



Please write your Name,  
Organization, and Role  
in the Teams Chat Box

# South Carolina Rail Plan

*Rail Advisory Committee Meeting #3*  
*South Carolina Department of Transportation*

November 13, 2024

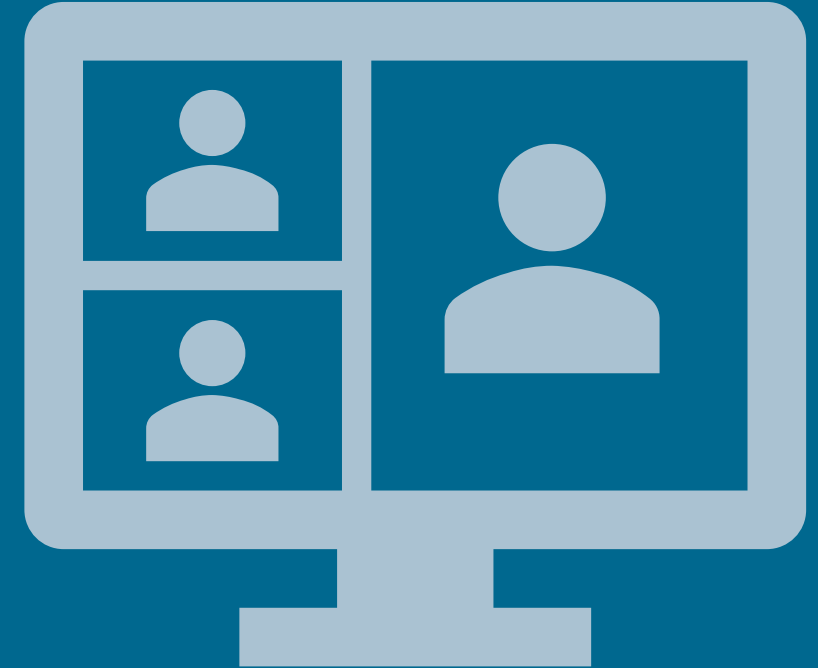
# Today's Purpose

**Review Draft Final Deliverables**

## **Discuss:**

- Goals and Objectives
- Needs and Opportunities
- Strategies to address needs

**Questions and  
Next Steps**



# Welcome



## » *Statewide Rail Plan Steering Committee*

- Division of Intermodal and Freight
- Rights of Way Division
- Traffic Safety Division
- Division of Planning
- Traffic Engineering

# Thank You for Participating in the RAC!



## SCDOT Representation

Division of Intermodal and Freight  
Division of Planning  
Safety  
Minority & Small Business Affairs  
Traffic Engineering

## State and Federal Partners

Federal Railroad Administration  
Federal Highway Administration  
Georgia Department of Transportation  
North Carolina Department of Transportation  
Tennessee Department of Transportation  
SC Dept. of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry  
SC Dept. of Economic and Community Development  
SC Dept. of Environmental Protection  
SC Ports Authority

## Regional and Local Partners

Regional Planning Organizations  
Economic Development

## Railroads

Class I  
Short Lines  
Passenger

## Other

Trade and Industry Associations

# Thank You for the Role You Played!



**Supported**  
development and  
**implementation** of  
the plan



Provided **input** into  
and **vetted** materials  
and data



**Validated** vision and  
goals



**Connected** with key  
**stakeholders** that  
use the system and  
with decision makers  
and implementers



# Draft Final Deliverables



- Executive Summary
- Plan Document
- Appendices

# South Carolina Statewide Rail Plan

Plan Document Table of Contents:

1. The Role of Rail in South Carolina
2. South Carolina's Rail System
3. Proposed Passenger Rail Improvements and Investments
4. Proposed Freight Rail Improvements and Investments
5. South Carolina's Long-Range Rail Service and Investment Program
6. Coordination and Review



# Vision

South Carolina will work with its rail providers to deliver a **safe, sustainable, efficient, and reliable** rail network that fosters **economic growth** and meets the state's evolving freight and passenger transportation needs.



# Goals



- ✓ Enhance the intermodal and multimodal connectivity of the rail system to provide greater modal options for freight and passengers and support continued economic prosperity across South Carolina.
- ✓ Promote rail system capacity and state of good repair to support reliable and efficient movement of people and goods across South Carolina.
- ✓ Support/Promote the safety and security of the rail system by reducing rail-related fatalities and serious injuries.
- ✓ Collaborate/Participate with stakeholders to improve rail access and connectivity to rural communities desiring more multimodal options to support economic competitiveness and reduce adverse impacts to areas overburdened and underserved by transportation infrastructure.
- ✓ Identify stable funding sources for rail projects in South Carolina, finding opportunities to leverage both state and federal sources.
- ✓ Support the reduction of adverse environmental and public health impacts of the rail system.



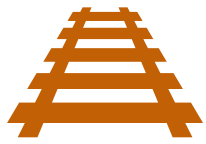
# Goals and Objectives

Goals	Objectives
<b>1. Enhance the intermodal and multimodal connectivity of the rail system to provide greater modal options for freight and passengers and support continued economic prosperity across South Carolina.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Partner with railroads to facilitate industrial rail access to relieve congestion on highways and provide modal options for shippers.</li><li>• Collaborate with railroads and ports to enhance rail connectivity to South Carolina's ports.</li><li>• Improve access to freight intermodal terminals.</li><li>• Improve multimodal access to passenger rail stations.</li></ul>
<b>2. Promote rail system capacity and state of good repair to support reliable and efficient movement of people and goods across South Carolina.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote the improvement of rail network conditions and enhanced capacity to meet current and future passenger and freight demand.</li><li>• Promote the preservation and rehabilitation of track and infrastructure and bridges on light density rail lines.</li><li>• Support short-line railroads in upgrading their rail infrastructure with a focus on short-lines serving industries in rural communities.</li></ul>
<b>3. Support/Promote the safety and security of the rail system by reducing rail-related fatalities and serious injuries.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborate with railroads to reduce illegal trespassing and enhance security on rail rights-of-way.</li><li>• Cooperate with railroads to explore options to reduce rail-related fatalities and serious injuries crashes, especially at at-grade crossings consistent with the action steps identified in the Rail Grade Crossing State Action Plan.</li><li>• Work with railroads to reduce conflicts between rail and other transportation modes.</li></ul>



# Goals and Objectives

Goals	Objectives
<b>4. Collaborate/Participate with stakeholders to improve rail access and connectivity to rural communities desiring more multimodal options to support economic competitiveness and reduce adverse impacts to areas overburdened and underserved by transportation infrastructure.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore the feasibility of new state supported passenger rail service.</li><li>• Support increased short-line rail access to rural areas to promote economic competitiveness.</li><li>• Support railroads in facilitating improved industrial access to rail, enabling more freight to move by rail.</li><li>• Support increased passenger rail opportunities where feasible to provide greater modal options.</li></ul>
<b>5. Identify stable funding sources for rail projects in South Carolina, finding opportunities to leverage both state and federal sources.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with Legislature to create state funding program for rail projects.</li><li>• Cooperate with railroads to identify consistent funding to support the preservation and potential expansion of the rail system.</li><li>• In partnership with rail providers and regional and local stakeholders, pursue federal discretionary grant funding to improve the passenger and freight rail networks.</li><li>• Explore opportunities for public-private partnerships that enable investments in rail.</li><li>• Partner with South Carolina’s economic development entities to preserve and promote freight-rail connected industrial sites for shippers and receivers.</li><li>• Connect with other departments of transportation (DOT) to improve the regional system and emerge as a leader.</li></ul>
<b>6. Support the reduction of adverse environmental and public health impacts of the rail system.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Encourage the use of cleaner technologies and fuels in rail operations.</li><li>• Encourage practices that reduce noise pollution and other environmental impacts.</li><li>• Support railroads in the development of rail infrastructure that minimizes environmental impacts.</li></ul>



# Rail Service Needs and Opportunities

Need Groups	Need Types	Potential Opportunities	Potential Benefits
<b>Rail Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rail infrastructure preservation</li> <li>Rail infrastructure modernization</li> <li>Rail capacity at strategic locations</li> <li>Proactive planning to address system deficiencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrading infrastructure</li> <li>Expanding sidings, second tracks, and signal system upgrades</li> <li>Addressing rail curvature issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase competitiveness</li> <li>Increase industry attraction</li> <li>Increase network capacity</li> </ul>
<b>Port Rail</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased rail capacity at SC Port Authority facilities</li> <li>Navy Base intermodal facility</li> <li>Rail capacity at inland ports</li> <li>Improved access and wayfinding to ports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding rail infrastructure at the ports and inland terminals</li> <li>Improving signage and access to port facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relieve rail congestion</li> <li>Increase rail efficiency</li> </ul>
<b>At-Grade Crossings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved safety at at-grade crossings</li> <li>Improved roadway condition at at-grade crossings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhancing inspection protocols and proactive planning</li> <li>Addressing humped crossings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve safety for all road users</li> </ul>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanded rail-served industrial sites</li> <li>Short line engagement in recruitment of industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inventorying and marketing existing rail-served sites</li> <li>Engaging railroads in recruitment efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand rail access</li> <li>Increase industry attraction</li> </ul>
<b>Financial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State funding</li> <li>Continued short line railroad tax deduction</li> <li>Support for railroads' efforts to secure federal discretionary funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborating to secure federal funds</li> <li>Extending the short line railroad tax deduction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish reliable and predictable funding sources</li> </ul>
<b>Others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adoption of new technology and regulation</li> <li>Maintained rail competitiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanding intermodal capacity</li> <li>Increasing private investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve rail safety more effectively</li> </ul>



## Framework for Rail Plan Strategies



Enhancing Rail Management



Coordinating with Public Agencies and Stakeholders



Enhancing Class I Railroad Infrastructure



Strengthening Support for Short Line Railroads



Improving At-Grade Crossings



Expanding and Modernizing Passenger Rail Services



# Rail Plan Strategies

## Enhancing Rail Management

- ✓ Centralize Management
- ✓ Develop Communication Guidelines
- ✓ Procedural Education
- ✓ Public Information and Awareness
- ✓ Implement Gradually
- ✓ Establish a Statewide Railroad Federal Grant Support Program
- ✓ Evaluate Organizational Structure



# Rail Plan Strategies

## Coordinating with Public Agencies and Stakeholders

- ✓ Foster Inter-Agency Relationships
- ✓ Enhance Data Sharing and Coordination
- ✓ Develop Coordination Framework Agreements
- ✓ Establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)
- ✓ Standardize Specifications and Plans
- ✓ Enhance Document Control and Archiving of Records



# Rail Plan Strategies

## Enhancing Class I Railroad Infrastructure

- ✓ Leverage Federal Grants for Infrastructure Upgrades
- ✓ Improve Rail Capacity and Connectivity
- ✓ Develop a Rail Modernization Program





# Rail Plan Strategies

## Strengthening Support for Short Line Railroads

- ✓ Establish a Statewide Short Line Infrastructure Fund
- ✓ Form a Statewide Short Line Rail Coalition
- ✓ Develop a Rail Corridor Improvement Plan
- ✓ Institute an Industrial Rail Access Program
- ✓ Continue to Provide Short Line Tax Credits
- ✓ Leverage Federal Grants for Infrastructure Upgrades



# Rail Plan Strategies

## Improving At-Grade Crossings

- ✓ Enforcement: Promote adherence to traffic laws at at-grade crossings
- ✓ Engineering: Continue to examine and enhance the existing prioritization process
- ✓ Operation: Implement a phased approach to policy changes



# Rail Plan Strategies

## Expanding and Modernizing Passenger Rail Services

- ✓ Collaborate on Multi-State and Intrastate Rail Initiatives
- ✓ Promote and support efforts to resolve infrastructure issues
- ✓ Support projects designed to improve the unique demands of intercity rail



# Rail Funding Opportunities

Funding Opportunities/Sources	Agency	Freight/ Passenger Rail
Short Line Tax Credits	SC Department of Commerce	Freight
South Carolina Coordinating Council for Economic Development Funds	SC Department of Commerce	Freight
Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP)	USDOT, MARAD	Freight
Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Service	USDOT, FRA	Passenger
Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program	USDOT, FRA	Freight/Passenger
Corridor Identification and Development Program	USDOT, FRA	Passenger
Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI)	USDOT, FRA	Freight/Passenger
Infrastructure for Rebuilding American Program (INFRA)	USDOT, FRA	Freight
Railway-Highway Crossing (Section 130) Program	USDOT, FHWA	Freight/Passenger
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program	USDOT, FHWA	Freight/Passenger
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Program (RAISE)	USDOT	Freight/Passenger

# View the Draft Rail Plan

[www.scdot.org/travel/freight-rail.aspx](http://www.scdot.org/travel/freight-rail.aspx)

**Public Comment**  
**November 14 –**  
**December 14, 2024**

**SOUTH CAROLINA STATEWIDE RAIL PLAN**

The SC Statewide Rail Plan represents a long-term vision of statewide policy to improve freight and passenger rail.  
**Your feedback is welcome.**

**Statewide Rail Plan Virtual Public Meeting Notice**  
June 26, 2024 | 5:30 - 6:30 PM EST  
[Register for the Virtual Public Meeting](#)

**Overview**

The 2024 update will involve input and guidance from a variety of stakeholders, to include passenger and freight rail operators, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Council of Governments (COGs), neighboring state DOTs, and the general public. The Plan will assess the existing statewide rail system in South Carolina and identify opportunities to enhance rail safety and expand rail service. The Plan will also identify anticipated trends, needs, and issues that will impact rail over the next 20 years.

**Existing South Carolina Rail System**

**Comments & Questions**

Email David Gray at [GrayDL@scdot.org](mailto:GrayDL@scdot.org) or call (803) 737-0738

OR

Submit comments online by selecting the Comment Form Button below and filling out a brief form

# What Happens Next?



# Thank You!



[www.scdot.org/travel/freight-rail.aspx](http://www.scdot.org/travel/freight-rail.aspx)

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