The California Rail Plan: A Model for Integrating Rail Service with other Transportation Modalities: Identifying the Best Practices and the Gaps for California’s Next Rail Service Plan

This research identifies the best features and planning strategies by reviewing other state’s rail plans and identifying improvements.

WHAT IS THE NEED?

The Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA)’s requirements are uniform. However, the actual content and breath of coverage of state rail service plans vary greatly. California was granted an exception to help update the FRA Rail Plan Guidance for its 2018 Rail Plan. In addition, other states have reported that FRA guidance on rail service planning and other planning requirements have put them in the position of constantly writing plans with little or no time to implement them.

Through this research, its authors will:

1. Identify all the requirements of the FRA guidance as they are reflected in the 2018 California Rail Plan and other states.
2. Identify the best features and planning strategies that may inform and improve the state rail planning process going forward.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The research will involve four steps:

1. Review and prepare text outlining the requirements of the FRA’s 2013 state rail plan guidance
2. Identify and review other sources of rail or transit plans
3. Summarize, compare, and evaluate innovative practices of these plans
4. Prepare commentary and analysis identifying improvements states could make in preparing and submitting future rail service plans
### WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

The goal of this research is to identify the best practices and gaps that may inform California and other states as they develop their future rail service plans.

### WHAT IS THE BENEFIT?

1. Identify best practices that may inform California in the development of future rail service plans.
2. Identify gaps that may inform California in the development of future rail service plans.

### WHAT IS THE PROGRESS TO DATE?

1. Reviewed and prepared text outlining the requirements of the FRA’s 2013 state rail plan guidance. Developed a set of matrix criteria to evaluate the state rail plans.
2. Evaluated innovative practices. Identified and reviewed other sources of state rail plans, interstate rail plans or transit plans.
3. Compiled suggestions for improvement that California could or should make in the development and execution of future state rail plans.
4. Prepared and submitted draft report for review to the Project Panel.
5. At this stage we have completed the final draft and have submitted the paper to the review panel for comment. We will revise the final draft based on the panel’s comments, and then put the paper through the final Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) quality control review process before returning to Caltrans for publication.