

UPDATE OF THE TEXAS RAIL PLAN

DESCRIPTION:

The Texas Rail Plan identifies current and proposed rail projects, determines infrastructure and capacity constraints on the rail network, develops an awareness of rail issues impacting Texas, and analyzes various options to address system improvements. Last published in 2005, the department is in the process of updating the rail plan to conform to recently enacted state and federal regulations. SB 1382 of the 81st Texas Legislature requires the department to prepare and update annually a long-term plan for a statewide passenger rail system.

At the federal level, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) requires states to establish priorities, objectives, and implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest in order to receive federal funds.

ISSUES:

- Federal requirements
 - Existing requirements
 - Positioning the department for future federal funds
 - Federal Railroad Administration grant programs
 - American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
 - High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail funds
 - TIGER II
- State requirements
 - Existing requirements
- Relation to other planning documents
 - Strategic Plan
 - Texas Transportation Plan
 - Unified Transportation Program
 - Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
 - Other modal plans (i.e., waterway, aviation, transit, etc.)
- Public involvement
 - Transportation Commission
 - Rail Plan Stakeholder Committee
 - General Public

REFERENCES:

- SB 1382, 81st Texas Legislature
- Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA)

DESIRED RESULTS:

Receive direction from the commission for updating the Texas Rail Plan.

FURTHER ACTIONS:

Presentation of the Texas Rail Plan will be made at the September Commission Meeting.