

## 1.1 Introduction

This document was developed by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) to serve as Oklahoma's State Rail Plan (SRP). The Oklahoma SRP is compliant with the federal Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA), as amended by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act of 2015 (FAST Act). In addition to meeting federal requirements, the SRP is intended to formulate a state vision for railroad transportation in the long-range horizon, to the year 2040, and strategies to achieve that vision. With this purpose in mind, the SRP was developed with extensive public participation and involvement by the state's railroads and rail users.

In 2008, the U.S. Congress passed the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) with the expressed intent of improving passenger rail service in the United States. One of the features of the legislation is the requirement that any state seeking federal assistance for either passenger or freight improvements have an updated state rail plan. The legislation further stipulated the minimum content of the rail plans, which was codified in Public Law 110-432.

This State Rail Plan meets the requirements set forth in that legislation and public law, as well as the final *State Rail Plan Guidance*<sup>1</sup> provided by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) in September 2013.

This chapter serves to illustrate the current and proposed future role of rail in Oklahoma's multimodal transportation system and describe how the state is organized to provide governmental, legal, and financial support to Oklahoma's rail transportation system to support economic development and safety improvements.

## 1.2 Oklahoma's Goals for its Multimodal Transportation System

Oklahoma's vision and goals for its multimodal transportation system are outlined in a number of recently published documents which are updated periodically.

### 1.2.1 Oklahoma State Freight Plan

Oklahoma's State Freight Plan will be completed concurrently with this Oklahoma State Rail Plan. The primary purpose of the State Freight Plan is to serve as a statewide long-range freight planning document, fully integrated with other state planning initiatives. The State Freight Plan will align with the National Freight Goals through the following potential goals<sup>2</sup>:

- Safe and Secure Travel
  - Improve the safety and efficiency of freight movement and its interaction with other vehicles.
  - Assure the ability of urban and rural highways to safely accommodate growth in freight traffic.
- Infrastructure Preservation
  - Meet freight transportation needs by maintaining the Oklahoma State Highway System in a state of good repair.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fra.dot.gov/eLib/Details/L04760>

<sup>2</sup> Oklahoma Freight Transportation Plan; Oklahoma Freight Advisory Committee Meeting; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; January 25, 2017

- Support the preservation of Oklahoma multimodal freight networks through appropriate policies and initiatives.
- Mobility: Choice, Connectivity and Accessibility
  - Ensure the competitive performance of the Oklahoma freight system.
  - Foster a diverse portfolio of modal choices for Oklahoma’s freight shippers and receivers in urban and rural areas.
  - Support end-to-end operations of industry supply chains in Oklahoma.
- Economic Vitality
  - Promote competitive access to domestic and international markets for Oklahoma industries.
  - Direct freight-related transportation investments to support the state’s economy.
- Environmental Responsibility
  - Support the growth of Oklahoma clean energy by promoting clean fuel use by freight providers.
  - Avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse environmental impacts of freight transportation.
- Efficient Intermodal System Management and Operation
  - Capitalize on federal funding and finance programs to aid investment in the freight transportation system.
  - Coordinate freight corridor development programs with neighboring states.
  - Safeguard industry supply chains by improving resiliency of the system.

### 1.2.2 Oklahoma Long Range Transportation Plan

*Oklahoma’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)*<sup>3</sup> builds on Oklahoma’s success with a previous long-range transportation plan and provides direction for all transportation modes in the state, including rail and public transit. The document was adopted and approved in 2015. The LRTP projects the demand for transportation infrastructure and services to the year 2040 and takes into account the social and economic changes that are expected to occur in the state between 2015 and 2040. The LRTP underscores the idea that Oklahoma’s economy, quality of life, and competitiveness will require a transportation system that is developed with these changes in mind.

Oklahoma’s adopted guiding principle for transportation is “to provide an intermodal transportation system that supports a thriving economy and improved quality of life for Oklahomans by providing safe and efficient movement of people and goods.” Oklahoma’s associated transportation goals, which support the guiding principle and are the basis for decision making and investment actions covering all transportation modes, include<sup>4</sup>:

- Infrastructure Preservation: Preserve and maintain Oklahoma’s multimodal transportation system in a state of good repair.
- Mobility Choice, Connectivity, and Accessibility: Facilitate the easy movement of people and goods, improve interconnectivity of regions and activity centers, and provide access to different modes of transportation.
- Economic Vitality: Provide an efficient and effective multimodal transportation system that is coordinated with land development patterns to strengthen communities and support economic development.

<sup>3</sup> [https://ok.gov/odot/Programs\\_and\\_Projects/Transportation\\_Programs/LRTP\\_2015-2040.html](https://ok.gov/odot/Programs_and_Projects/Transportation_Programs/LRTP_2015-2040.html)

<sup>4</sup> [https://ok.gov/odot/Programs\\_and\\_Projects/Transportation\\_Programs/LRTP\\_2015-2040.html](https://ok.gov/odot/Programs_and_Projects/Transportation_Programs/LRTP_2015-2040.html)

- Environmental Responsibility: Minimize environmental impacts related to transportation enhancing the natural environment.
- Efficient Intermodal System Management and Operation: Strengthen the data-driven decision making approach in order to maximize intermodal system performance and operation.

### 1.2.3 Oklahoma Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program 2015-2018 (STIP)<sup>5</sup> is a federally required systematic listing of projects for which federal-aid funding is proposed. This document grows out of the State Transportation Plan (STP) and outlines Oklahoma DOT's funding objectives to maintain a globally competitive and attractive climate for businesses and people, and to ensure that the transportation system contributes to a productive and efficient economy. Oklahoma's rail network is a key asset in attaining these objectives. The current STIP identifies projects funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), including highway-railroad grade crossing safety projects, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) programs. These projects may have a potential intersection with the Oklahoma state railroad network. Rail projects in the state have also been added to the STIP in the past for illustrative purposes to support applications for federal grant funding.

## 1.3 Rail's Role Within the Oklahoma Transportation System

Today, the rail system in Oklahoma plays an essential freight transportation role both within the state and nationally. Oklahoma's location and position on principal rail corridors provides rail access to every region of the U.S., as well as to Canada and Mexico.

Oklahoma ranks in the top 20 among states in all of the following categories<sup>6</sup>:

- Freight Railroads (16<sup>th</sup>) – 19 railroads
- Total miles of rail (17<sup>th</sup>) – 3,273 miles
- Rail tons terminated (20<sup>th</sup>) – 34.8 million tons
- Rail tons carried (8<sup>th</sup>) – 297.1 million tons
- Rail carloads carried (9<sup>th</sup>) – 6,120,800.

Oklahoma also ranks highly among all states for rail movements of many individual commodities. For commodities originating by state, Oklahoma ranks third (3<sup>rd</sup>) in crushed stone, sand, and gravel products. For commodities terminating in the state, Oklahoma ranks eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) in crushed stone, sand, and gravel products, tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) in primary metal products, and ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) in lumber and wood products<sup>7</sup>.

Rail intercity passenger service in Oklahoma at present includes the Heartland Flyer Amtrak service between Fort Worth, Texas, and Oklahoma City on the BNSF Railway. The Heartland Flyer makes station stops in Oklahoma City, Norman, Purcell, Pauls Valley, and Ardmore, Oklahoma, and Gainesville and Fort Worth, Texas. Connections can be made in Fort Worth to Amtrak's Texas Eagle, which operates between Chicago, Illinois; St. Louis, Missouri; and Los Angeles, California, via San Antonio, Texas.

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.odot.gov/p-r-div/stip/index.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Based on 2012 Association of American Railroad statistics for the U.S. and Oklahoma

<sup>7</sup> Based on 2012 Association of American Railroad statistics for the U.S. and Oklahoma

As several of the metropolitan areas in Oklahoma continue to grow, the need to invest in a diverse network of passenger transportation options that will accommodate this population growth has been recognized. This growth could be accommodated via improved rail corridors providing new intercity passenger services.

In terms of potential future passenger rail service implementation, Oklahoma is located on the federally designated high-speed rail corridor known as the South Central Corridor from Fort Worth, Texas, to Oklahoma City to Tulsa.

## 1.4 Institutional Structure of Oklahoma's State Rail Program

### 1.4.1 Oklahoma Department of Transportation Rail Functions

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation is responsible for coordinating the overall state transportation improvement strategy. The department is primarily responsible for rail planning and project development activities, including development of this State Rail Plan. ODOT's headquarters is located in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

ODOT is Oklahoma's State Rail Transportation Authority (SRTAA) and State Rail Plan Approval Authority (SRPAA). Furthermore, Oklahoma is in compliance with the requirements of 49 U.S.C. §22102, which stipulates eligibility requirements for long-established FRA rail freight grant assistance program pertaining to state planning and administration.

Other areas of ODOT rail involvement include long-range rail planning, including development of this State Rail Plan, and financing. Financing involves loans and grants for construction and maintenance of track, maintenance and safety improvements at grade highway-rail crossings, and developing new spur tracks to support economic development.

The following are those divisions under the jurisdiction of ODOT which have existing or potential rail-related responsibilities.

#### Rail Programs Division

The Rail Programs Division of ODOT was established in 1989 to oversee the state's 3,244 miles of rail, 153 miles of which are owned by the state. It is responsible for acquiring and administering federal and state funds used to support operation of the Heartland Flyer passenger service, highway construction projects affecting railroad property, railroad crossing safety improvements, and maintaining the state-owned rail lines. The division comprises five sections: State-owned Rail Line Management, Safety, Rail Passenger, Construction, and Federal Programs.

#### State-Owned Rail Line Management Section

In 1978, the Oklahoma State Legislature passed the "Railroad Revitalization Act." This Act specified powers and duties of ODOT to address state rail issues. ODOT was authorized and empowered to acquire, construct, repair, operate, and maintain railroad rights-of-way and trackage on feasible and economically sound railroad routes.

This section oversees the state-owned rail properties and their selected operators, which includes direct responsibility of the rights-of-way, operator contract compliance, property inspections, and all easement/license/lease reviews, and maintains the lease agreements between the state and the

operators. It also completes yearly inspections for proper maintenance and administers state funds for the upkeep of these properties. ODOT had successfully leased 98 percent of the lines it owns to Class III (short line) railroad operators.

### **Safety Section**

Oklahoma has 3,852 railroad-highway grade crossings with one-third equipped with active warning devices with either pedestal mounted flashers, gates, cantilevered signals, or any combination of the three. The remaining two-thirds of these crossings are controlled by passive devices such as warning signs.

Each state receives annual federal funding for improving of grade railroad crossings with active warning devices. The FRA has devised a system called the "Priority Index Ranking" to determine which crossings are the leading candidates for funding. The Rail Programs Division Safety Section manages the crossing improvements priorities in Oklahoma. It also manages the FRA Crossing Corridor program, which provides funding for upgrades to remaining crossings in corridors where selected grade crossings are closed.

The most recent highway-rail crossing inventory data collected for the State of Oklahoma in 2009 indicates that Oklahoma at that time had 4,318 crossings that were open to the public including 533, or 12 percent, that were grade separated locations; 1404, or 33 percent, with some type of active warning devices; and 2,381, or 55 percent, with passive warning devices.

### **Rail Passenger Section**

The Rail Programs Division oversees the passenger rail operations in the state, namely the Heartland Flyer. It works with Amtrak to ensure quality and reliable service. It also administers the funding provided to Amtrak for provision of the service.

### **Construction Section**

The Construction Section of the Rail Programs Division coordinates state rail construction activity. It is responsible for reviewing the scope of a railroad's involvement, developing required agreements with the railroads to permit contractor access to railroad property, and ensuring that insurance requirements are met. It oversees projects through to completion and final inspection.

### **Federal Programs Section**

The purpose of the division's Federal Programs Section is to identify and secure funding available for rail improvements. It assures that ODOT is fully compliant and integrated with all Federal rail funding initiatives. It prepares all funding applications and develops the business cases supporting the applications. The section also keeps ODOT staff informed of national rail policy and priorities to position Oklahoma as a benefactor of the policies.

### 1.4.2 Other State Agencies or Initiatives Related to Rail Oklahoma State Transportation Commission

The State Transportation Commission (STC) leads the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. The STC was created for the purpose of developing comprehensive transportation policy and planning within the State of Oklahoma. The STC has final approval authority on funding allocations, including the Railroad Revolving Loan and Grant Program (RRLG), federally funded highway-railroad grade crossing safety projects, and highway-railroad grade crossing surface repair projects in Oklahoma.

STC membership is comprised of eight transportation commissioners, which are appointed by the Oklahoma Governor and confirmed by the Oklahoma Senate. The Commission appoints a Director, who serves as the executive head of the ODOT. The current ODOT Executive Director is Mr. Mike Patterson. The Governor also appoints a Secretary of Transportation. The current Secretary of Transportation is Mr. Mike Patterson.

### Oklahoma Department of Commerce

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce serves as the primary economic development entity in Oklahoma with the mission to create and deliver high-impact solutions that lead to prosperous lives and communities for all Oklahomans.

Through its two main focuses – business development and community development – the Department of Commerce administers several state and federal programs to meet its goals of assisting individuals, communities, and businesses.

These agencies also provide financial assistance programs that have been utilized to assist in the attraction of new industries on the state's rail lines through a number of initiatives including tax credits and in some instances have provided financial assistance for projects such as track rehabilitation and the construction of spur tracks to industries.

### 1.4.3 Regional and Local Organizations

Oklahoma's transportation agencies, besides the Oklahoma DOT, include Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Associations (RPAs). Oklahoma's MPOs and RPAs are identified and described in this section.

### Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are federally mandated and funded transportation policy-making organizations comprised of local government and transportation officials. The formation of an MPO is required for any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000.

MPOs are required to maintain and continually update a Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) as well as a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is a multi-year program of transportation projects to be funded with federal and other transportation funding sources. As MPO planning activities have evolved to address the movement of freight as well as passengers, they have included consideration of multimodal solutions, improved intermodal connections, and more specific rail and rail-related project solutions. MPOs must work cooperatively with area transportation stakeholders to understand and anticipate the area's travel needs and to develop the aforementioned documents.

There are four MPOs within Oklahoma. These MPOs are described below.<sup>8</sup>

- *Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) – Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*
  - Serves the transportation planning boundary, known as the Oklahoma City Area Regional Transportation Study (OCARTS), includes all of Oklahoma and Cleveland counties and portions of Canadian, Grady, Logan, and McClain counties in Oklahoma.
- *Indian Nations Council of Government (INCOG) – Tulsa, Oklahoma*
  - Serves the transportation planning boundary including Tulsa County and portions of Creek, Osage, Rogers, and Wagoner counties in Oklahoma.
- *Lawton Metropolitan Planning Organization (LMPO) – Lawton, Oklahoma*
  - Serves the transportation planning boundary including within the Lawton city limits, with minor adjustments, excluding Fort Sill in Oklahoma.
- *Frontier Metropolitan Planning Organization – Ft. Smith, Arkansas*
  - Serves the transportation planning boundary including portions of LeFlore and Sequoyah counties in Oklahoma.

### Regional Planning Associations

Regional Planning Associations (RPAs) are responsible for transportation planning in regions of Oklahoma outside the metropolitan areas represented by MPOs. Oklahoma has 11 RPAs,<sup>9</sup> which are identified below:

- *Association of Central Oklahoma Governments - ACOG*
  - Serves Oklahoma, Canadian, Logan, McClain, Cleveland, and parts of Grady counties.
- *Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments - ASCOG*
  - Serves Caddo, Comanche, Cotton, Tillman, Stephens, Jefferson, and parts of Grady counties.
- *Central Oklahoma Economic Development District - COEDD*
  - Serves Pawnee, Payne, Lincoln, Pottawatomie, Seminole, Okfuskee, and Hughes counties.
- *Eastern Oklahoma Development District - EODD*
  - Serves Okmulgee, Muskogee, McIntosh, Sequoyah, Cherokee, Adair, and parts of Wagoner counties.
- *Grand Gateway Economic Development Association - GGEDA*
  - Serves Washington, Nowata, Craig, Ottawa, Delaware, Mayes, and parts of Rogers counties.
- *Indian Nations Council of Governments - INCOG*
  - Serves Osage, Tulsa, Creek, and parts of Wagoner counties.
- *Kiamichi Economic Development District of Oklahoma - KEDDO*
  - Serves Pittsburg, Haskell, Le Flore, Latimer, Pushmataha, McCurtain, and Choctaw counties.
- *Northern Oklahoma Development Authority - NODA*
  - Serves Alfalfa, Grant, Kay, Major, Garfield, Noble, Blaine, and Kingfisher counties.
- *Oklahoma Economic Development Authority - OEDA*
  - Serves Cimarron, Texas, Beaver, Harper, Woods, Woodward, Ellis, and Dewey counties.
- *Southern Oklahoma Development Association - SODA*

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.ok.gov/odot/About\\_ODOT/Central\\_Office\\_Divisions/Metropolitan\\_Planning.html](https://www.ok.gov/odot/About_ODOT/Central_Office_Divisions/Metropolitan_Planning.html)

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.ok.gov/odot/About\\_ODOT/Central\\_Office\\_Divisions/Metropolitan\\_Planning.html](https://www.ok.gov/odot/About_ODOT/Central_Office_Divisions/Metropolitan_Planning.html)

- Serves Garvin, Pontotoc, Coal, Atoka, Murray, Johnston, Carter, Love, Marshall, and Bryan counties.
- *South Western Oklahoma Development Authority - SWODA*
  - Serves Roger Mills, Custer, Beckham, Washita, Harmon, Greer, Kiowa, and Jackson counties.



## Local Economic Development Agencies

Oklahoma has a number of local public and private economic development agencies which recruit industries and businesses on the basis of their location, available labor force, room for growth, and access to rail and other transportation assets.

The *Oklahoma Directory of Economic Development Organizations* lists 23 entities around the state, including economic development agencies and authorities, chambers of commerce, alliances, development councils, corporations, associations, and marketing coalitions at the regional, county or local level of government.<sup>10</sup> Many of these agencies offer incentives such as tax exemptions and credits and other means of assistance to attract business interests. Under 68 O.S. 1370.7, local governments may form a transportation authority to provide transportation to facilitate the movement of commerce.

Although these agencies do not generally work directly with freight railroad operators, they do have a vested interest in the level of rail services and rail assistance programs available to supplement their incentives.

These agencies include:

- Oklahoma Department of Commerce
- The State Chamber
- Edmond Economic Development Authority
- Norman Economic Development Coalition
- Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
- South Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
- Midwest City Chamber of Commerce
- Eastern Oklahoma County – MRO and Aerospace Partnership
- Lawton/Fort Sill Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Team
- Garfield County Industrial Authority Enid
- Bartlesville Chamber of Commerce and Development Corporation
- Stillwater Chamber of Commerce
- Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education, Tulsa
- Port of Catoosa
- Claremore Area Chamber of Commerce
- Claremore Industrial and Economic Development Authority
- Tulsa Area Partnership
- Ada Jobs Foundation
- Vinita Area Chamber of Commerce
- Miami Area Economic Development Service
- City of Miami Oklahoma Community and Economic Development Department
- MidAmerica Industrial Park
- Ponca City Development Authority

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.okladot.state.ok.us/maps/basic/index.htm>

## 1.5 Oklahoma's Authority to Conduct Rail Planning and Investment

### 1.5.1 State Authority for Rail Planning

The Oklahoma Statutes, Title 66 (Railroads) pertains to the establishment of railroad companies in the state of Oklahoma. Oklahoma DOT's rail-related responsibilities per the Oklahoma Statutes are also detailed in Title 66. These include the following:

- Initiation of railroad safety program. Requires ODOT to coordinate construction and maintenance of safety devices at highway-rail crossings (OS-66-125a, ).
- Empowerments and provisions for the "Railroad Revitalization Act." Authorizes ODOT to acquire, operate, and maintain railroad right of way (OS-66-304, ).

### 1.5.2 State Authority for Grants and Other Rail Financing

Oklahoma has utilized both federal and state transportation funding programs when rail infrastructure improvements were eligible and appropriate. State-sponsored rail investment in Oklahoma has been provided through ODOT and other state economic development agencies.

- Establishes Railroad Maintenance Revolving Fund (RMRF) (OS-66-309).
- Amendment of General Revenue Fund (GRF) to include appropriations for the purchase of railroad right of way. The initial funds went toward the purchase of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad right-of-way. Amendment of GRF appropriations to include "new" designated appropriations for rail passenger service. Currently appropriates \$2 million per year for Oklahoma's portion of Heartland Flyer operating costs (OS-68-2352, OS 1521).
- Established the Oklahoma Tourism and Passenger Rail Revolving Fund (OTPRR) for the purpose of funding passenger rail service. OS 68-500.6 provides an additional \$850,000 for this fund annually.(OS-66-325, OS 68-500.6).
- Provisions and terms for Railroad Rehabilitation Act railroad rehabilitation loan program (RMRF) (OS-66-309.3).

Other state-sponsored rail investment programs include:

- Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Safety Program: This federally funded program provides financial assistance to states for improvements at highway-railroad crossings.
- Grade Crossing Safety Program: This state-funded program assists railroads with funding to defray a portion of the signal maintenance costs at signals installed under the Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Safety Program since 1973.
- Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Surface Repair Program: This state-funded program is designed to assist city and county highway authorities and railroads with surface improvements at highway-railroad crossings.

- Primary Road Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing Repair Program: This state-funded program is designed to assist with surface improvements at highway-railroad crossings on the Primary Road System.

Additional details on these rail and rail safety related funding programs appear in Chapter 2 of the State Rail Plan.

### 1.5.3 State Funding for Rail Projects in the Last Five Years

Recent year funding totals under the aforementioned state rail improvement programs are as follows:

- In 2014 ODOT announced a Rail Crossings Safety Initiative and expected to spend \$100 million over three years to improve signage and active warning systems such as flashing lights, gates, and audible alert devices.

## 1.6 Summary of Freight and Passenger Rail Services in Oklahoma

### 1.6.1 Existing Rail System

The rail system in Oklahoma is comprised of approximately 3,244 route miles owned by freight railroads and non-operating railroad owners. There are 19 freight railroads in the state. Three of these railroads – BNSF Railway (BNSF), Kansas City Southern Railway (KCS), and Union Pacific Railroad (UP) – are categorized as Class I or major railroads. These carriers own a total of approximately 2,010 route miles, or about 62 percent of the total rail mileage in the state. Sixteen of these railroads are categorized as a Class III railroad (known also as a short line railroad). Short line railroads own a total of 1,041 route miles, or about 32 percent of the total rail mileage in the state. The State of Oklahoma currently owns 153 route miles, or about 5 percent of the total rail mileage in the state. In 2014, the state's freight railroads carried 320.9 million tons of freight, or 6.9 million rail carloads of various commodities, to, from, within and through Oklahoma<sup>11</sup>. The state's freight railroads and non-operating railroad owners and their respective networks in Oklahoma will be identified and described in detail in Chapter 2 of the Oklahoma State Rail Plan.

One Amtrak intercity passenger rail route operates within the state. Amtrak's Heartland Flyer routes' southern terminus is Fort Worth, Texas, and its northern terminus is in Oklahoma City. This service operates over BNSF in Oklahoma. During Amtrak's 2016 Fiscal Year, a total of 69,531 passengers boarded or alighted at the five Amtrak stations in Oklahoma. Boardings and alightings at individual stations ranged from 1,693 to 44,551 in the year, and the busiest station was Oklahoma City<sup>12</sup>.

Oklahoma's rail network, as well as its contributions and impacts on the state, are described in greater detail in Chapter 2 of the State Rail Plan.

### 1.6.2 Rail Initiatives and Plans

#### Freight Rail Initiatives

There are various freight rail initiatives ODOT has considered. ODOT has studied the potential for optimizing the state's freight rail network and to identify investments in the state's rail infrastructure

<sup>11</sup> Based on 2014 Surface Transportation Board (STB) Confidential Waybill Samples for the U.S. and Oklahoma

<sup>12</sup> Amtrak Fact Sheet, Fiscal Year 2016, State of Oklahoma

that improve the capacity, efficiency, and safety of the state's rail network, promote railroad access and economic development, and bolster connectivity with other transportation modes. Some of these initiatives include:

- Enhancing coordination between Oklahoma DOT and the state's freight railroads
- Increasing maximum allowable gross weights to 286,000 lbs. per car
- Advancing at-grade highway/rail crossing surface and signal improvements
- Expanding rail access and development of industrial spur tracks
- Promoting rail safety
- Leading freight rail studies

These and other freight rail initiatives are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 of the State Rail Plan.

### Passenger Rail Initiatives

There are various passenger rail initiatives under consideration by ODOT. These include:

- Increase the efficiency of the Heartland Flyer route from Oklahoma City to Fort Worth
- Extend Heartland Flyer to Newton, Kansas
- Implement a new daytime intercity service between Kansas City – Oklahoma City – Fort Worth
- Implement intercity passenger rail service between Tulsa and Oklahoma City
- Implement intercity passenger rail service from South Texas to Oklahoma
- Implement high-speed passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth

These and other intercity and commuter rail service concepts are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3 of the State Rail Plan.