

**El Paso  
Metropolitan Planning Organization**

**TRANSPORTATION PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

**October 1, 2025**

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**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5:**

Presentation on NMDOT State Rail Plan

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

Item is for discussion only; no action may be taken.

**SUPPORT INFORMATION:**

- Presentation

**DISCUSSION/OPTIONS:**

The New Mexico Department of Transportation's State Rail Plan aims to support economic growth and development, enhance railroad safety and security, maintain railroad assets in a state of good repair, and promote efficient passenger rail service.

# New Mexico State Rail Plan

Presentation to the El Paso MPO

October 1, 2025

Kevin Olinger

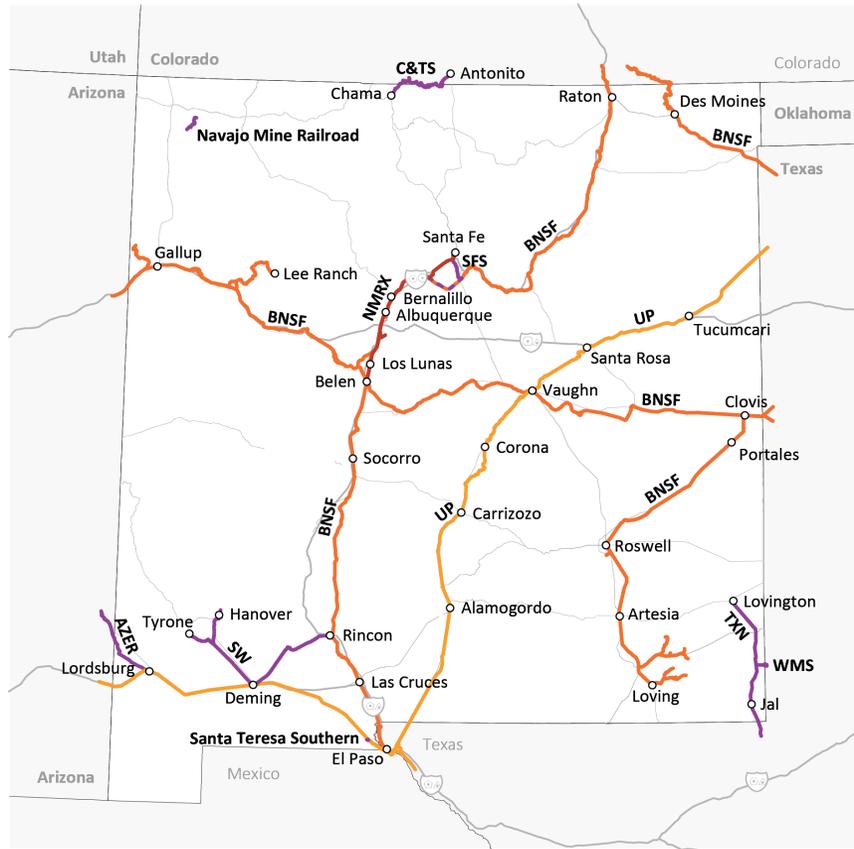
NMDOT Transit and Rail  
Division Director



*New Mexico* DEPARTMENT OF  
**TRANSPORTATION**  
MOBILITY FOR EVERYONE

# Why are we updating the Rail Plan?

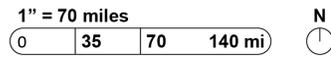
- Identify a long-range service and investment program for freight and passenger rail improvements
- Support the New Mexico 2045 Plan
- Update the 2014 New Mexico Rail Plan
- Provide a federally-required systematic analysis
  - Required to receive future Federal Railroad Administration funding



**Legend**

- Arizona Eastern RW (AZER)
- BNSF RW (BNSF)
- Cumbres and Toltec Scenic RR (C&TS)
- Waste Mangement Specialists (WMS)
- Navajo Mine RR
- Rail Runner Express (NMRX)
- Santa Fe Southern RW (SFS)
- Santa Teresa Southern RR (STS)
- Southwestern RR (SW)
- Texas & New Mexico RW (TXN)
- Union Pacific RR (UP)
- Freeways
- Major Roadways
- State Boundaries
- New Mexico State
- Stations along rail lines

Source: NMDOT

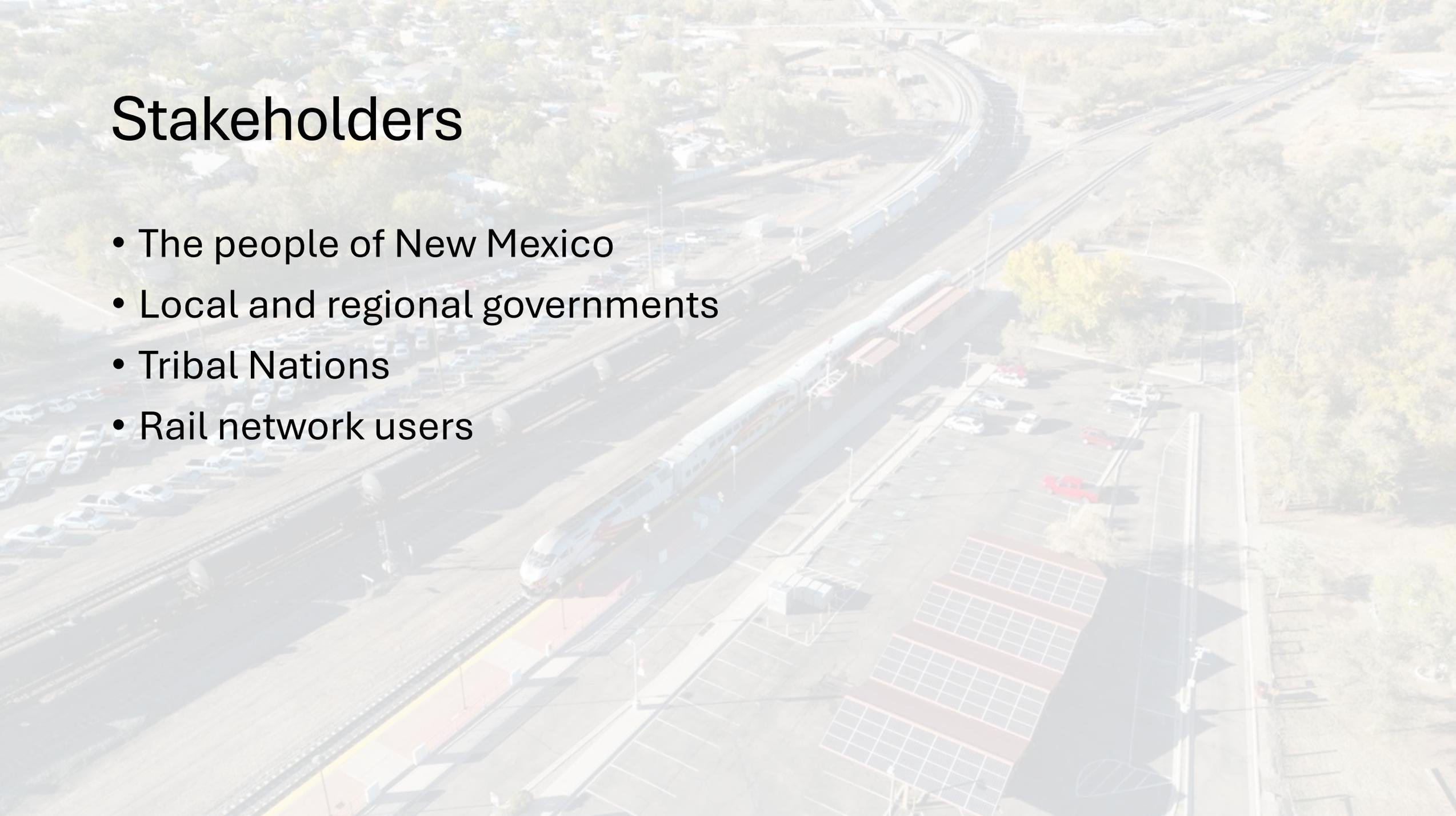


# About New Mexico's rail network

- Includes major transcontinental freight and passenger corridors
- In 2023, freight traffic density of 553 million gross tons
- In 2024, nearly 1,000,000 passengers carried



# Stakeholders

An aerial photograph of a train station. A high-speed train is stopped at the platform. To the right of the tracks, there is a large parking lot with several cars and a large array of solar panels. The background shows a residential area with houses and trees.

- The people of New Mexico
- Local and regional governments
- Tribal Nations
- Rail network users

# Vision – New Mexico rail network

- Is a fully-integrated and safe multimodal rail system
- Provides efficient passenger services to, from, and within the state
- Provides a competitive option for New Mexico shippers
- Is a vital component of the national transportation network
- Supports sustainable and inclusive economic development statewide

# Goal: Support economic growth and development

- Promote rail-related tourism
- Increase capacity and efficiency of long-distance freight corridors
- Develop and promote local freight connections and industrial sites
- Link rail investments to strategies that support economic development

# Goal: Improve railroad safety and security

- Continue improvements for safety at highway-rail at-grade crossings
- Reduce impacts of rail crossings on local mobility
- Improve rail security

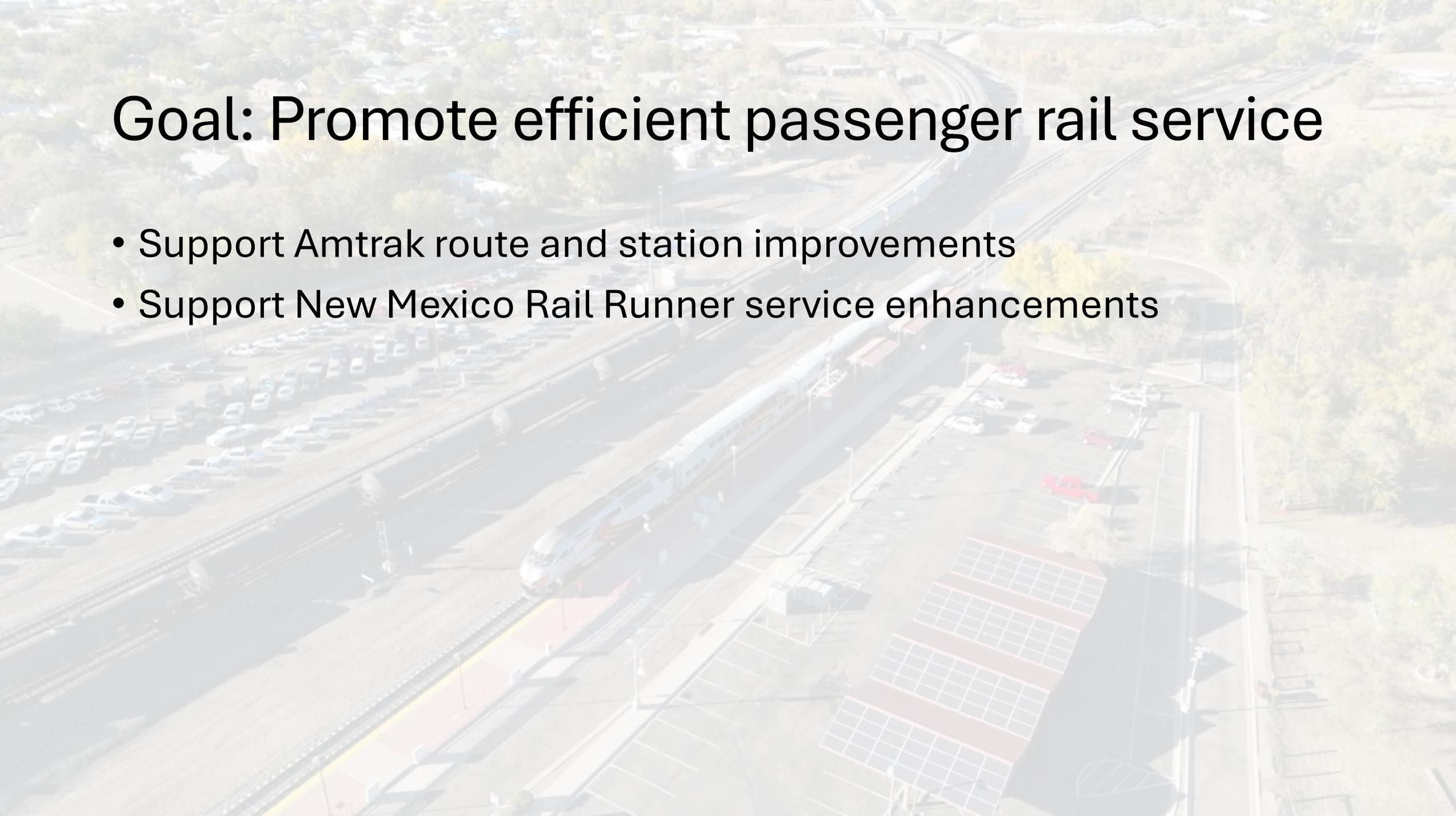
# Goal: Maintain railroad assets in a state of good repair

- Improve conditions of the state's short rail lines
- Maintain and improve the conditions of the NMRX rail lines



# Goal: Promote efficient passenger rail service

- Support Amtrak route and station improvements
- Support New Mexico Rail Runner service enhancements



# Outcome: Rail Service and Investment Program (RSIP)

- Program of projects awarded or seeking Federal funding, typically passenger rail projects
- Short-Range Investment Program (2025-2030)
- Long-Range Investment Program (2031-2045)

# RSIP: Short-Term Investments

- Planning studies
- NMRX rolling stock replacements
- Infrastructure maintenance and smaller construction projects
  - Crossing equipment
  - Bridge design work
  - Trainyard access projects and sidings to improve train operations in Los Lunas and Belen
- Amtrak service and station improvements
  - Restore bus connections (El Paso – Albuquerque, Denver – Raton)
  - ADA improvements
- Grade Separated Crossing safety projects

# RSIP: Long-Term Investments (2031-2045)

- Continue to replace NMRX rolling stock
- Pursue additional capacity enhancements for more frequent Rail Runner service
- Support additional Amtrak service in New Mexico (i.e., El Paso-Albuquerque-Denver route)
- San Juan County Freight Line
- Santa Teresa International Rail Border Crossing
- Additional Grade Separated Crossing safety projects

# Next steps

- Draft plan available for public review through November 30
- <https://tinyurl.com/NMDraftRailPlanSept2025>



- Respond to comments received from public review
- Release the final New Mexico State Rail Plan
- Present the final plan to MPOs/RTPOs

# Contact Info

Kevin Olinger

NMDOT Transit and Rail Division Director

[Kevin.Olinger@dot.nm.gov](mailto:Kevin.Olinger@dot.nm.gov)

(505) 469-3595

[rail.plan@dot.nm.gov](mailto:rail.plan@dot.nm.gov)