



South Carolina  
Department of Transportation

## 2018 Rail Plan Implementation Update January 2019

- SCDOT is South Carolina's "State Rail Transportation Authority" as defined by the federal Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). The South Carolina Statewide Rail Plan (SRP) was approved by the SCDOT Commission as part of the South Carolina Multimodal Transportation Plan on December 4, 2014. SCDOT ensures that the SRP documents the state's policy on freight and passenger rail transportation within the State's boundaries, establishes priorities and implementation strategies to enhance rail service in the public interest, and serves as the basis for Federal and State rail investment. The SRP was approved by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on April 13, 2015. SCDOT continues to work on implementation of the SRP to enhance the overall passenger and freight rail services in South Carolina.
- SCDOT, through our Office of Railroads, continued to review FRA Safety Grants for Short Line Railroads for infrastructure improvement projects. While there were no FRA Grants that fit the identified need in 2018, SCDOT continues to analyze the needs of our short line railroads and will continue efforts in applying for competitive federal rail funding.
- SCDOT continued participation and planning activities for the Atlanta to Charlotte Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan (PRCIP) with NCDOT and GDOT partners. The PRCIP is an extension of the Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor (SEHSR) that is under development from Charlotte to Washington, D.C. As the project planning lead, GDOT submitted the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to FRA, SCDOT and NCDOT for concurrent review. A formal comment period and a series of public meetings (one in each state) are anticipated to occur in early 2019. GDOT will prepare a combined Final EIS/Record of Decision (ROD) document selecting a preferred corridor alternative following the public and agency involvement.
- SCDOT continued to participate in the multi-state Southeast Rail Coalition, with a leadership role in the Southeast Rail Forum which held its second bi-annual forum in March 2018. The regional forum included FRA, six Southeastern states and various rail stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting was to bring focus to the economic benefits of freight and passenger rail in the region and efforts made by the southeastern states to coordinate their collective vision for rail transportation in the Southeast. The next bi-annual meeting is scheduled for 2020.
- FRA selected the Southeast region for a fully-funded, USDOT-led, Southeast Multi-State Rail Planning Study in July 2015. This effort continues and will facilitate coordination with neighboring states and will assist with funding for freight and passenger rail projects in the Southeast. SCDOT serves as a member of the project Steering Committee, and participated in all quarterly meeting in 2017. The anticipated completion date for the Plan is the second quarter of 2019.
- In response to a federal funding announcement in April 2018, SCDOT submitted an application under the USDOT's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program in July 2018 for the **Upstate Express Corridor Capacity Expansion Project (UPEX)**. The UPEX project will make freight rail infrastructure improvements in South Carolina through expansion of Inland Port Greer (IPG), and expanded track and siding within the rail corridor for more efficient rail movements. The IPG expansion will add inland intermodal transportation capacity to accommodate the ongoing and projected economic growth in the state. SCDOT was notified in December 2018 of their successful application and was awarded \$25 million for this project that is a public-private partnership between SCDOT, the South Carolina Ports Authority, BMW and Norfolk Southern Railroad.

