



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Railroad
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

April 20, 2015

Mr. Daniel Kuhn
Railroad & Freight Planner
Utah Department of Transportation
Calvin Rampton Complex
4501 South 2700 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Dear Mr. Kuhn:

FRA has completed its review of the Utah State Rail Plan (SRP) from December 2014, which was submitted to FRA on January 6, 2015. FRA's review of the SRP found that it contained the minimum required elements in accordance with Section 303 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). This letter serves as notice that FRA formally **accepts** the SRP and the projects listed in the SRP will be eligible for capital grants under Sections 301, 302, and 501 of PRIIA, relating to intercity passenger rail, congestion relief, and high speed rail respectively. FRA acceptance of the 2014 Utah State Rail Plan is valid until April 20, 2020.

While FRA finds that the SRP meets the minimum requirements under Section 303 of PRIIA, it does not fully comply with the September 2013 State Rail Plan Guidance. Future SRPs will be subject to the requirements of the formal Guidance, and FRA retains the right to reject an SRP for failure to meet those requirements.

Additionally, FRA recommends addressing the following issues in future updates to the SRP to fully comply with the Guidance and facilitate a robust planning process for rail in the State of Utah:

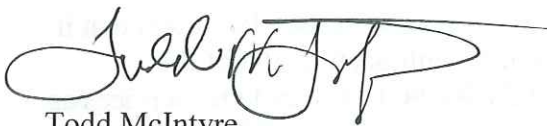
- Section 303 of PRIIA requires incorporating capital projects into the SRP to qualify for federal funding. Failure to do so may result in ineligibility to receive federal funding for capital rail projects.
- FRA requests that information regarding proposed rail projects by all entities in Utah be included in the SRP. This information aids in evaluating the state of rail in Utah and the nation as a whole. Incorporation by reference is not sufficient.
- FRA requests an analysis of the conditions that create rail service gaps. The absence or discontinuation of rail service does not necessarily indicate a service gap as adequate demand must exist to support service. Please describe conditions in the region, such as roadway level of service, travel demand, and regional

population and economic growth that create conditions that would benefit from and support rail service.

- Please describe the program effects that would result from implementing identified rail projects. Regardless of who is responsible for project implementation, public and private benefits may result. Describing these benefits for the short and long terms will help prioritize investment opportunities. Also consider effects on the State's transportation system, rail capacity and congestion, environmental impacts, economic impacts, along with other key factors.
- FRA understands States may face limitations in how funding can be allocated towards transportation infrastructure. However, the SRP can indicate the cost of unfunded capital projects, similar to a constrained long range transportation plan, to demonstrate financial requirements for implementation of needed rail projects within Utah.

FRA looks forward to partnering with the State of Utah to continue building a rail network for America that is safer, more reliable, and more efficient.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd McIntyre". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "T" and "M".

Todd McIntyre
Western Regional Team Lead