



Caltrans Division of Research,  
Innovation and System Information

# Research

# Notes

Planning, Policy &  
Programming

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Project Title:  
METRANS Transportation Center

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## A model for integrating rail service with other transportation modalities.

Identifying best practices and gaps for California's next rail service plan.

### WHAT IS THE NEED?

While the general outline of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)'s requirements are uniform for all states, the actual content and breadth 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



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## 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. The next step is to identify and review other sources of rail or transit plans.