

Heartland Flyer Extension Infrastructure Needs Assessment

BNSF has provided the preliminary capital investment costs to operate the proposed Amtrak service connecting Newton, KS to Oklahoma City, OK based on current freight rail traffic and capacity. While this is an important step forward, the State still needs significant information to evaluate establishing Heartland Flyer service. A summary of the estimated preliminary capital investment costs and likely next steps are outlined below.

Preliminary capital investment cost: The preliminary cost estimates to improve BNSF rail infrastructure are based on current freight traffic and current capacity levels. Note – these costs do not include station stops (e.g., platforms, station buildings, station operating costs, etc.).

The total infrastructure cost for 79mph service is **\$124.4 million**, including:

- Kansas rail improvements **\$31.2 million**
- Oklahoma rail improvements **\$93.2 million**

These costs include:

- \$28.8M (across both states) for upgrades necessary for 79mph operating speed
- \$15.8M for an extension of a siding on the Arkansas City, BNSF Kansas subdivision rail (2.3 miles)
- \$79.8M for an extension of a siding near Oklahoma City (4 miles – includes 5 bridges)

The reason the needed Kansas investment is substantially less than the Oklahoma investment is because BNSF is currently investing in track improvements and additions from Emporia to Wellington that result in improved freight flows on the rail corridor between Newton and Mulvane. This reduces the need to expand track infrastructure along that corridor which was originally outlined in previous assessments.

Additional analysis based on future freight capacity is still in development and will be necessary for future planning of the service.

Next Steps: There are several key next steps in the planning process for this service.

1. Discuss these cost estimates with our partner state, Oklahoma, because infrastructure improvements will be required within their state borders. KDOT has been in consistent communication with Oklahoma Department of Transportation officials regarding this service and will maintain that communication as information becomes available.
2. Develop an updated service development plan. This is a necessary step to fully understand the resources needed to implement and operate the service.
 - KDOT will partner with Amtrak, stakeholders including communities and agencies to update the service development plan which that will guide future implementation of the service.
 - Funding for Amtrak start-up costs will be needed along with the infrastructure investment that BNSF requires, and the annual operating cost.
 - Local partnerships are also vital as commitments from local communities are necessary for future action. Communities that have stops in the updated Service Development
 - Plan will need to commit to investing in station stops and necessary investment for the service.

3. BNSF will need to complete the second phase of the infrastructure needs assessment that focuses on *a future growth scenario* (instead of the current scenario for which we now have cost estimates) to provide final cost estimates necessary for future implementation of the service. Note: BNSF will not complete the final analysis until a commitment of state or local funding is made to establish the Heartland Flyer service on the corridor. In order to demonstrate that commitment, we need to secure commitments from Oklahoma and the station stop communities.

4. KDOT and communities need to explore regional support for the investment in passenger rail at upcoming local consult meetings because an investment of this magnitude is consistent with modernization and expansion projects on the highway system. KDOT is pleased to have the first modal project to be considered alongside highway projects – this represents a positive step in viewing our transportation system and investments from a multi-modal perspective.

5. It should also be noted that KDOT is working in good faith from preliminary cost estimates and as information is released to KDOT, we will maintain transparency and keep stakeholders informed of any progress.

If you have any questions please contact Chris Herrick, Chris.Herrick@ks.gov .