



Dear Stakeholders:

Please join us for the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) ***High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Workshops***, as we begin to implement President Obama's vision for developing a cohesive national intercity and high-speed passenger rail network. This vision was set forth in FRA's Strategic Plan for High-Speed Rail (HSR) announced by President Obama, Vice President Biden, and U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood, and sent to Congress that same day on April 16, 2009.

The workshops will be led by FRA Deputy Administrator Karen Rae or myself. Through these workshops, FRA is reaching out to the rail community in seven regions across the country to seek your input on the Interim Guidance we are required to issue on or before June 17, 2009, for the \$8 billion in grant funds provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for the high-speed rail corridors program, intercity passenger rail grants, and congestion grants. The workshops will enable FRA to discuss the HSR Strategic Plan with key stakeholders such as state departments of transportation, regional planning authorities, metropolitan leaders, associations and labor groups (***under the ARRA, these workshops exclude the participation of lobbyists***). We seek your input not only to provide us with your regional vision of high-speed and intercity rail networks, but to enable stakeholders to focus on the critical factors that will make this program a success for generations to come.

The goal of the workshop is to take the first steps toward determining how we can best partner together to make the Strategic Plan a reality. During the workshop, you will have an opportunity to share experiences, raise concerns, provide insights, and make recommendations on several key issues and questions, as well as hear those of your colleagues and representatives from a regional perspective. The workshop schedule will include the following:

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| 1. Introduction | 10 minutes |
| 2. Overview of FRA strategic plan and next steps | 30 minutes |
| 3. Amtrak presentation | 15 minutes |
| 4. Q & A | 35 minutes |
| 5. Regional presentation | 30 minutes |
| 6. Break | 15 minutes |
| 7. Working group break-out | 1 hour |
| 8. Wrap-up | 15 minutes |

The workshops will be held 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. on the following dates and locations:

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| 🕒 Southeast Corridor: Charlotte
Renaissance Charlotte Suites Hotel
2800 Coliseum Drive, Charlotte, NC 28205 | May 20 |
| 🕒 Florida Corridor: Orlando
Marriott Orlando Airport
7499 Augusta National Drive, Orlando, FL 32822 | May 21 |

- ⌚ **Pacific Northwest Corridor: Seattle**
Seattle Airport Marriott Hotel
3201 South 176th Street, Seattle, WA 98188

May 27
- ⌚ **California Corridor: Sacramento**
Sacramento Marriott Rancho Cordova
11211 Point East Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA 95742

May 28
- ⌚ **South Central and Gulf Coast Corridor: Houston**
Marriott Houston Airport
18700 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Houston, TX 77032

May 29
- ⌚ **Midwest Region: Chicago**
Marriott Chicago Magnificent Mile
540 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611

June 1
- ⌚ **Northeast Region: Philadelphia**
Philadelphia Downtown Marriott
1201 Market St. Philadelphia, PA 19107

June 2

Due to practical space and time constraints, I ask that you only plan to attend the event that is nearest to your location or proposed corridor. Please RSVP at the following Web site : <https://survey.deloitte.com/wsb.dll/5644/FRARegistration.htm>, and indicate which workshop you will be attending no later than 3 days before the scheduled workshop, after which confirmed attendees will receive additional details regarding the location and program. Those wishing to attend without a RSVP may do so as long as space is available. *(Despite the name survey in the URL, the website is not a survey, but rather a means to track the number of individuals who indicate that they will be attending particular workshop sessions.)*

In addition to participating in the workshop, I am inviting you and other members of the public to submit written comments to FRA by June 5, 2009, on issues that should be addressed in the Interim Guidance and specific recommendations on the criteria to be used in evaluating grant applications. FRA has created a public docket (Docket No. FRA-2009-0045) for the receipt of written comments. Please visit FRA's Web site at: www.fra.dot.gov/us/content/2236 for information regarding the various ways in which you may submit comments to the public docket.

Please note, additional sessions to aid states with the mechanics of applying for ARRA funds will be scheduled after these workshops, as will informational sessions for industry, labor, intergovernmental and other interested parties.

I look forward to working with you over the coming months to ensure the grant programs funded by ARRA are implemented successfully.

Sincerely,

Joseph C. Szabo

Administrator