



South Carolina  
Department of Transportation

## 2019 Rail Plan Implementation Update January 2020

- 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 in December, 2014 and was approved by the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) on April 13, 2015. As required, the Statewide Rail Plan has been updated concurrent with the Statewide Multimodal Plan and is currently under review. Final approval of the plan is anticipated by mid-2020. 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. SCDOT continues to work on implementation of the SRP to enhance the overall passenger and freight rail services in South Carolina.
- 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, and following review by partner states SCDOT and NCDOT, GDOT submitted the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to FRA for review. A formal comment period and a series public meetings (one in each state) was conducted in the last half of 2019. Following review and tabulation of all public comments, GDOT will prepare a combined Final EIS/Record of Decision (ROD) document selecting the preferred Greenfield Corridor alternative.
- SCDOT continued to participate in the multi-state Southeast Rail Coalition, with a leadership role in the Southeast Rail Forum which will hold its third bi-annual forum in March 2020 in Raleigh, NC. The regional forum includes FRA, a number of Southeastern states and various rail stakeholders. The purpose of the forum is 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.
- FRA selected the Southeast region for a fully-funded, USDOT-led, Southeast Multi-State Rail Planning Study in July 2015. As the study was underway, the FY2017 Consolidated Appropriations Act directed the FTA to allocate \$1 million to stand up the **Southeast Corridor Rail Commission** between the lead states involved in the Southeast Regional Rail Plan. The purpose of the Commission is to prioritize and advance near-term projects across the region and develop a visionary multi-state investment strategy for a long-term regional rail network. The inaugural meeting of the Commission was held in November 2019. Southeast states have continued to work cooperatively as the Southeast Rail Coalition Technical Committee and have remained in communication on the status of various programs and projects through workshops, forums, and monthly calls.
- SCDOT (on behalf of Norfolk Southern (NS) and the South Carolina Ports Authority (SCPA)) was awarded \$25 million through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation discretionary grant (2018) program. A \$51.1 million project, the **Upstate Express Corridor Capacity Expansion Project** (UPEX) 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.

