

## JANUARY, 2011 OKLAHOMA FREIGHT AND PASSENGER RAIL PLAN UPDATE

In late 2010, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation entered into a contract with Parsons-Brinckerhoff to help us develop a comprehensive 25-year statewide freight and passenger rail plan. The Rail Division at ODOT is working hand in hand with PB to not only build on the 1992 Statewide Rail Plan, but to expand it to meet new federal guidelines as required by recent legislation—specifically the 2008 Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA). The Federal Rail Administration is concurrently developing a National Rail Plan, and so the FRA is working with States including Oklahoma to assure both the National Rail Plan and all of the individual state plans are compatible.

ODOT secured a 2010 HSIPR Grant from the FRA to pay for half of the study.

ODOT and PB have been working to notify various organizations and entities, including meeting with both TXDOT and KDOT, about our planning effort to take place throughout the coming year.

Currently, ODOT and PB are preparing to hold a series of public and stakeholder meetings to give various people and organizations an opportunity to share their thoughts and needs regarding a statewide rail plan. ODOT is very focused on the economic benefits of rail to the State's economy, and so this will serve as a central aim of the Rail Plan.

ODOT and PB are developing a Vision backed with Goals and Objectives that will serve as a basis for the development of a comprehensive "projects and programs" list to be generated further into the Rail Planning process. The list will account for both freight and passenger rail growth opportunities aimed at enhancing Oklahoma's economy and generating benefits for its citizens.

A data collection plan is being generated, and we are preparing to begin analysis of massive amounts of data related to freight activity in our State. Also, preparations are underway to begin examining the freight and passenger systems across our state.