. Similarly, PRIIA provides a list of performance indicators for use in developing State rail plans. In coordinating State rail plan development with transportation planning processes carried out at the statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan levels, States are advised to utilize consistent sets of performance measures, to the extent practicable. For rail assets in particular, States are encouraged to prepare and maintain inventories and analyses of their rail facilities consistent

with the transit asset management plans required in MAP-21 and other transportation facility and service-based performance plans, as appropriate. Similarly, the development and use of safety-focused performance metrics should be coordinated with the safety-related performance measures and targets established by States and public transportation service providers, in accordance with MAP-21.

Similar to planning for capital investments, important opportunities exist to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of rail services by harmonizing operations and management with other modes. While rail offers important benefits to intermediate and long-distance travel for people and freight, these efficiencies depend upon the quality of access and egress at trip origins and destinations. Intercity passenger rail services should be coordinated with public transit and commercial intercity bus operators and timetables in order to extend the range of destinations that can be reached through seamless intermodal connections. The same concept applies to freight, as well-located intermodal terminals with good connections to highway and port facilities provide similar opportunities to enhance the quality of rail freight service and add value to both the rail and highway network while improving the economic competitiveness of the Nation. There are also opportunities for rail and aviation to provide access and egress benefits to each other and they should be discussed in the State rail plan where applicable.

Coordination and integration of planning and operations across modes is encouraged. Rail interests should seek-out opportunities for interagency, intergovernmental, and multimodal coordination through the ongoing transportation planning process. The various committees and task forces serving the planning processes administered by States and MPOs can provide useful venues for this coordination and integration.

In summary, there are many reasons for rail interests to become active participants in the statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan transportation planning processes being carried out in their service areas. MAP-21 enhanced the role of transportation system administrators and operators by requiring MPOs in urbanized areas with populations over 200,000 to include officials of public agencies that administer or operate major modes of transportation operating in their areas. Rail interests serving these large metropolitan areas should explore the opportunity to have a voice in the transportation planning process, representing the needs of the rail industry to State and local officials.

### *C. Public and Stakeholder Involvement*

PRIIA requires States to involve public and private stakeholders – including the private railroads that own the majority of rail related infrastructure – in the development and review of State rail plans. These stakeholders must be notified and given the opportunity to provide input on the State rail plan as it is being prepared, as well as on the draft plans produced, with a reasonable

period of time allowed for public and stakeholder review. The occasions for public involvement within the State rail plan development effort, as well as the method and period of time for public involvement, should be determined by States in collaboration with the public and stakeholder community. States are encouraged to incorporate the public involvement activities associated with State rail plan development within the documented public involvement process established for the overall statewide/nonmetropolitan planning process with appropriate expansion of the range of interested stakeholder groups, including, for example, the state freight advisory committees encouraged by MAP-21. Additionally, the States' public involvement processes should include provisions for engaging typically under-represented populations.

As defined by PRIIA, stakeholders must include all freight and passenger rail (intercity and commuter rail) carriers and transit authorities operating in, or affected by rail operations within, the State, units of local government, and metropolitan areas.<sup>12</sup> Stakeholders should also include major shippers, freight and passenger rail organizations, rail labor organizations, intercity bus operators, airlines, airport authorities, port authorities, chambers of commerce, tourism organizations, and other public or private entities interested in improving rail services and multi-modal integration within the State. SRPAs must work cooperatively with State, regional and municipal transportation and land use planning, environmental and economic development agencies; review their freight and passenger rail activities and initiatives; and consider their recommendations. Additionally, where Federal installations are involved and/or military preparedness is affected by rail facilities and services, the appropriate Federal agencies should be included among the group of stakeholders supporting development of the State rail plan.

States shall work with MPOs to involve the appropriate public and stakeholder interests from urbanized areas of the State in the preparation of State rail plans. Public involvement in support of state rail plan development would be enhanced if coordinated with, or incorporated within, the public involvement processes carried out both by States and MPOs through their respective statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan transportation planning processes, as described above. Because State rail plans will include proposed improvements throughout the State - in both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, working through the public engagement

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<sup>12</sup> States must involve private sector stakeholders such as freight railroads in preparing State rail plans. While private rail interests are under no obligation to provide proprietary information of any kind, their observations and perspectives are invaluable to the State rail plan development effort. Similarly, to the extent that private rail interests may voluntarily submit confidential information for use in preparing State rail plans, States should take appropriate measures to safeguard the confidentiality of that potentially sensitive information. States should comply with antitrust laws when preparing State rail plans.

processes of both States and MPOs can afford the public and stakeholders a comprehensive view of transportation decision-making across modes and across regions.

In summary, it is important to establish and maintain coordination between State rail plan development and the overall statewide/nonmetropolitan transportation planning activities of a State, as well as the metropolitan transportation planning process administered by MPOs. MPOs are required to prepare public Participation Plans that document the full range of organizations involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process along with procedures for their involvement. With similar provisions for collaboratively developed and documented arrangements for stakeholder participation in the statewide/nonmetropolitan transportation planning process, rail operators, agencies, and authorities are encouraged to participate in the planning processes of States and metropolitan areas where they have an operational presence.

#### *D. Coordination with Neighboring States*

The railroad network and the flow of goods and passengers on trains routinely cross State boundaries, as well as international borders. Many intercity corridors serve multiple States, as well as Canadian provinces, and several metropolitan areas' existing or proposed commuter rail services straddle State boundaries. Therefore, it is necessary that SRPAs coordinate their planning efforts with neighboring States and countries, where applicable.<sup>13</sup> Multi-state rail plans can serve as visioning and strategy documents for improved passenger and freight rail networks within multi-state megaregions.

FRA encourages all States to participate in the development of multi-state rail plans, as appropriate, in addition to the required State rail plan. However, it is also necessary to coordinate State rail planning among neighboring States for facilities and services that cross, or someday may cross, State boundaries. This need persists whether or not larger-scale regional multi-state planning processes have been established.

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<sup>13</sup> Where appropriate, States where a significant portion of passenger and freight rail travel has origins and/or destinations outside of the U.S., should describe how international travel markets are reflected in State rail plan development.

## IV. Federal Involvement

PRIIA requires that the USDOT Secretary develop procedures for States to submit State rail plans for review, including a standardized format and data requirements. This requirement was delegated to FRA. FRA review of the initial State rail plan and subsequent updates ensures the State of continuous eligibility for rail capital assistance authorized under PRIIA. Before awarding capital grants under Sections 301, 302, and 501, FRA, on behalf of the DOT Secretary, must verify that candidate projects for funding are included in the State rail plan and that the State rail plan includes the minimum content required by PRIIA.

FRA's role in State rail planning includes four primary responsibilities:

- to establish minimum content requirements and a recommended format for the preparation, update, and submittal of State rail plans;
- to offer funding through cooperative grant agreements to States for the completion of State rail plans and other planning activities;
- to coordinate State rail plans with national and multi-state rail planning efforts;
- to provide technical assistance, guidance, analytic tools, and training to support preparation of State rail plans.

### *A. Minimum Content Requirements, Recommended Format, and Submittal Guidelines*

Acting for the Secretary, FRA is establishing, through this guidance, the minimum content and standard format for preparation and periodic updates of State rail plans. This guidance also establishes the process for submitting a State rail plan for FRA review and acceptance. Additional information on these issues can be found in Sections V and VI.

### *B. FRA Cooperative Funding Agreements with States for State Rail Plan Development*

Subject to availability of federally appropriated resources, FRA funds State rail plan development efforts through cooperative agreements. This enables FRA to work closely with States throughout the planning process – providing ongoing review and feedback to States, which may also enable FRA to shorten the amount of time required to review the final plan.

### *C. Coordination of State Rail Plans with Multi-State and National Rail Planning Efforts*

PRIIA contains provisions for two other large-scale rail planning efforts led by FRA. First, Section 307 of PRIIA directed the Administrator of FRA to develop a long-range National Rail Plan consistent with both approved State rail plans and the rail needs of the Nation. FRA released a Preliminary National Rail Plan in October 2009 and a National Rail Plan Progress Report in September 2010. The findings and recommendations from State rail plans and multi-state

regional rail plans are furthering development of regional rail networks that cross State lines and will be used to inform continued national rail planning efforts.

The individual corridors comprising such networks should eventually be studied through a Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan (PRCIP). A PRCIP is comprised of a Tier 1 (i.e., Service-level) NEPA environmental document and a companion Service Development Plan (SDP). PRCIPs are used to determine alignments, service characteristics, and the improvements required to operate the proposed service, with consideration for the role the corridor plays in the current and planned regional network. The results of multi-state planning studies and SDPs should be considered in State rail plans and future updates. Likewise, it is envisioned that projects first identified in State rail plans should be adopted into multi-state and national plans as they are developed.<sup>14</sup>

#### *D. FRA Technical Assistance*

States are welcome to request technical assistance from FRA to support their work to prepare State rail plans. FRA is sponsoring training and technical assistance activities, and the development of technical analysis tools to support preparation of State rail plans. Informational resources will be made available by FRA on request.

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<sup>14</sup> To the extent possible, the State rail plan should reflect locally agreed upon approaches to multi-state coordination and decision-making, if available. Accordingly, States are encouraged to include discussions of the techniques and institutional frameworks for multi-state, mega-regional planning in a technical appendix to their State rail plans.

## V. Standard Format and Data Requirements

In accordance with PRIIA, State rail plans must include a comprehensive description and assessment of a State's current rail system, an analysis of the role of rail transportation within the State's transportation system, and a vision of the future passenger and freight rail system in the State. The State rail plan should also describe how that vision is integrated into planning for the overall multimodal transportation system for the State. The State rail plan must include a Rail Service and Investment Program (RSIP) that provides guidelines and lists the rail investment needs to achieve the State's vision for the rail system in the short- and long-term.

PRIIA Section 303<sup>15</sup> requires that State rail plans address twelve minimum content areas. These content areas are addressed in the standardized format and listed for reference in Appendix 1, along with a list of additional FRA-required data.

The following outline represents the required standard format for State rail plans:

### Executive Summary

1. The Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation (Overview)
2. The State's Existing Rail System
  - 2.1. Description and Inventory
  - 2.2. Trends and Forecasts
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### Technical Appendix

#### **Executive Summary**

**Objective:** *A summary that highlights key facts and findings of the State rail plan, with an emphasis on the desired outcomes and program effects of the State's vision for rail and how that vision will be achieved through the projects, programs, and policies identified in the Rail Service and Investment Program.*

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<sup>15</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705

## Chapter 1: The Role of Rail in Statewide Transportation (Overview)

**Objective:** *Illustrate the current and proposed future role of rail in the State’s multimodal transportation system. Describe how the State is organized to provide political, legal, and financial support to rail development.*

- 1.1. The State’s goals for the multimodal transportation system.
- 1.2. A conceptual analysis of rail transportation’s role within the State’s transportation system.<sup>16</sup>
- 1.3. A description of the institutional governance structure of the State rail program(s) including: SRTA, SRPAA, State and local agencies involved in delivering rail services, such as rail authorities, transit agencies and MPOs, and State authorizing (and limiting) laws and powers for planning, funding, and operating rail services; and a statement that the State is in compliance with the requirements of Section 22102 (which stipulates eligibility requirements for a long-established FRA rail freight grant assistance program pertaining to State planning and administration).<sup>17</sup>
- 1.4. A description of the State’s authority for grant, loan, and public/private partnership financing; how the State has used these authorities in the past; State revenue sources that are dedicated to rail funding (if any); and how much the State has provided in funding over the past five years.
- 1.5. A summary of the freight and passenger rail services, initiatives and plans, such as environmental reviews required by NEPA, and Service Development Plans (SDP), sponsored by State rail transportation authorities, regional planning agencies, regional transportation authorities, and municipalities within the State, or in the region in which the State is located, that have been considered while preparing the plan. A summary of services, initiatives, and plans of private sector railroads, as well as connections between rail services and other modes in the State transportation system, to the extent known to the State, are to be included here as well.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(1)

<sup>17</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(12)

<sup>18</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(11)

## Chapter 2: The State's Existing Rail System

**Objective:** *Provide an overview and inventory of the State's existing rail system as a baseline for planning and decision making, describe the trends that will impact the need for rail in the State, and identify the needs and opportunities for passenger and freight rail service in the State.*

### 2.1. The State's Existing Rail System: Description and Inventory

Describe the following in text, maps, tables, and graphics for the existing rail system:

- 2.1.1. The existing freight, intercity passenger, and commuter rail transportation system, services currently operating, operating objectives, and system performance, including: a review of all rail lines and corridors, existing and proposed for freight, commuter, and intercity passenger service, including high speed lines as well as railway assets currently out of service or rail banked. The ownership of, and operating rights over, each segment of the railroad network, whether private or public, is to be clearly identified.<sup>19</sup>
- 2.1.2. Major freight and passenger terminals and stations that serve as intermodal connections, including seaports and airports.<sup>20</sup>
- 2.1.3. Objectives for the passenger rail services operating within the State, including minimum service levels by route, including service frequency, capacity, and projected ridership.<sup>21</sup>
- 2.1.4. A performance evaluation of intercity passenger services operating in the State (both interstate and intrastate services) according to metrics such as those established under PRIIA Section 207: FRA Metrics and Standards for Intercity Passenger Service. Only currently available data for PRIIA Section 207 analysis is requested. Identify possible improvements in existing services and a describe strategies to achieve those improvements).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(1) and (2)

<sup>20</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(8)

<sup>21</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(3)

<sup>22</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(10)

- 2.1.5. A statement on public financing for rail projects and service in the State, including a list of current and prospective public capital and operating funding resources, public subsidies, State taxation, and other financial policies relating to rail operations and infrastructure development. This section should also address existing challenges to State investment or involvement in rail transportation as posed by the State’s constitution, laws, or regulations, or by implementation of current or proposed federal regulations.<sup>23</sup>
- 2.1.6. Ongoing programs and projects intended to improve the safety and security of rail transportation, including all major projects funded under section 130 of Title 23.<sup>24</sup>
- 2.1.7. A general analysis of rail transportation’s economic and environmental impacts in the State including, but not limited to, congestion mitigation, safety impacts including the benefit of freight rail compared to freight on public highways, trade and economic development, air quality, land use, energy use, resiliency to climate change impacts, and community impacts.<sup>25</sup>

## **2.2. The State’s Existing Rail System: Trends and Forecasts**

Describe trends and forecasts for demographic, economic and transportation demand growth in the State and for the likely demand for freight and passenger (intercity and commuter) rail service, including:

- 2.2.1. Demographic and Economic growth factors, including:
  - Population.
  - Employment.
  - Personal income.
  - Industrial outlook by sector.
- 2.2.2. Freight demand and growth by type of service, e.g. intermodal, commodity, manifest.
- 2.2.3. Passenger travel demand and growth.

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<sup>23</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(6)

<sup>24</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(9)

<sup>25</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(4)

2.2.4. Fuel cost trends.

2.2.5. Rail congestion trends.

2.2.6. Highway and airport congestion trends.

2.2.7. Land use trends.

### **2.3. The State's Existing Rail System: Rail Service Needs and Opportunities**

Based on the findings above, summarize the key issues, service gaps, improvement needs (including connectivity to other modes), and financial deficits facing the State's rail system. Identify the opportunities to address those issues, gaps, needs, and deficits for freight, intercity, and commuter rail. The rationale and basis for the rail improvements proposed in Chapters 3 and 4 should be presented, included projected shifts in the nature and type of passenger and freight movement and emerging markets.

### **Chapter 3: Proposed Passenger Rail Improvements and Investments**

**Objective:** *Describe the improvements and investments that could address the passenger rail needs of the State.*

For the intercity and commuter passenger opportunities described in Chapter 2, describe in summary terms - at minimum at a program level - all passenger rail proposals under consideration, including new services, station improvements, improved intermodal connections to other passenger modes, state of good repair projects, rolling stock improvements, opportunities for improved coordinated or integration with freight rail services, and unfunded concepts.<sup>26</sup> Identify projects such as service changes or physical improvements and whether they are improvements or new additions to the existing rail network in the State. Organized by corridor and type of service (i.e. intercity, commuter or both), describe how each proposal would address gaps in service, climate change adaptation, and financial deficits identified in Chapter 2, identify potential operating subsidies and sources, and reference relevant studies and reports.

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<sup>26</sup> Because PRIIA requires information on "major passenger and freight intermodal connections and facilities", this guidance requests detailed information on major stations and all stations with rail-to-rail, rail-to-public transportation, and other significant intermodal transfer opportunities.

## **Chapter 4: Proposed Freight Rail Improvements and Investments**

**Objective:** *Describe the improvements and investments that could address the freight rail needs of the State.*

For the freight opportunities described in Chapter 4, describe in summary terms all freight rail proposals under consideration, including intermodal connections and facilities. Identify projects as service changes or physical improvements and whether they are improvements or new additions to the existing rail network in the State. Organized by railroad company and corridor, describe how each proposal would address gaps in service, climate change adaptation, financial needs, and options for improvement identified in Chapter 2 and reference relevant studies and reports. Also, describe how investments in the freight rail network both leverage, and are leveraged by, investments to the highway and transit systems, as well as port and air facilities. This section also can complement the preceding section by identifying opportunities for improved coordination or integration with passenger rail services.

FRA understands that private railroads are under no obligation to provide information on their capital improvement plans, thus the information States are able to collect for Chapter 4 may be incomplete.

## **Chapter 5: The State's Rail Service and Investment Program**

**Objective:** *Describe the State's long-term vision for rail service and its role in the statewide multimodal transportation system. Prioritize the specific projects, programs, policies, laws, and funding necessary to achieve that vision and describe their financial and physical impacts.*

The Rail Service and Investment Program (RSIP) is the key component of the State rail plan. Essentially, it is the project-focused "action plan" component of the State rail plan. It lays out the State's long-range, 20-year vision for the passenger and freight rail system in a coordinated and integrated way, describes how that vision will be implemented and integrated with other statewide and regional transportation plans, and identifies the highest priority needs for funding within the immediate, short-range (4-year) program period. The RSIP should identify improvements to achieve the vision, including an estimate of investment needs and benefits resulting from those investments.<sup>27</sup> The RSIP will also detail potential approaches to securing funding and programming the financing of improvements, as well as suggest policy and programmatic changes, such as refining existing rail programs and institutional responsibilities for coordinated rail service and infrastructure development for passenger and freight service.

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<sup>27</sup> As described further below, the level of information required for projects in the short-range (4-year) program period is more detailed than that for projects in the long-range, 20-year vision.

As stated previously, States must closely coordinate State rail plan development with their statewide/nonmetropolitan and metropolitan planning processes, or, optimally, prepare the State rail plan as an element of the statewide/nonmetropolitan transportation planning process. For information and coordination purposes, States are encouraged to incorporate improvements identified in the RSIP into the statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan, the STIP, and, for improvements located in urbanized areas, the applicable Metropolitan Transportation Plans and TIPs. Some States use a longer horizon than 4 years for their short-term planning efforts or 20 years for their long-range plans. In such instances, a State rail plan could incorporate information consistent with longer cycle plans as long as the document contains a 4-year short-term and 20-year vision RSIP as described in this guidance.

The RSIP shall include the following sections:

**5.1 Vision:** Describe the State’s vision for rail transportation for the long-range, 20-year time horizon. States may also include an even longer-term vision, if desired. The vision should be based on input from all stakeholders, inform the State’s goals for a multimodal transportation system, and describe the intended role for rail in the State’s transportation system.

Goals and objectives that help the State achieve the vision should be identified. These goals and objectives will help prioritize the components of the RSIP that achieve the desired outcomes of the vision.

States should include a map depicting the proposed, long-term vision for a passenger rail network, including intercity and commuter corridors, as well as potential communities where intercity rail stations could be located. In addition, the statewide vision map should depict opportunities for improved or expanded freight rail service that relate to the goals and policies described in the plan.

**5.2 Program Coordination:** Describe how the State’s long-term vision integrates with other transportation planning efforts, including the State’s Long-Range Transportation Plan, national rail planning efforts and associated activities, the State rail plans of neighboring States and countries, if appropriate, and regional multi-state rail plans, as appropriate.

**5.3 Rail Agencies:** Describe any planned State rail agency organizational changes and proposed policy or legislative changes and new programs within the 4 and 20-year time horizons.

**5.4 Program Effects:** So as to prioritize individual projects or corridor programs, describe, with specific detail for projects in the short-range, 4-year program, and with the best

available information for projects in the long-range, 20-year vision, the effects of the passenger and freight rail elements on:

- 1) The State's transportation system.
- 2) Public and private benefits that exist and are anticipated with the 4 year phase and full 20-year plan and the correlation between public funding contributions and the expected public benefits.<sup>28</sup>
- 3) Rail capacity and congestion by corridor.<sup>29</sup>
- 4) Transportation system capacity, congestion, safety, and resiliency including the individual and combined effects on local transit, highway, aviation, and maritime modes.<sup>30</sup>
- 5) Environmental, economic, and employment conditions<sup>31</sup>, including energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 6) Distribution of benefits to regions (regional balance).<sup>32</sup>

The program effects of the 4-year program phase of the plan should be described at a project level, while more aggregate, corridor level data can be used to describe the program effects of the long-range, 20-year vision.

## 5.5 Passenger Element:

- 5.5.1. Describe how passenger rail capital projects were analyzed for their effects on:
- Projected ridership, passenger miles traveled, modal diversion from highway and air travel, revenue, and operating expenses associated with existing, 4 and 20-year passenger rail services in aggregate and broken down by commuter, intercity and high-speed rail projects. The revenue assumptions section should include a short discussion substantiating the likely availability of the 4-year projected stream of revenues and the reasonableness of the 20-year forecast of revenue/cost alignment.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> 49 U.S.C. §§ 22705(b)(2)(A) and (B)

<sup>29</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(b)(3)(B)

<sup>30</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(b)(3)(C)

<sup>31</sup> 49 U.S.C. §§ 22705(b)(3)(E) and (F)

<sup>32</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(b)(3)(D)

<sup>33</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(b)(3)(G)

- Livability, including land use changes and improvements to walkability.<sup>34</sup>

5.5.2. Capital Financing Plan: describe the 4 and 20-year financing plans for capital expenditures associated with the project lists including potential funding sources, capital costs required both initially and in subsequent years to maintain a state-of- good-repair and to recapitalize as necessary to sustain the initially proposed level of service or higher levels of service. Present the estimates for capital expenditures annually in year of expenditure cost. Specify the strategy for using grants, loans, private activity bonds (PABs), public-private partnerships (P3s), or other finance mechanisms for each project. Definitive financial data should be provided on a year-by-year basis for projects listed in the first 4 years of the State rail plan. Projects in the outer years of the long-range, 20-year plan may include prospective financial data in an aggregated, more general format.

5.5.3. Operating Financing Plan: Describe the 4 and 20-year financing plans for supporting operating costs associated with the State’s publicly-financed passenger rail services, including funding sources.

5.5.4. Describe the public and private economic benefits that exist and are anticipated with the 4 and 20-year plans and the correlation between public funding contributions and the expected public benefits.<sup>35</sup>

## **5.6 Freight Element**

5.6.1. Financing Plan: describe the 4 and 20-year capital financing plans for public and private investments in freight rail (Class I, II and III) capital expenses associated with the project lists in section 7.8 exclusive of operating and maintenance costs. If there are publicly-financed freight rail services in the State, an operating financing plan for any operating deficits (with funding sources) should be included and public capital contributions estimated annually in year of expenditure cost. Specify the strategy for using grants, loans, PABs, P3s, or other finance mechanisms for each project.

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<sup>34</sup> See FRA’s Station Area Planning Guidance for further information on the topics of livability, land use, and walkability.

<sup>35</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(b)(2)(B)

It is understood that much of this information for freight rail lines is private and proprietary and will be shared voluntarily for use by States in preparing State rail plans only to the extent acceptable to public and private interests. However, this information is required for those freight projects for which public funding is envisioned.

- 5.6.2. Describe the public and private economic effects that exist and are anticipated with the 4 and 20-year plans and the correlation between public funding contributions and the expected public benefits.<sup>36</sup>

**5.7 Rail Studies and Reports:** Describe existing and needed planning studies to: develop corridor service plans for passenger rail (including high speed rail);<sup>37</sup> develop coordinated regional or multi-state rail policies and plans; evaluate freight operations and policies; address economic, environmental, or safety topics; or address other rail and rail-related transportation system topics. List all planned studies for the next 4 years, organized by rail corridor, and provide the following information for each study:

- 1) Title.
- 2) Short description of study.
- 3) Estimated total cost by year in current year dollars and source of funding.
- 4) Estimated completion date (year and quarter).

**5.8 Passenger and Freight Rail Capital Program:** List all selected projects organized by rail corridor for the short-range, 4-year program and provide another list for projects in the long-range, 20-year vision that present the following information by project:

- 1) Title.
- 2) Short project description, including the need it addresses.
- 3) Estimated total capital cost, by year, in year of expenditure dollars.
- 4) Non-public involvement and identify sources of funds.
- 5) Non-Federal public cost and identify sources of funds.
- 6) Federal cost.
- 7) Estimated impact, by year, on operating subsidy requirements for the affected service(s).

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<sup>36</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(b)(2)(B)

<sup>37</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(11)

Note: FRA recognizes that specific dollar estimates for individual projects in the long-range, 20-year vision portion of the RSIP are not likely to be available, in which case rough estimates may be used. States should identify the potential public and private benefits of RSIP projects as early as possible.

## **Chapter 6: Coordination and Review**

**Objective:** *Indicate how stakeholders were involved in the development and coordination of the RSIP component of the State rail plan.*

- 6.1. Describe the approach to public and agency participation in the development of the State rail plan including public noticing, opportunities for public and agency participation, and how comments were accepted.
- 6.2. Where applicable, describe how the State rail plan was coordinated with neighboring States with respect to facilities and services that cross State boundaries.
- 6.3. Address how the public, rail carriers, commuter and transit authorities operating in, or affected by rail operations within the State, units of local government, and other interested parties were involved in the preparation and review of the State Rail Plan.<sup>38</sup>
- 6.4. In general, describe issues raised during the preparation of the State rail plan and how they were addressed.<sup>39</sup>
- 6.5. Describe how recommendations made by participants such as railroads, agencies, authorities, and municipalities within the State, or in the region in which the State is located, were appropriately considered and presented in the State rail plan.<sup>40</sup>
- 6.6. Describe how the State coordinates State rail planning with other transportation planning programs and activities of the State and metropolitan areas, including those conducted under Sections 134 and 135 of Title 23 and Sections 5303 and 5304 of Title 49.

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<sup>38</sup> 49 U.S.C. § 22705(a)(7)

<sup>39</sup> *Id.*

<sup>40</sup> *Id.*

### **Technical Appendix: Documentation of Technical Assumptions and Procedural Steps**

Documentation of key policy assumptions and planning methodologies underlying the planning studies supporting preparation of the State rail plan should be provided in a Technical Appendix to the State rail plan. This is important to substantiate and establish the credibility of the planning studies supporting the State rail plan.

## **VI. Preparation and Revision of State Rail Plans**

State rail plans completed before publication of this guidance that substantially meet the requirements of PRIIA, as determined by FRA, will be accepted as satisfying the State rail plan requirement for capital grants under Sections 301, 302, and 501 of PRIIA. Because State rail plans must be updated at least every five years and State update cycles vary, there is no set schedule when States will submit rail plans to FRA for review and acceptance.

Further, State rail plans that are the product of planning efforts underway prior to issuance of this final guidance, and that substantially meet the requirements of PRIIA, will also be deemed by FRA to satisfy the State rail plan requirement for States seeking capital grants under Sections 301, 302, and 501 of PRIIA. A State rail plan effort that has reached the “notice-to-proceed” (NTP) stage between a State Rail Transportation Authority and a consultant will be considered “underway”.

### *A. Coordination with FRA*

FRA’s aim is to provide technical assistance and work with States throughout the State rail plan development and review process. State rail plans that are created through cooperative grant agreements with the FRA are developed with ongoing technical guidance from FRA staff. This allows States to receive comments from the FRA at critical points in the plan development process. States are encouraged to submit State rail plans in preliminary draft form to FRA for review and comment before officially submitting the approved State rail plan. FRA encourages this practice in order to streamline the State rail plan review process and support delivery of State rail plans of the highest quality.

### *B. State Approval*

In the final stages of preparing a rail plan, the SRPAA must approve a final draft State rail plan for submission to FRA. If the plan does not meet the minimum requirements, FRA will send a letter to the State describing the deficiencies. In order to become eligible for grants available under the Act, the State must make the necessary revisions, approve and resubmit a revised final draft State rail plan that addresses the deficiencies noted by FRA. Upon confirmation from FRA that the minimum requirements have been met, the SRPAA may finalize the rail plan and notify FRA.

### *C. Submission to FRA*

When a final draft State rail plan has been approved by the designated SRPAA, one electronic and one printed copy shall be submitted for review to FRA. Electronic and hard copies should be sent to the appropriate FRA Regional Manager. A list of the Regional Managers and their

contact information is available at <http://www.fra.dot.gov/>. FRA, acting for the Secretary, will confirm that the State rail plan meets the minimum requirements established in the Act and described in this guidance.

#### *D. FRA Review*

FRA will notify a State once it has received its State rail plan. Following notification, FRA will review the plan to ensure that it is responsive to the minimum requirements. FRA will inform the State within 90 days following notification if its plan meets the minimum requirements or if there are deficiencies.

Once FRA determines that the State rail plan meets all minimum requirements, the agency will inform the State by issuing a letter from the Federal Railroad Administrator or his designee. The letter may contain recommendations that could be addressed in the next version of the State rail plan. This letter can be included in the final State rail plan document to indicate the document has been reviewed by FRA for legal compliance.

Similarly, States submitting State rail plans for FRA review that do not meet the minimum requirements will receive a letter describing any deficiencies.

#### *E. State Rail Plan Updates*

PRIIA requires that States revise and resubmit to USDOT a State-approved plan no less frequently than once every 5 years. However, this 5-year update cycle should be viewed only as a minimum requirement. States are strongly encouraged to prepare State rail plans as elements of, and on the same schedule as, development of statewide Long-Range Transportation Plans and/or Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs, or more frequently if they wish. When preparing updated plans States should consider:

- A response to FRA recommendations on previously submitted updates, revisions, amendments, or the original State Rail Plan.
- An update of information in the previous plan, which is no longer accurate as a result of plan implementation, action by a government entity or railroad, or changed conditions.
- Updates to rail system maps and rail line descriptions that should include the operating carrier and the location of the freight, commuter, and intercity passenger routes.

States optionally may update their State rail plans more frequently - at any time when new or changed information is of sufficient scope as to warrant such action by the State. Situations that the State may consider warranting a plan update could be the availability of new sources of funding, significantly changed development assumptions and forecasts, and new or changed passenger or freight rail needs not envisioned in the current plan. FRA will follow the same

process of review, comment, and acceptance of State rail plans regardless of the frequency of updates.

## Appendix 1: Additional Data Requirements with Corresponding Element in Standardized Format

Element	Required Data	Suggested Data Sources/Notes
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the percentage of freight tonnage and value of goods shipped over 500 miles within, to, or from the State by rail.</li> <li>• Freight rail tonnage by major commodity that is originated, terminated, originated &amp; terminated within the State, or overhead (passed-through).</li> <li>• Intercity passenger rail mode share of intercity trips if mode share data or statewide travel data to infer mode share is available.</li> <li>• Commuter rail mode share in metropolitan areas that have such service.</li> <li>• Optionally, States can choose to describe the population with access to passenger rail service. FRA’s preferred methodology to determine this population is to determine population of Census tracts within a 10- and 30-mile radius of rail stations. (FRA encourages States to investigate other measures of accessibility, including the population within a 30-minute drive of a rail station and the population within a 30-minute transit ride of a rail station).</li> <li>• Optionally, present the accessibility factor above in terms of service frequency. For example, calculate the population within 10 and 30 miles of stations with trains departing in each direction less than once per day, at least once per day, at least twice per day, at least four times per day, and at least 10 times per day.</li> <li>• Optionally, FRA encourages States to experiment with creative ways to assess station accessibility for transit and non-motorized modes of transportation, such as by reporting “Walk Score” and “Bike Score” factors for station locations or the capacity and frequency of transit services at a station.</li> </ul>	Waybill sample; Freight Analysis Framework; Commodity flow survey tables.
2.1.1	<p>Inventory and map all rail lines (operating and inactive) with description by line of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surface Transportation Board railroad classification of owner railroad.</li> <li>• Signal type data (e.g. TWC, DTC, ABS, CTC, ATS, ATC, PTC, etc.).</li> <li>• Significant clearance and weight restrictions.</li> <li>• Rail line route mileage categorized by number of main tracks and track classification.</li> <li>• Rail-banked lines that may be considered for service reintroduction.</li> <li>• Passenger services including passengers per route and station, trains per day, train miles and passenger miles).</li> <li>• Locations of intermodal connections for both passenger and freight services, including type of mode(s) available for connections.</li> </ul>	<p>FRA Bridge Inspections;</p> <p>FHWA Freight Analysis Framework (FAF); National Transportation Atlas Database (NTAD)</p> <p>(Note: Portions of the NTAD may be incomplete. States</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Rail Corridor Network (STRACNET) facilities.</li> </ul> <p>Additional performance measures could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety– number of at-grade crossings and those on hazmat routes.</li> <li>• Financial/Economic – public sector operating costs, real estate and other taxes paid, jobs, economic development impacts.</li> </ul>	should verify the data with the railroad operators.)
<b>2.1.2</b>	<p>Inventory of intercity and commuter passenger stations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service frequency for each station, by type of service and route.</li> <li>• Station location type (i.e., urban, suburban, rural/small community, park &amp; ride, airport).</li> <li>• Local transit and intercity bus connections, parking availability, and assessment of non-motorized transportation access including bicycle parking facilities.</li> </ul> <p>Inventory of freight terminals including freight intermodal transfer facilities, seaports, Marine Highway routes, and their rail capacity, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity of freight terminal by commodity type (bulk material, containers, autos, etc.).</li> <li>• Current operational level of the freight terminals in similar terms.</li> </ul>	
<b>2.1.3</b>	<p>Minimum passenger service objectives by corridor in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service frequency and train miles.</li> <li>• Capacity (Seat Miles).</li> <li>• On-time performance (OTP).</li> </ul>	
<b>2.1.4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-time performance (OTP), delays and causes of delay by route.</li> <li>• Ridership and passenger-miles by route and by station for each of the previous 5 years. Data from earlier years may be used if available to show longer ridership trends.</li> <li>• Passenger train-miles operated (a general estimate is acceptable).</li> <li>• Passenger-miles/Train-mile (on a route and intrastate basis for state-supported services and on a route basis for long-distance services).</li> <li>• Operating and maintenance costs for state-supported services.</li> <li>• Farebox recovery ratio for existing state-supported services.</li> <li>• State operating assistance for existing state-supported services.</li> <li>• Operating subsidy/rider for commuter rail at the route and system-wide level.</li> </ul>	Much of this information is available in Amtrak's "State Fact Sheets" and Amtrak monthly/annual reports.
<b>2.1.5</b>	A comprehensive public funding list to include public capital and operating funding resources, public subsidies, State revenue, and other financial policies relating to rail infrastructure development, including a discussion of the reasonableness of the revenue assumptions.	

<p><b>2.1.7</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amtrak's salary and expenditures per State.</li> <li>• Metropolitan and statewide/non-metropolitan transportation plans and transportation improvement programs.</li> <li>• Provide a summary level discussion of local land use and transportation plans - especially Station Area Plans - for cities and regions with existing and proposed passenger rail service, especially for projects that have advanced to environmental analysis.</li> <li>• Analysis of potential land use policies and strategies for areas near stations.</li> <li>• Vehicle Miles of Travel avoided.</li> <li>• Greenhouse Gases Reduced.</li> </ul>	<p>Amtrak salary and expenditure data is available in Amtrak's "State Fact Sheets";</p> <p>FRA's "Station Area Planning Guidance"</p>
<p><b>2.2.1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current statewide population and employment with growth projections for the 20-year horizon.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.2.2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gross State Product by industry sector.</li> <li>• Freight tonnage by mode and commodity.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>2.2.3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projected Vehicle Miles Traveled and Passenger Miles Traveled growth for statewide intercity travel.</li> <li>• Passenger demand by intrastate and regional interstate city pairs from statewide transportation demand models, if available.</li> </ul>	<p>Statewide travel demand model or independent modeling.</p>
<p><b>5.1</b></p>	<p>Provide a map showing the proposed vision for a passenger rail route network, including intercity and commuter corridors as well as potential communities where intercity stations could be located, and opportunities for improved or expanded freight rail service.</p>	
<p><b>5.4</b></p>	<p>To assess costs and benefits consider traditional costs (e.g. capital, credit for residual value, operations and maintenance) with traditional benefits (e.g. revenue, travel time savings, safety improvements, congestion reduction), and wider economic benefits (e.g. commuter/freight capacity improvements, state of good repair, productivity improvement) of providing rail service in a given corridor or network.</p>	

## Appendix 2: State Rail Plan Content Requirements

These are the requirements of 49 U.S.C. Section 22705:

- (a) In General.—Each State rail plan shall, at minimum, contain the following:
- (1) An inventory of the existing overall rail transportation system and rail services and facilities within the State and an analysis of the role of rail transportation within the State’s surface transportation system.
  - (2) A review of all rail lines within the State, including all freight rail lines, intercity passenger rail lines, commuter rail lines, and proposed high-speed rail corridors and significant rail line segments not currently in service.
    - i. Contain an illustration of the State’s entire rail system to include: (1) the operating carrier or carriers, (2) location of freight, intercity passenger, high- speed, and commuter rail service, and (3) rail rights-of-way that have been preserved for potential reactivation;
    - ii. Contain most recent available data on freight rail tonnage originated and terminated within the State by major commodity;
    - iii. Contain information on the use of passenger and freight rail facilities.
  - (3) A Statement of the State’s passenger rail service objectives, including minimum service levels, for rail transportation routes.
  - (4) A general analysis of rail’s transportation, economic, and environmental impacts in the State, including congestion mitigation, trade and economic development, air quality, land use, energy-use, and community impacts.
  - (5) A long-range rail investment program for current and future freight and passenger infrastructure in the State that meets the requirements of subsection (b) [of this section – “Long-Range Service and Investment Program”].
  - (6) A statement of public financing issues for rail projects and service in the State, including a list of current and prospective public capital and operating funding resources, public subsidies, State taxation, and other financial policies relating to rail infrastructure development.
  - (7) An identification of rail infrastructure issues within the State that reflects consultation with all relevant stakeholders.
  - (8) A review of the major passenger and freight intermodal connections and facilities within the State, including seaports and Marine Highway routes, and prioritized options to maximize service integration and efficiency between rail and other modes of transportation within the State.
  - (9) A review of publicly funded projects within the State to improve rail transportation safety and security, including all major projects funded under section 130 of title 23.

- (10) A performance evaluation of passenger rail services operating in the State, including possible improvements in those services and a description of strategies to achieve those improvements.
- (11) A compilation of studies and reports on high-speed rail corridor development within the State not included in a previous plan under this subchapter, and a plan for funding any recommended development of such corridors in the State.
- (12) A statement that the State is in compliance with Title 49 United States Code Section 22102 as follows:

*“A State is eligible to receive financial assistance under this chapter only when the State complies with regulations the Secretary of Transportation prescribes under this chapter and the Secretary decides that:*

*(1) the State has an adequate plan for rail transportation in the State and a suitable process for updating, revising, and modifying the plan;*

*(2) the State plan is administered or coordinated by a designated State authority and provides for a fair distribution of resources;*

*(3) the State authority –*

*a. is authorized to develop, promote, supervise, and support safe, adequate, and efficient rail transportation;*

*b. employs or will employ sufficient qualified and trained personnel;*

*c. maintains or will maintain adequate programs of investigation, research, promotion, and development with opportunity for public participation; and*

*d. is designated and directed to take all practicable steps (by itself or with other State authorities) to improve rail transportation safety and reduce energy use and pollution related to transportation.*

*(4) the State has ensured that it maintains or will maintain adequate procedures for financial control, accounting, and performance evaluation for the proper use of assistance provided by the United States Government.”*

As a minimum requirement noted in subsection (a)(5) for:

(b) Long-Range Service and Investment Program

- (1) Program content. A long-range rail investment program included in (a)(5) above shall, at minimum include the following matters:

“(A) A list of any rail capital projects expected to be undertaken and supported in whole or in part by the State.

“(B) A detailed funding plan for those projects.

- (2) Project List Content. The list of rail capital projects shall contain--

“(A) A description of the anticipated public and private benefits of each such project; and

“(B) A statement of the correlation between –

“(i) public funding contributions for the projects; and

“(ii) public benefits.

- (3) Considerations for Project List.—In preparing the list of freight and intercity passenger rail capital projects, a State rail transportation authority should take into consideration the following matters:

“(A) Contributions made by non-Federal and non-State sources through user fees, matching funds, or other private capital involvement.

“(B) Rail capacity and congestion effects.

“(C) Effects on highway, aviation, and maritime capacity, congestion, or safety.

“(D) Regional balance.

“(E) Environmental impact.

“(F) Economic and employment impacts.

“(G) Projected ridership and other service measures for passenger rail projects.

### Appendix 3: PRIIA Capital Grant Programs

PRIIA authorized three new capital grant programs to fund the development of high-speed and intercity passenger rail:

- High Speed Rail Corridor Development (Section 501 of PRIIA, Public Law 110-432, Division B, codified at 49 U.S.C. 26101 et seq.)
- Intercity Passenger Rail Service Corridor Capital Assistance (Section 301 of PRIIA, codified at 49 U.S.C. Chapter 244)
- Congestion Grants (Section 302 of PRIIA, codified at 49 U.S.C. 24105)

Each of these sections includes distinct eligibility criteria and other provisions, but the three programs are closely related and address several overlapping activities. To streamline administration of these provisions, FRA consolidated the three grant fund authorizations into a single program, the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR) program, as described further in the April 2009 *Vision for High-Speed Rail in America* and the June 2009 notice of funding availability.

Projects and programs eligible for HSIPR program capital grants and general project selection criteria are summarized below:

- *High Speed Rail Corridor Development and Capital Assistance for Intercity Passenger Rail Service* grants (Sections 501 and 301) can be used for acquiring, constructing, improving, or inspecting equipment, track, track structures, or facilities for the primary benefit of high-speed or intercity passenger rail service; expenses incidental to the acquisition or construction (including designing, engineering, locating, surveying, mapping, environmental studies, and acquiring rights-of-way); payments for the capital portions of rail trackage rights agreements; highway rail grade crossing improvements related to high speed or intercity passenger rail service; expenses for mitigating environmental impacts; communications and signalization improvements; relocation assistance; acquiring replacement housing sites; and acquiring, constructing, relocating, and rehabilitating replacement housing.
  - *High-Speed Rail Corridor Development Grants* can be used to fund capital projects listed above on eligible corridors including the ten high-speed rail corridors previously designated by the Secretary of Transportation.
  - *Capital Assistance for Intercity Passenger Rail Service* grants can also be used for rehabilitating, remanufacturing or overhauling rail rolling stock and facilities used primarily in intercity passenger rail; to cover the costs associated with

developing State rail plans; and the first-dollar liability costs for insurance related to the provision of intercity rail.

- *Congestion Capital Grants* (Section 302) can be used for facilities, infrastructure, and equipment for high priority rail corridor projects necessary to reduce congestion or facilitate ridership growth in intercity passenger rail transportation. Eligible projects would be those identified by Amtrak to reduce congestion or facilitate ridership growth in heavily traveled rail corridors, those identified by the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to improve on-time performance and reliability, and those designated by USDOT as meeting the purpose of the program and being sufficiently advanced so as to be ready for implementation.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Public Law 111-5) and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-117) provided the first substantial appropriations for the HSIPR program. However, these appropriation bills waived the PRIIA requirement that proposed projects must be included in a State rail plan to be eligible for federal funding. In the notice of funding availability, FRA provided detailed grant application instructions and project selection criteria that could be used as interim guidance for States in developing intercity passenger rail plans.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Federal Register/Vol 74, No. 119/Tuesday, June 23, 2009/Notices at [http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/rrdev/fr\\_hsipr\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/rrdev/fr_hsipr_guidance.pdf)