

Roundtable on Funding & Financing Short Line Rail Projects
February 20, 2018 1:00-5:00 PM
Washington Court Hotel, Madison Room (Lower Lobby level)



The Build America Transportation Investment Center (BATIC) Institute is hosting a Roundtable on Funding and Financing Short Line Rail Projects on February 20, 2018, in conjunction with the Council on Rail Transportation meeting being held in Washington, DC. This roundtable will provide a forum for State DOT and other Short Line Stakeholders to exchange ideas and best practices, and identify common challenges and opportunities in funding and financing short line railroad projects. The roundtable will include participation by representatives of the Federal Railroad Administration and the Build America Bureau, who will be available to discuss federal resources available for advancing such projects.

AGENDA

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

1:00-1:15

Jennifer Brickett, Director, BATIC Institute:
An AASHTO Center for Excellence

Roger Bohnert, Director of Outreach and
Project Development, USDOT Build America
Bureau

1 Operating Environment, Capital Needs, and Investment Approaches 1:15-2:15

- Overview of short line industry (size, ownership, organizational structure)
- Fiscal condition of short line companies (operating results, investments, outstanding debt)
- Typical private investment approaches (including use of debt financing and other tools like "45G" tax credits)
- Challenges and limitations of financing

Introductory Remarks

Linda Darr, President, American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA)

Jerry Vest, Senior Vice President of
Government & Industry Affairs, Genesee &
Wyoming

BREAK 2:15-2:30

2 Federal Financing for Short Line Projects 2:30-3:15

- Review of recent ASLRRA survey findings and other challenges identified
- Discussion of RRIF program – history and process relevant to short lines
- Potential synergies with other federal and state programs

Introductory Remarks

Jo Strang, Vice President, Safety and
Regulatory Policy, American Short Line and
Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA)

Roger Bohnert, Director of Outreach and
Project Development, USDOT Build America
Bureau

BREAK 3:15-3:30

3 Public Funding Challenges and Strategies 3:30-4:30

- Working with stakeholders to get projects into relevant freight and rail planning documents
- Grant opportunities (NHFP, INFRA, TIGER, CRISI, and state programs) – availability, eligibility, application process
- Impact of tax reform (public grants as taxable income?)
- Navigating Buy America and other challenges to utilization of public funding
- Thoughts on the ideal grant program
- Strategies for partnering with State DOTs and other public entities

Introductory Remarks

Matt Dietrich, Executive Director, Ohio Rail Development Commission

Jerry Vest, Senior Vice President of Government & Industry Affairs, Genesee & Wyoming

4 Wrap Up & Closing Discussion 4:30-5:00

- Key takeaways
 - Additional capacity building needs
-

Roundtable Participants

State	Name	Organization	Position
Alabama	George Conner	Alabama Department of Transportation	Deputy Director, Operations
Indiana	Venetta Keefe	Indiana Department of Transportation	Rail Programs Manager
Indiana	Brittany White	Indiana Department of Transportation	Passenger Rail Planner
Ohio	Thomas Burns	Ohio Department of Transportation	Project Development Manager, Ohio Rail Development Commission
Ohio	Matt Dietrich	Ohio Department of Transportation	Executive Director, Ohio Rail Development Commission
Ohio	Megan McClory	Ohio Department of Transportation	Secretary-Treasurer, Ohio Rail Development Commission
Tennessee	Liza Joffrion	Tennessee Department of Transportation	Director, Multimodal Transportation Resources Division
Virginia	Linda Balderson	Virginia Department of Transportation	Rail Preservation and Access Programs Manager
Washington	Ron Pate	Washington State Department of Transportation	Rail, Freight, and Ports Director
Washington	Jason Biggs	Washington State Department of Transportation	Operation Program Manager
Wisconsin	Arun Rao	Wisconsin Department of Transportation	Passenger Rail Implementation Manager
	Jerry Vest	Genesee & Wyoming	Senior Vice President of Government & Industry Affairs
	Linda Darr	ASLRRA	President
	Jo Strang	ASLRRA	Vice President, Safety and Regulatory Policy
	Roger Bohnert	U.S. Department of Transportation	Director, Outreach and Project Development, Build America Bureau
	Kylie Cannon	U.S. Department of Transportation	Project Development Lead (Rail), Build America Bureau
	Tom Halloran	U.S. Department of Transportation	Project Development Lead, Build America Bureau
	Danielle Rinsler	U.S. Department of Transportation	Outreach and Project Development, Build America Bureau