THE NEW BLUEPRINT FOR RAIL-ENABLED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Innovation at the Heart of the 2021 Nevada State Rail Plan

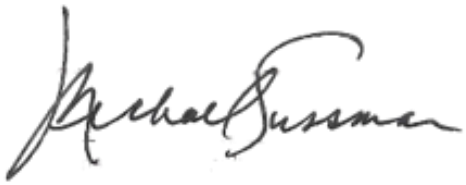
Moving from Reports to Results for Sustainable Supply Chains

Preface

For nearly three decades, as trusted advisors to railroads and communities, Strategic Rail Finance (SRF) and its affiliate, OnTrackNorthAmerica (OTNA), have advanced a new model of public–private sector planning and investment in railways. This innovative set of principles, practices, and tools, introduced here, represents a breakthrough for improving a state or region's rail infrastructure and economy while addressing pressing environmental and congestion issues.

This innovation formed the foundation of SRF and OTNA's groundbreaking 2021 Nevada State Rail Plan (NVSRP). Solving our current problems requires this new approach, which empowers business, government, and community leaders to collaborate for results rather than simply generating more studies and reports. Widespread adoption will facilitate the private-sector capitalization of expanded rail service, leading to a balanced transportation system and efficient supply chains that all states deserve.

You're invited to discover how this proven approach can work in your community, industry, or region—and why the time for transformation is now.



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Introduction: Why Innovate, and Why Now?

For decades, railroads have served as engines of growth across America, particularly in the West, where vast distances demanded efficient transportation. Yet today, we are facing a transportation crisis that is hiding in plain sight, impacting every American through higher prices, congested highways, and declining air quality.

The Scale of the Problem

The numbers tell a stark story. In 1916, the United States' rail route mileage reached its peak at 254,000 miles.[1] After a steady decline over the past century, the active network has receded to just 137,000 miles in 2020.[2] Today, trucks are the sole land freight option for nearly 80% of the nation's towns and cities.[3]

The result? Despite America having the world's most robust freight rail system, which generates approximately $95 billion in annual revenue, the trucking industry generates significantly more at $950 billion annually. This imbalance incurs enormous costs. Transportation has become our nation's largest source of harmful greenhouse gases, with freight transportation the fastest-growing contributor to pollution. As trucking consumes two to five times more fuel than rail for the same freight movement, continuing this trend will suffocate the nation under the weight of its logistics.

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[1] American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, source link, accessed May 14, 2025.

[2] Federal Railroad Administration, source link, accessed July 10, 2020.

[3] Source: Darren Roth, American Trucking Association, Interviewed by Author, September 27, 2019

Why Current Approaches Fail

These negative trends aren't inevitable—they persist because of unaddressed flaws in how we plan, design, and invest in supply chains. While America's excessive reliance on cars for passenger transport is often decried, the ongoing expansion of truck-centric supply chains is rarely examined.

The root cause is structural. Truck service has become ubiquitous because road infrastructure is provided as a public service—almost every new industrial project is instantly accommodated as if roads were a fundamental economic right. In contrast, freight rail service requires education, coordination, and private-sector investment to connect each shipper and receiver.

Federal and state freight transportation plans exacerbate the issue by concentrating narrowly on individual modes and projects. This strategy may have been effective when the frontier was expansive and resources appeared limitless, but that shortsightedness is now evident. Governments have mistakenly believed that market competition alone can generate efficient systems, confining their role to merely providing increased public funding for highway bottlenecks and maintenance.

The Consequences of Fragmented Planning

The results are clear upon further examination. In Nevada, only 4% of freight moving in, out, and through the state travels by rail to or from a Nevada business.[4] Biofuel facilities transport feedstock from California by truck and send their products back to California by truck, despite both states' environmental concerns. Tesla ships 60 tractor-trailers of auto components daily from Sparks, Nevada, to Fremont, California—even though both facilities have adjacent rail lines.

[4] STB Waybill Sample 2018; TRANSEARCH® Truck Data 2018

Production, distribution, and warehousing facilities are located through random commercial land transactions without considering transportation implications. The explosive growth of warehouses in Nevada to serve California's ports exemplifies this problem, increasing truck traffic and congestion while diminishing the quality of life in both states. Of Nevada's 137 warehouses, only one utilizes rail.

Moving from Reports to Results

These challenges require a fundamentally different approach. When the Nevada Department of Transportation engaged SRF, they opted to forge a new path that fulfills federal requirements while simultaneously advancing economic opportunities. From the very beginning, we committed to shaping a new future rather than producing another moment-in-time report.

Our preparation was thorough: we analyzed more than 100 state rail plans while overseeing rail project funding in 44 states over 30 years. This experience revealed that at this near-crisis moment, the model we advanced in Nevada must be scaled across the continent.

The solution requires rethinking industrial activity, freight transportation, and land use as interconnected systems that create efficient, sustainable supply chains—moving beyond simply transporting ever-increasing volumes of goods. Infrastructure investors worldwide are ready to fund innovative, commercially viable rail growth plans when positioned as the backbone of comprehensive industrial system investments.

On the Road to Sustainable Supply Chains—Contents

1. Design for Action and Prepare to Implement

Create dynamic plans that can be updated and enhanced over time.

A distinctive feature of this state rail plan is that stakeholders are engaged in a collaborative effort to contribute to its ongoing evolution and implementation. This contrasts with typical plans fixed in time and outdated as soon as they are submitted. We have developed an action plan for moving forward, rather than merely presenting a report based on past data. As real-life needs and conditions change, they can be integrated into the plan and communicated to stakeholders. This ensures that transportation networks and infrastructure projects continuously align with new economic and market data and shifting climate and community priorities.

This approach necessitates a structured implementation plan that extends beyond the plan submission to USDOT. In the case of the NVSRP, the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) entered into a next-phase contract with OTNA for implementation.

2. Radical Inclusion Amasses Synergy and Attracts Capital

Bring together all regions, shippers, properties, projects, and communities.

Effective statewide transportation investment must embrace as many stakeholders and projects as possible. Given transportation's outsized relevance to communities and the environment, it is important to

include stakeholders impacted by the system, not just those directly using it.

The NVSRP process began with a commitment to include the entire state in the effort. Indeed, this has proven to be achievable and productive. This commitment led to in-depth interviews with 375 (and counting) stakeholders and an additional 141 shippers. In contrast to typical stakeholder engagement, which is often limited to the perfunctory sending and collecting of questionnaires, our team engaged interviewees in down-to-earth, one-on-one conversations. These interactions surface valuable marketplace opportunities, which otherwise remain unseen in the typical planning process.

This firsthand research was bolstered by comprehensive satellite imagery and field inspections of the entire state's rail network. With this critical mass of on-the-ground data, business opportunities and economic development plans can be based on accurate knowledge of the physical characteristics that determine where rail goes, where it has been, and where it can now extend to existing and new commercial areas.

Due to limited public funding for transportation infrastructure, accepted logic suggests that state rail plans should prioritize certain projects while excluding others, based on the assumption that there isn't enough capital for all projects. Decision-making within this scarcity mindset then relies on ranking, comparing, and voting. Unfortunately, this raises a significant question: When are the "lesser" ranked projects and their communities supported and funded?

Given that ample private-sector capital exists for all worthwhile freight rail infrastructure investments, all projects, communities, and regions should be included. The NVSRP is based on the understanding that transportation operates most effectively when all its components are

part of comprehensive growth and improvement plans. Including all opportunities increases the feasibility and, therefore, the fundability of rail development plans. In fact, the viability of local rail operations is enhanced by the number and diversity of customers.

Every region, town, business, and project matters and should be identified, cataloged, and included, as was done in Nevada.

The NVSRP database categorizes Nevada into eight regions, distinguished by geography, governing districts, and the operational characteristics of the rail network. By segmenting the state's rail system and relevant data into eight logical regions, stakeholders can collaborate in teams focused on local rail development. Statewide discussions can also be convened effectively because all roles are clearly identified. The 550+ stakeholders cataloged within the database are organized by region, industry, and/or public service role, facilitating group discussions with the most suitable stakeholder representatives. This specificity respects stakeholders' time and energy, fosters trust and participation, and promotes long-term engagement.

We have developed comprehensive methods and tools to enhance this large-scale coordination and collaboration. Our inquiry-based methodology, IntelliSynthesis®, establishes a new framework for collaborative thinking that promotes meaningful exchanges of ideas and information among diverse stakeholders. IntelliSynthesis makes regional and statewide teamwork enormously productive. In addition to individual and group dialogues, stakeholders use our online platform, which conveniently accommodates contributions from their individual locations and schedules. IntelliSynthesis also turns any virtual or in-person stakeholder summit into a powerful opportunity for collective input and intelligence gathering.

3. The Right Tools Make the Right Data Actionable

Provide a complete set of rail development tools.

Raw data that informs is one level of usefulness; data that is made accessible and applicable is another. The NVSRP's objectives were achieved by integrating findings from data research and direct outreach into a multi-layer web map. This innovative tool provides stakeholders access to critical information not available in standard planning exercises, facilitating the insights and decisions necessary for building efficient and sustainable supply chains.

Accurate geographic representation is fundamental to the SRF/OTNA Mapping System. Below are some of the datasets we developed and mapped:

- All active and non-active rail sidings in Nevada
- All truckload shippers in the state
- All truckload shippers located adjacent to a rail line
- All commercial projects that could benefit from expanded rail service
- Opportunity zones
- Private-sector rail construction projects under consideration

The NVSRP's pioneering 12-layer digital mapping system displays the location, ownership, and contact information for each data category listed above, along with the precise routing of the entire rail network in relation to existing properties, buildings, topography, and landscape features. The mapping system provides access to a wide array of cataloged datasets, enabling stakeholders to further develop innovative uses for this comprehensive information.

Sharing data and practical insights with those who can use the information most effectively—economic development agencies, land developers, shippers, and transportation providers—empowers them to pinpoint business growth opportunities as well as new tenants and businesses that can take advantage of these opportunities.

By integrating traditional rail plan data with commercially relevant supply chain data, planners and stakeholders can identify new markets for distributing and sourcing goods and materials.

This transforms the fundamental concept of state rail plans—from accepting the inevitability of a future based on the past to creating a new future. Already, this tool has guided the routing of new rail lines in Nevada to provide service to key industrial properties and regions.

To advance transportation plans into this new era of relevance, it is crucial to acknowledge the fundamental shortcomings of the free, federally provided Freight Analysis Framework (FAF) data. This data offers geographic information only at the level of the 50 U.S. states and 173 BEA regional zones. In contrast, S&P Global's Transearch data reports at the level of over 3,000 U.S. counties.

FAF only reports freight commodity flows by tonnage, while Transearch data provides information on tonnage and the number of truck units. During the development of the 2021 NVSRP, SRF analyzed over 10.5 million truck trip records using multiple data sources. Approximately 4.1 million, or 40%, of these truck trips were empty return moves or secondary moves between warehouses and distribution centers. This statistically significant insight could not have been achieved through the exclusive use of FAF data, a common practice in public sector transportation plans.

While aspects of FAF data are helpful, producing results, not just reports, requires a more comprehensive set of private-sector data sources, such as Transearch Trucking, FreightWaves Sonar, and Panjiva.

Truck Data Is More Valuable than Rail Data in a Rail Plan

Traditional rail plans are filled with freight rail data. However, this data reflects currently successful rail freight movements with routings, frequency, and rates that work for shippers. Can this information reveal areas for improvement within a state's rail network? Minimally. Surprisingly, it is truck data that is most valuable in a rail plan. Truck shipment data offers a crucial insight into the bulk of a region's freight activity, guiding beneficial truck-to-rail conversion and enhancing modal balance. The 2021 Nevada State Rail Plan is based on a thorough analysis of rail and truck freight data.

4. Rail and Roads Are One System

Integrate to make the optimal use of each mode.

When rail mileage in the United States peaked in 1916 at 254,000 route miles, it became clear that an expanded road network connecting rail stations was necessary. However, the emerging trucking industry and the established rail sector were made to compete for commercial and policy focus, rather than collaborate for efficiency. Since then, little progress has been made toward establishing a balanced and symbiotic relationship between our rail and highway freight systems. Our country continues to face the consequences of that failure, as the U.S. rail network transports only 38.2% of the land freight ton-miles.

According to the USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the United States moved 17.8 billion tons of freight across all modes in 2015, with only 10% transported by rail and 65% by truck.

By 2045, U.S. freight transport is expected to increase by 40%, reaching 25 billion tons annually. Overreliance on truck transportation for this increased volume will heighten pollution and traffic congestion proportionately. Our goal is to enable as much future rail freight service as possible without limiting the viability or success of the trucking industry. To this end, neither Nevada nor any other state can afford to pit highway, air, pipeline, and railway transport modes against each other in public policy or the marketplace. The goal is not to “take trucks off the road,” as is often expressed. Truck transportation is a critical component of goods movement that must be optimally integrated with railroads.

Considering the relative impact of each mode of transportation on energy consumption, emissions, highway congestion, safety, road maintenance costs, noise, light pollution, and land use, effective planning is essential. Achieving a new sustainable balance will require thoughtful integration of productive collaboration with constructive competition. The only way to foster this level of shared productivity between trucking and railroading is through cooperation between all parties. Incorporating diverse perspectives leads to informed public policies and sustainable commercial practices. With that intention at its core , OTNA collaborates with the trucking industry to explore how improved rail service can enhance both the stability and profitability of trucking companies and the quality of life for truck drivers.

5. Focus on Whole Supply Chains, Not Just Individual Projects

Collaborate boldly across businesses, agencies, and industries.

During the extensive expansion of the national rail network in the 19th and early 20th centuries, individual local projects were developed within corridor and regional supply chain strategies. For instance, in 1878, James J. Hill, the esteemed railroad builder of the Great Northern Railway, envisioned a comprehensive supply chain system when assessing the opportunity to develop 1,600 miles of untapped forest and mineral resources between St. Paul, MN, and the Pacific Ocean. His supply chain-oriented approach to railroad development, typical of the era's rail leaders, has long been replaced by a narrow focus on individual projects and short-term results.

Nevada's early rail line development was also influenced by this emphasis on supply chains, from mine to factory and from farm to table. OTNA's freight system planning reintroduces regional supply chain strategies for the 21st century.

Case in Point: The Mining Materials Logistics Strategy

Nevada's mining industry is experiencing growth, yet it is underutilizing rail transportation, significantly limiting the viability of associated processing and manufacturing facilities that could be co-located in the state to enhance the industry's economic benefits.

Nevada's rail network has decreased from its 1914 peak of 2,418 route miles to its current 1,190 route miles. This track is almost entirely mainline along I-80 and I-15, with only a few minor branch lines. Like nearly all industries, the Nevada mining sector comprises entities that primarily operate independently. However, these enterprises can

achieve substantial economic efficiencies by collaborating on logistics planning for incoming and outgoing materials as part of a comprehensive supply chain system.

Designing rail infrastructure based on the needs and opportunities of individual businesses while integrating those needs into comprehensive plans can significantly improve transportation efficiency, business profitability, and supply chain sustainability. Adopting a rail-enabled logistics strategy for extracting, producing, and transporting strategic minerals and products will generate a high return on investment in Nevada. This logistics strategy is detailed in Chapter 4 of the NVSRP.

The NVSRP team developed the Mining Materials Logistics Strategy with input from the Nevada Mining Association, the Nevada Bureau of Mines, the Mackay School of Earth Sciences and Engineering at the University of Nevada, and the top mining companies in the state. All parties are interested in exploring this logical strategy.

6. Railroads and Supply Chains Do Not Begin or End at State Lines

A new model that accounts for interstate supply chain dynamics is critical.

The expanding economic relationship between Nevada and California has highlighted the inefficiencies stemming from haphazard or nonexistent multi-state planning. Commercial land development for warehouse and distribution facilities in Nevada, which primarily serve California, has resulted in only one out of 137 warehouses in Nevada utilizing rail transportation. The California–Nevada commerce driving this demand has become so robust that 70% of all trucks moving in Nevada are coming from or going to California.

Because this truck-centric growth predominantly occurs just east and south of Las Vegas and east and north of Reno-Sparks, the resulting increase in California-related traffic exacerbates highway congestion, safety concerns, and air quality issues in Nevada's two major metropolitan areas. Additionally, snow on I-80 at the Donner Pass—the only east-west truck route through the Sierra Mountains—frequently delays and reroutes truck movements, adding uncertainty and freight transportation costs for businesses in both states.

Regional and Corridor Planning Beyond State Lines: The Southwest Supply Chain Coalition as a Model

Nevada's rail-enabled economic development can only progress through fruitful collaboration across state lines with California, Utah, and Arizona's public agencies, port authorities, economic developers, businesses, communities, and transportation providers.

SRF and OTNA established the Southwest Supply Chain Coalition to support the multistate implementation of the NVSRP. This process started with identifying, cataloging, and engaging stakeholders from both the public and private sectors in all four states, including Caltrans, the Port of Long Beach, the Port of Oakland, and the Utah Inland Port Authority.

The SSCC would assume responsibility for:

- Leading the vision for progressive rail development
- Convening and facilitating stakeholders as partners
- Educating and guiding stakeholders for maximum effectiveness
- Recruiting and managing a team of experts
- Delivering logistics and railroad advisory services
- Managing the elements of plan execution
- Maintaining a large set of community and commercial relationships
- Establishing the SSCC Industrial Rail Development Fund

7. Smart Logistics Drives Sustainable Economic Development

Integrate rail planning with economic development.

Across the country, transportation departments and economic development agencies often work independently on issues that co-influence rail development. Specialized education that integrates knowledge of railroads, supply chains, and economic development is seldom available in academia, professional training, or the marketplace. Consequently, logistics-oriented economic growth has stagnated, and transportation efficiency has declined. This shortcoming is at the root of countless missed opportunities, yet it presents an ideal opening for historic rail-enabled economic progress. How many industries have a complete infrastructure of public sector agencies dedicated to their success? Almost every state and the federal government have a rail department tasked with supporting rail industry service and safety. Now is the time for a new era of commercially astute, public-private collaboration among these transportation departments, economic development agencies, local planners, transportation providers, shippers, and communities.

Service Through the State Is Different than Service to the State

Gaps in public policy and pressure from Wall Street have inadvertently fostered a Class I railroad business model thar prioritizes long-haul rail traffic, resulting in limited local pickup and delivery. Shortline and regional rail companies operating parts of the rail network in many states have partially bridged this local rail service gap. However, Nevada lacks Class II (Regional) or III (Shortline) rail providers. As a

result, 83% of all rail traffic in Nevada passes through the state without stopping. This pass-through dynamic is prevalent in most states.

While ensuring that long-haul rail traffic navigates Nevada safely and efficiently is crucial, it is equally essential for businesses and communities within the state to benefit from more local and direct rail connections and transloading opportunities. Union Pacific Railroad and BNSF, the two rail carriers managing this long-haul traffic, operate responsibly while contributing millions in property and fuel taxes to the state. That said, to develop a rail system that better serves the state, the NVSRP concentrates on projects that assist local shippers and land developers.

8. Freight Transportation and Land-Use Planning Must Be Inseparable

Site selection must consider transportation to and from properties.

Land available for development is now recognized as a valuable resource in short supply. Nevadans quickly point out that the federal government owns approximately 86% of the state through the Bureau of Land Management, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Forest Service. Continuous population and economic growth necessitate the optimization of limited private land and the space required for transporting goods and people. Given the significant difference in the amount of space needed to move goods on highways compared to railroads (27 miles of trucks are necessary to move the same goods as a one-mile train), a balanced and efficient system demands land-use planning that accounts for externalized impacts. Since freight-oriented development stimulates the long-distance movement of goods and workers, land-use planning must

concentrate on travel to and from a property as well as the activities occurring at the property.

Land-use planning guided by zoning regulations and codes has long been accepted in residential and commercial development and transit. There is much to be gained by instituting a parallel set of land-use practices for industrial development and freight transportation. Doing so will maximize commercial productivity while minimizing land use for roads. Effective land-use planning will reduce the community and environmental impact of moving goods.

For instance, it makes sense for land along rail rights-of-way to be preserved for rail-served commercial development. This is similar to municipal regulations that communities enact to protect land along beautiful lakefronts for appropriate uses. The NVSRP team engaged extensively with the Nevada State Land Use Planning Advisory Council and its county representatives, who recognized the strategic value of integrating road and rail infrastructure, industrial and logistics facilities, and energy production and distribution. The aim of this strategy is to:

- Make the best use of land for moving goods while limiting industrial sprawl
- Expand freight capacity while lessening transport congestion
- Lower the carbon footprint of goods movement
- Minimize noise and visual pollution
- Address the need for new energy distribution corridors
- Maximize accessibility to the most efficient freight transport mode for the state’s communities and businesses.

9. Present Transportation Providers with a Compelling Growth Plan

Offer Class I railroads a timely business opportunity.

This is the most crucial element of the Nevada State Rail Plan. We must continue to promote a statewide, business-friendly approach to modern rail development that is financially attractive to Union Pacific Railroad and BNSF. By consolidating opportunities into comprehensive state, regional, and corridor rail development plans, Union Pacific and BNSF will be better equipped to provide the flexibility necessary to enhance local and regional service.

Class I's openness to rail development aligns with current rail industry dynamics and global affairs. These companies have a renewed focus on 1) revenue growth, 2) catering to the expanding North American consumer economy,[5] 3) supporting the reshoring of U.S. manufacturing,[6] and 4) contributing to a more balanced market share with trucks. The rail industry's previous emphasis on longer haul lengths has led to reduced service between California and Nevada; however, it is now adapting to incorporate shorter hauls in viable lanes.

Nevada's rapid industrial growth, along with its warehouses, strategic minerals, bioresources, sustainable energy, and proximity to California, presents a significant opportunity for expanding rail service. Increasing export volumes are driving transloading practices—transferring international container contents into domestic trailers before inland transit to ensure a faster return of scarce 40-foot containers. Both Union Pacific and BNSF are exploring new intermodal "inland ports"

[5] Railway Age Podcast: "The Future of Freight" with CN's JJ Ruest, source link, published May 29, 2020.
[6] Reshoring Initiative, Reshoring Initiative 2018 Data Report, page 1, source link, accessed May 14, 2025.

with shuttle trains to and from West Coast ports, positioning Nevada and other Southwest states favorably to establish these inland logistics hubs.

However, rail business development requires a thorough education program for shippers, landowners, and economic development leaders, often beginning with basic railroading principles. Without this foundation, decision-makers tend to default to increased reliance on trucks when faced with the complexities and uncertainties of rail. The significant attention railroads once dedicated to local business development can be revitalized through the Southwest Supply Chain Coalition model. Presenting citizens and communities with the NVSRP's comprehensive rail-enabled economic development strategy fosters the crucial support needed for expanding rail service.

10. Government Does Not Have to Fund Freight Rail Development

Attract private investment with comprehensive regional and corridor strategies.

Railroads and shippers are income-generating enterprises that attract private-sector funding. Investment in any state's rail projects becomes viable when infrastructure development supports a coherent aggregation of projects and customers across a region or corridor. Infrastructure investors and lenders managing hundreds of billions in capital will eagerly finance individual projects within the NVSRP's commercially relevant planning framework.

By carefully reimagining infrastructure investment, progress can be aligned with the goals of both the private and public sectors. Public-private partnerships that integrate policy, planning, and funding

improvements are essential for developing infrastructure that delivers a high return for all stakeholders. Rather than relying on typical infrastructure strategies applied to publicly owned roads and highways, limited public sector funds can be combined with private capital to turn infrastructure “costs” into investment opportunities. The NVSRP team identified over 50 private-sector rail growth investment projects, including significant mining, agricultural, and land development.

The NVSRP focuses on regional and corridor rail-enabled economic development plans because the marketplace alone doesn’t foster the necessary collaboration. However, discussions regarding collaboration with individual project sponsors have yielded overwhelmingly positive feedback. The concept of sharing new proprietary rail facilities with businesses across various industries has been met with enthusiasm. Public planners and economic developers also value collaborating with other agencies, towns, and counties to support shared interests. Stakeholders from across the political and commercial spectrum are eager to participate in this collaborative success.

Conclusion

Nothing in the 190-year history of railroading in the United States has made it any less essential to a strong economy and thriving communities. No new technologies are on the horizon, including autonomous trucks, that could replace railroads as the low-impact, sustainable method for transporting heavy loads over land. America's early 20th-century shift to roads as the primary focus of transportation investment has not diminished railroads' enduring efficiency.

OTNA is promoting the NVSRP model as a catalyst for rail-enabled economic development across the continent. Society faces an urgent need to significantly reduce the negative environmental impacts of industrial activity while continuing to expand economic opportunities. Transforming the supply chain is crucial for Nevada and North America. The NVSRP provides a blueprint for this change. Furthermore, it shows that the government does not need to be the primary funder of new rail infrastructure. When transportation providers embrace this comprehensive growth strategy, private investors are ready to finance rail service expansion. Achieving sustainable progress is possible by applying this common-sense approach to our planning and investment strategies.

Your knowledge, perspectives, and accountabilities likely render you a stakeholder in applying these principles to Nevada or another region. We invite and welcome your feedback and inquiries. Thank you for considering this commitment to logic, sustainability, and railroads.

Sustainability Commitment

- We believe the return-on-investment analysis of economic development must account for all environmental and community impacts.
- We acknowledge that some projects generate a degree of negative impact, often unavoidable to achieve a positive net contribution.
- We support investments in projects that enable the transition from the overuse of fossil fuels, petrochemicals, and water, while acknowledging the pragmatic challenges on the journey to a cleaner economy. We guide our clients to align their investment horizons with the evolution of these markets.
- We advise clients to relate proactively with community stewards, whose influence on advancing or blocking projects makes them valuable partners.
- Including everyone who benefits from or is impacted by a project is critical to the successful design and implementation.

There are four steps to evaluating every project for alignment with these values.

1. The commodities, activities, and impacts of each project are cataloged.
2. For nuanced and complex projects, we conduct research to gain a full understanding of environmental and community impacts.
3. We share our findings with the team and the client to invite all perspectives.
4. Together, we decide how to properly influence the project's sustainability.

We hold ourselves accountable to future generations by working only on projects that align with a sustainable environment and healthy communities

Views on the 2021 Nevada State Rail Plan from State Leaders…

"Now is the time to better utilize rail to make Nevada a leading center for intelligent logistics and commerce, resulting in economic prosperity and sustainability for every Nevadan."

~ Perry Ursem, VP of Business Retention and Expansion
Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance

"And most importantly, I want to say how much I appreciate that NNRDA has been allowed to provide so much input in this process."

~ Sheldon Mudd, Executive Director
Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority

"Supply chains extend beyond individual companies, beyond individual industries, and beyond state borders. Strategic Rail Finance has pinpointed how the supply chains of California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona are inextricably linked and yet growing chaotically."

~ Kris Sanchez, Deputy Director
Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development

"While traditional economic development practices often create competition amongst states to win the next deal, we believe that through focused and thoughtful partnerships, greater sustainable economic vitality can be achieved."

~ Steve Sisolak, Nevada Governor