



Rail Open Houses Rescheduled in Oklahoma City and Lawton Due to Weather FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Due to the winter weather forecast, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation has rescheduled the first two meetings in a series of open houses on rail long-range planning originally scheduled to get underway in Oklahoma City on Tuesday, Feb. 1 and in Lawton on Thursday, Feb 3.

ODOT is urging the public to get involved in the development of a new Oklahoma Freight and Passenger Rail Plan being created to combine the state's planning for freight and passenger rail into one single coordinated effort.

The Rail Plan, or OFPRP, will profile the state's freight and passenger rail system, showing its importance to the economy, mobility, safety and environmental sustainability of Oklahoma. The Plan will identify the current and future needs of the state's rail system and will provide a basis for future state and federal funding of rail transportation improvement projects. The updated plan is expected to be completed in late 2011 and will meet requirements established in federal Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008.

The public is invited to attend one of five open houses ODOT is holding in February and March. People will have the opportunity to meet with ODOT officials to learn more about the state's railroads, share current and future views on freight and passenger rail and discuss potential improvements and funding requirements. The new schedule is as follows:

- Tuesday, Feb. 15, 4:30 – 7 p.m. – McAlester
Southeast Expo Center, Room 101 - 4500 W. US-270
- Wednesday, Feb. 16, 4:30 – 7 p.m. – Tulsa
Buddy LaFortune Community Center - 5202 S. Hudson Ave.
- Thursday, Feb. 17, 4:30 – 7 p.m. – Enid
Cherokee Strip Conference Center, Chisholm Trail Room - 123 W. Main
- Tuesday, March 1, 4:30 – 7 p.m. - Oklahoma City
Metro Technology Center, Room H-Big Dipper – 1900 Springlake Dr.
- Thursday, Mar. 3, 4:30 – 7 p.m. – Lawton
Great Plains Technology Center, Bldg. 300, Rm. 301B - 4500 S.W. Lee Blvd.

The study will look at freight and passenger rail as equally important in providing key strategic transportation goals, including mobility choices, opportunities for economic development, energy independence, lowering carbon emissions and interconnected communities.

Oklahoma is sharing information with neighboring states and coordinating with transportation officials in Kansas, Missouri and Texas. The states are also working cooperatively with the large and small freight railroads as well as Amtrak.

The meetings are accessible to persons having disabilities. For special accommodations needs, contact ODOT Public Involvement Specialist at 405-521-2705 or email fcampbell@odot.org in advance of the meeting. For more information visit www.okladot.state.ok.us/rail/rail-plan/

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(Editors and News Directors: FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES, contact ODOT Media and Public Relations Division at 405-521-6000.)

INFORMATION RELEASE

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