

CHAPTER 6

Coordination and Review

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Chapter 6 Coordination and Review

A. Approach to Public and Agency Participation

Outreach for the new Nevada State Rail Plan (NVSRP) began with comprehensive research into Nevada's history, rail development, the overarching economics of the state, and the structures of public sector planning and economic development.

NDOT's rail program and its state rail planning activities are staffed by one person with assistance from the DOT's cartography team. NDOT management provides oversight and input into rail planning activities. These activities have included close interaction with NDOT staff. Approximately half of all in-person, telephone, or video conference stakeholder meetings have been attended by NDOT staff.

NVSRP staff reached out to each statewide and regional agency involved in planning and transportation in Nevada. Other stakeholders involved in commerce, logistics, economic development, and governance were identified and contacted after internet research and networking conversations. These stakeholder groups included:

- Freight shippers (both truck and rail)
- Land developers
- Mining operators
- Railroad personnel
- State and local government employees
- Academics
- Tribes
- Citizen groups (for example, The Sierra Club)

These stakeholders were cataloged by role, region, and - where appropriate - specific supply chain. Interviews led to local insights and further recommendations for stakeholder engagement which were immediately pursued. Also, as participating stakeholders were engaged, they subsequently informed others of the NVSRP process who enthusiastically requested invitations to participate.

There are three Class I railroads operating in Nevada – freight operators Union Pacific Railroad and BNSF Railway, and long-distance passenger rail provider Amtrak. There is no regional passenger rail service in Nevada. NVSRP staff have been in close contact with both freight railroads throughout this process. Additionally, NVSRP's passenger rail team solicited input from Amtrak. While there are no Class II or III "Regional" or "Short line" freight railroads there are three passenger excursion operations; each was engaged by NVSRP staff.

Nevada's two transit authorities – the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Washoe County and the Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada are housed in their respective area's Municipal Planning Organizations. Representatives from both were engaged by the NVSRP team to explore opportunities for regional passenger rail service.

B. Coordination with Neighboring States

The NVSRP team reached out to Departments of Transportation in California and Utah, the two states with which Nevada shares rail connections. Caltrans, UDOT, and NDOT are now in ongoing dialogue. Caltrans rail planners have expressed a policy and planning priority of developing new bi-state freight and

passenger rail services to and from Nevada. They are supportive of new inland intermodal shuttles between California ports and warehousing and industrial shippers in Northern and Southern Nevada.

NVSRP staff explored the role of rail shippers’ associations in Nevada. The American Institute for Shippers’ Associations, Inc. defines Shippers’ Associations as: "Generally non-profit transportation membership cooperatives which arrange for the domestic or international shipment of members' cargo. Associations will contract for the physical movement of the cargo with motor carriers, railroads, ocean carriers, air carriers, and others. The ability to aggregate and ship the collective membership cargo at favorable volume rates is the key to the existence of the modern-day Shippers' Association." In addition to rate negotiating these regional entities are forums for shippers to share knowledge. NVSRP staff interviewed the Southwest Association of Rail Shippers (SWARS) and the Northwest Association of Rail Shippers and found that no Nevada shippers are members of either organization. The rate benefits of participating in a shipper association remain available to Nevada’s shippers.

Nevada has no rail connections with Arizona, Idaho, or Oregon. Following is a list of all neighboring state rail planning offices and links to their rail plans and other transportation planning documents and administrative entities.

			Email	Phone Number	
California	Rail Plan	https://dot.ca.gov/programs/rail-and-mass-transportation/california-state-rail-plan			
	Freight Mobility Plan	https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/freight-planning/ca-freight-advisory-committee/cfmp-2020			
	Advisory Board	Rail Planning Branch, https://catc.ca.gov/			
	Contact	Hilary Norton	Vice Chair of Commission	hnorton@tpgre.com	213-448-2900
	Contact	James Jack	Capitol Strategic Advisors	james@capitolstrategic.com	916-325-8591
	Contact	Andy Cook	Chief, Office of Planning & Operations, Caltrans	Andrew.Cook@dot.ca.gov	916-653-0806
Utah	Rail Plan	https://drive.google.com/file/d/15ZjI8Roiq8iL5icZgS-OKiziFKwhY-4K/view			
	Advisory Board	Board is State Rail Plan specific, can't find any online evidence that it remained in existence past the writing of the rail plan. Dan Kuhn was on the committee and a major participant in the plan.			
	Contact	Jordan Backman,	Railroad Planner, UDOT	jbackman@utah.gov	385-226-4255

			Email	Phone Number
Arizona	Rail Plan	https://azdot.gov/planning/transportation-programs/state-rail-plan		
	Advisory Board	https://www.azmc.org/binational-committees/transportation-infrastructure-ports/		
	Contact	John Halikowski	ADOT Director	jhalikowski@azdot.gov 602-712-7227
Oregon	Rail Plan	https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Planning/Documents/OSRP.pdf		
	Advisory Board	https://www.oregon.gov/odot/RPTD/Pages/RAC.aspx		
	Contact	Paul Langner,	Committee Chair	plangner@teevinbros.com 503-741-0175
	Contact	Cary Goodman,	ODOT Rail Program Coordinator	cary.goodman@odot.state.or.us 503-986-4230
Idaho	Rail Plan	https://apps.itd.idaho.gov/apps/freight/Idaho-Statewide-Rail-Plan.pdf		
	Advisory Board	https://itd.idaho.gov/board/		
	Contact	Bill Moad,	Chairman	contact info not readily available
	Contact	Sue Higgins	Secretary	sue.higgins@itd.idaho.gov 208-334-8808
	Contact	Rail department is unstaffed		

The Western States Freight Coalition (WSFC)¹ was founded by Bill Thompson of Nevada Department of Transportation in 2014 to facilitate peer exchange among state DOT freight program managers and coordinate preparation of FAST Act compliant state freight plans. Leadership rotates among participating states and WSFC is now led by Utah. The Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (WASHTO) is reportedly planning to absorb WSFC’s activities into its operation.

C. Involvement of Stakeholders in the Preparation and Review of the State Rail Plan

SRF and NDOT worked to create a plan that expands and improves on typical stakeholder engagement. SRF, with NDOT’s significant participation, has conducted in-depth dialogues with 235 (and counting) stakeholders from every related public- and private-sector arena. In many cases the dialogues have led to second and third conversations. These conversations continue to illuminate the challenges, opportunities, and needs particular to Nevada’s regions and industries that would not have been otherwise discerned.

NVSRP staff toured the entire state’s rail network and made extensive use of satellite imagery. This has proven to be an effective method for the identification of 1) every rail siding in the state, 2) every truckload shipper in the state, and 3) every non-rail shipper located adjacent to a rail line.

¹ *Western State Freight Coalition*, Christopher Chesnut, Dan Anderson, [source link](#), (April 2019)

Approximately 140 shippers were interviewed in-person during several cross-state trips made by NVSRP staff (before the COVID virus curtailed travel starting in March 2020), or through individual telephone interviews.

One hundred and seventy-five stakeholders participated in ninety-minute regional video meetings (complete attendance lists and meeting metrics are contained in the Technical Appendix):

Region 1 - Southern Nevada [Clark County] - July 28, 2020

Region 2 - Lincoln County - July 27, 2020

Region 3 - Ely-North to W. Wendover [White County; some Elko County] - July 23, 2020

Region 4 - I-80 Corridor, Lovelock to Wendover [Elko County; Eureka County, Lander County; Humboldt County; Pershing County] - July 29, 2020

Region 5 - TRIC-Fernley-Fallon-Silver Springs [Washoe County; Storey County; Douglas County; Lyon County; Churchill County] - July 27, 2020

Region 6 - Carson City-Reno-Sparks-Stead - July 30, 2020

Region 7 - Wabuska-Yerington-Mineral County-Tonopah-Esmeralda County [Mineral County; Esmeralda County; some Nye County] - July 29, 2020

Region 8 - Nye County from Hawthorne to Jean - created post-Regional Team Meetings

Stakeholders were also invited to the two statewide IntelliConferences (described below). Lastly, stakeholders were invited to share their input directly with NVSRP staff at any time throughout the NVSRP process.

From the outset, stakeholders who have contributed to the NVSRP have not simply been surveyed for their input—they have been enrolled in an ongoing partnership for rail development. Typical state rail plan stakeholder outreach is conducted through town hall meetings, poster presentations, surveys, and a few interviews. The NVSRP incorporates a comprehensive communications strategy that includes email, calling, and knocking on doors as needed to connect *personally* with stakeholders.

This regional and statewide teamwork is made practical by an innovative, online, time-saving program for multi-stakeholder dialogue. The program design accommodates stakeholders participating asynchronously, on their own schedules, from the convenience and safety of their remote locations. This inquiry-based dialogue methodology—**IntelliConference**—has been developed by a non-profit transportation policy development organization, *OnTrackNorthAmerica*, founded and led by the principals of Strategic Rail Finance. The **IntelliConference** system facilitates asynchronous online summits of stakeholder representatives for efficient gathering of collective input and intelligence. The **IntelliConference** methodology also supports real-time, in-person and virtual summits. With each successive summit, new points of view are added to an ongoing dialogue that incorporates diverse perspectives. This methodology puts into practice cutting-edge research in civic and large-group engagement.

As a complement to these summits, the NDOT Rail website at www.nevadadot.com/mobility/rail-planning serves as a portal for ongoing multi-stakeholder input. All participating stakeholders and interested observers can follow this evolving process. The website also serves as the platform for compiling and cataloguing relevant reports, projects, plans, and events.

D. Issues Raised During Preparation of the NVSRP and Their Consideration

Issues identified during interviews and meetings included:

- Access to rail service is a critical requirement for advancing mining business plans
- Traffic congestion is exacerbated by increasing truck traffic
- Truck crashes are a problem in the state
- Need for information sharing and collaboration between government planning and economic development entities
- Need for educating industrial real estate developers and shippers about rail options
- Need for connections to and relationships with West Coast ports where Nevada can provide economical green- and brown-field facilities for shipping container staging to buffer port traffic
- Need for additional Amtrak passenger rail service frequencies along with re-opening Amtrak stations in Lovelock and Sparks
- Exploration of nascent regional passenger rail options in the Reno-Sparks and Las Vegas regions

All suggestions, concerns, and requests for service were catalogued, aggregated, and considered for immediate action where appropriate. Most of these stakeholders have continued to engage in NVSRP teamwork activities within one-on-one and group conversations.

E. Recommendations Made by Participants

Recommendations were solicited and came from many stakeholders during NVSRP outreach. The outreach was conducted via one-on-one interviews. All stakeholder comments were noted and have been included in the Technical Appendix. Eight developers in Region 5 were given Land Development Project Assessment forms for their eleven projects. Eight Assessment forms were returned and have been used internally by the NVSRP project team. A sample Assessment Form is included in the Technical Appendix.

Nevada's primary freight railroad – Union Pacific participated in each of the seven NVSRP regional meetings in July and provided general guidance for those seeking new or enhanced service. Stakeholders have been forthcoming with their knowledge and wisdom, and frequently introduce others and make recommendations to NVSRP staff on new participants.

Stakeholders participating in NVSRP Regional team meetings stepped into creative brainstorming on solving challenges and collaborating on opportunities.

F. Coordination with Other Planning Functions

NDOT works closely with all Nevada state and local planning entities to coordinate planning efforts and prioritize transportation spending. The NVSRP is fully integrated with:

- 2017 Nevada State Freight Plan²

² *Nevada State Freight Plan*, Michael Gallis & Associates, ch2m, Cambridge Systematics, [source link](#), (January 2017)

- 2018 One Nevada Transportation Plan³
- And all Nevada Municipal Organization and Regional Transportation Commission planning:
 - Washoe County RTC⁴
 - Carson Area Metropolitan Planning Organization⁵
 - Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada⁶
 - Tahoe Regional Planning Agency⁷

In preparation for the NVSRP, multiple readings of the state transportation plan, state freight plan, and 2012 Nevada state rail plan have been completed to synthesize previously developed intelligence. Additionally, plan authors have been working with the Northern Nevada Development Authority to create a plan for rail service in its catchment area. The Fernley Multimodal Freight Facility Feasibility Study has been completed and included in the Appendix.

F.1 U.S. Department of Defense Strategic Rail Corridor Network (STRACNET)

The U.S. Department of Defense's (DOD) Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC) evaluates and determines the Department's needs for rail service that is essential for national defense. MTMC selected these rail lines in the 1970s to form a DOD Strategic Rail Corridor Network (STRACNET), involving 38,000 miles serving over 170 defense installations. Please refer to **Figure 6-1** for more detail.

Hawthorne Army Depot is the only DOD installation located in Nevada that requires rail service. Although the Sierra Army Depot is located just across the state line in California, the Union Pacific's Feather River Corridor from Winnemucca provides a key link for the movement of military materials to and from the base. Additionally, MTMC has identified the UPRR Overland Route mainline through northern Nevada and the South-Central Route mainline through southern Nevada as elements of STRACNET. Please refer to **Figure 6-2** for more detail.

³One Nevada Transportation Plan, Nevada DOT, [source link](#), (November 2018)

⁴ RTC Metropolitan Planning website, [source link](#)

⁵ Carson City official website, [source link](#)

⁶ RTC Southern Nevada website, [source link](#)

⁷ Tahoe Regional Planning Agency website, [source link](#)

Figure 6-1: STRACNET and Defense Connector Lines

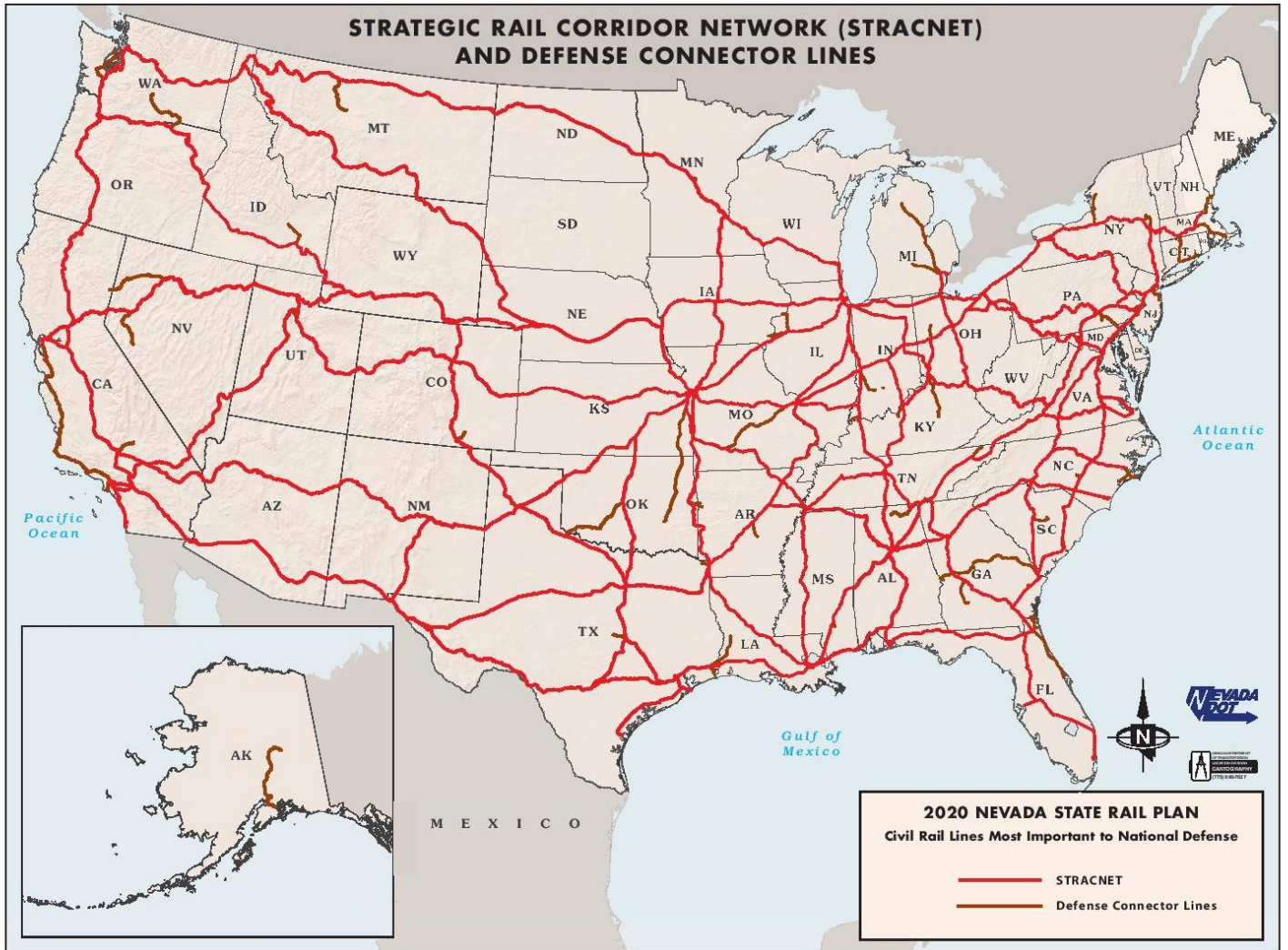


Figure 6-2: STRACNET in Nevada

