Mixing Fast Trains on Freight Rail Corridors

presented by:
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Presentation Outline

• State Plans for Fast (Passenger) Trains
• Overarching principles
• Why existing freight rail corridors
• Challenges
• Opportunities
• Wrap-up
2009 Rail Plan
(speeds up to 110 mph)
The US railroad industry is planning to spend roughly $13B USD for infrastructure improvements in 2012 alone.

The State Rail Plan identified passenger needs of about $4B USD (2009 – 2030).
Passenger Rail Development

Overarching Principles

• We need to work with the freight railroads
• Freight rail capacity must be preserved & improved
• Paid for with public and/or non-host railroad sources
• The resulting service must meet the public need

Freight Rail Corridors are privately owned (in most cases)
What Makes Existing Freight Rail Corridors Attractive?

• It already looks like a duck
• Existing recognizable and contiguous linear transportation corridors
• Minimal or no changes to land use (facilitated environmental approval)
• Allows for incremental development of new service

It looks easier!
Challenges

- **Safety**
  - proper separation of passenger and freight trains
  - public’s perception of train speeds
  - controlling trespass and access in communities

- **Operations**
  - braking distances and acceleration rates
  - where to hold, meet and pass trains
  - proper location and configuration of station areas

More trains, different speeds – safely!
Challenges - continued

• Track Design
  – track is designed for slower heavier freight trains
  – curve design is not optimal for light fast trains

• Host Railroad Agreements
  – future freight needs
  – future passenger needs
  – liability and compensation

More trains, different speeds – safely!
Opportunities if Implemented Properly

• Safety
  – Engineering, Education and Enforcement

• Infrastructure
  – Phase-in improvements based on need & resources
  – Leave room for future growth (passenger & freight)

• Host Railroad Agreements
  – Cooperatively build a framework and partnership
Wrap-up

• Existing freight rail corridors provide a great opportunity
• Design needs to be optimized for joint use
• Safety and liability issues need to be addressed
• Corridor capacity and appropriate operating and maintenance costs need to be agreed to.

Cooperatively build a framework and partnership to address workable solutions
Questions?

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