

2026 National Rail Crossing Conference

April 6-9

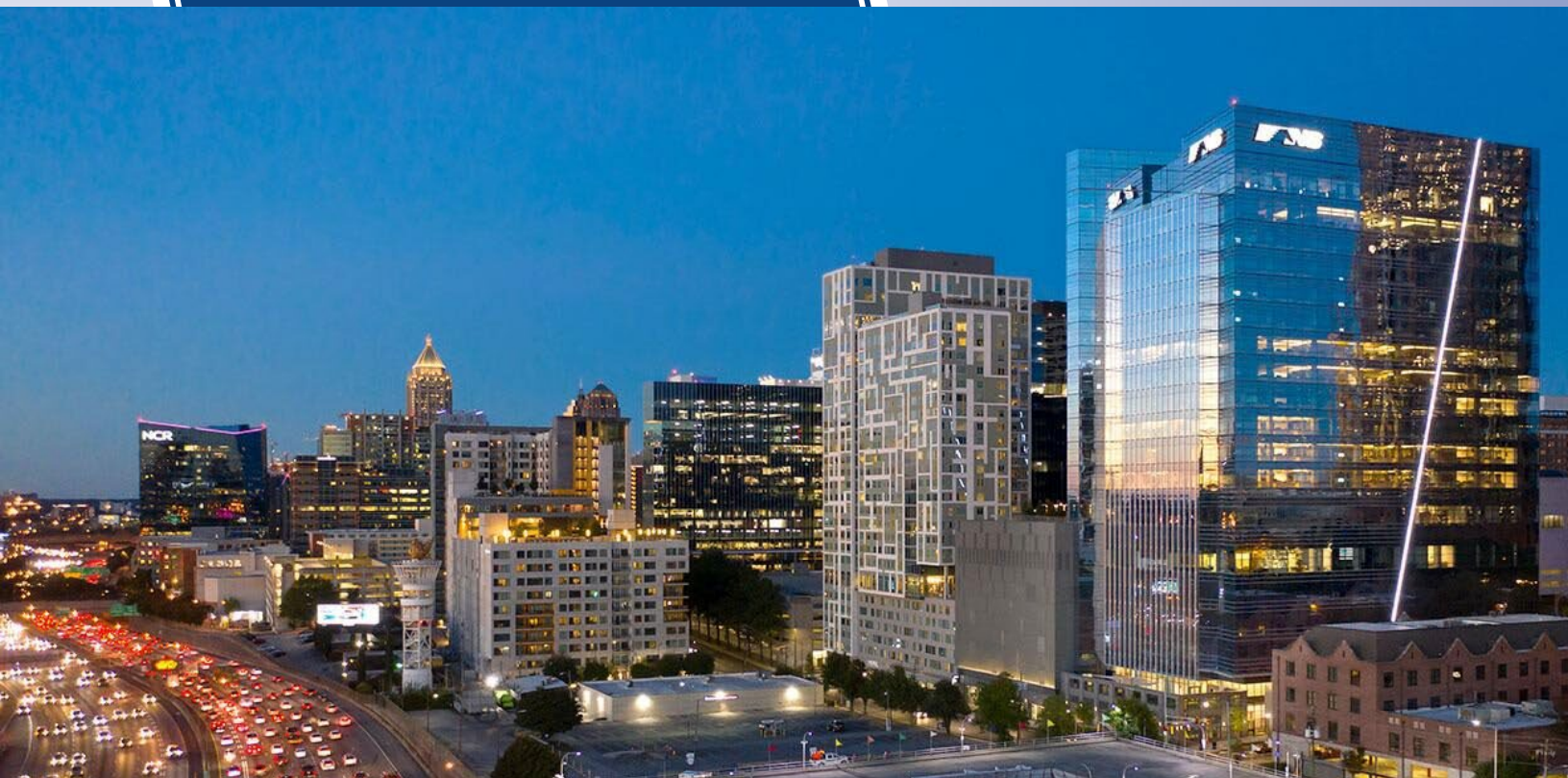
Atlanta, Georgia

Georgia Tech Hotel &
Convention Center

Preliminary

AGENDA

Subject to change



Georgia Tech.
Hotel & Conference Center



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Railroad Administration

Monday, April 6, 2026

3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | [Foyer](#)
Registration

6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. | [Restaurant, Ground Floor](#)
Welcome Reception, Cocktail Hour

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. | [Restaurant, Ground Floor](#)
Welcome Reception, Dinner

All are welcome, including spouses, to meet with your fellow attendees and colleagues as we prepare for a full day of informative sessions that begins Tuesday morning. The cocktail hour and dinner are business attire and will be held in the main conference room. The Executive Planning Committee members are slated to provide welcoming remarks.

Jason Mobley, Georgia Department of Transportation

Jim Dahlem, Federal Railroad Administration

Frank Frey, Federal Railroad Administration

Matt Bond, California Public Utilities Commission

Allan Rutter, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

Tuesday, April 7, 2026

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | [Foyer](#)
Registration

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | [Foyer and Ballroom A](#)
Exhibitor Booths

Please visit our exhibitors.

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. | [Restaurant, Ground Floor](#)
Breakfast

Breakfast is included for all registered attendees.

8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)
Welcoming Address and Safety Briefing

The Executive Planning Committee will welcome attendees, go over any housekeeping items, and provide a safety briefing for all attendees.

Jason Mobley, Georgia Department of Transportation

Jim Dahlem, Federal Railroad Administration

Frank Frey, Federal Railroad Administration

Matt Bond, California Public Utilities Commission

Allan Rutter, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

8:15 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)
Keynote Speakers – Setting the Stage

You'll hear our keynote speakers open our event and discuss the latest trends in the industry as told from the leadership perspective.

9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)
Operation Lifesaver, Inc.

Learn about the latest crossing safety trends and outreach initiatives.

Rachel Maleh, Executive Director, OLI

9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | [Foyer](#)
Mid-Morning Break

Refreshments will be provided and please visit our exhibitors.

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)
Overview of Traffic Signal Preemption

Understand how preemption is used at crossings near traffic signals. This overview will cover when preemption is used, how the preemption timing is determined, and new industry practices in use.

Nicole Jackson, Benesch

Karen Hankinson, Olsson

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | [Restaurant, Ground Floor](#)
Lunch

Lunch will be provided and please visit our exhibitors.

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)
International Update

Hear from our partners around the globe on the latest in crossing safety. We'll have representatives from six countries on four continents including Australia, Japan, Germany, Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Canada.

Moderator: Allan Spence, Chair of the UIC Global Crossing Network (GLCN)

2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)
Humped Crossing Database

Explore the new humped crossing database used to identify locations where low-profile vehicles may be at a higher risk of getting hung up and stuck on crossings. Also, see the latest in research on how FRA has built this database using LIDAR.

Francesco Bedini, Federal Railroad Administration

3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. | Foyer

Afternoon Break

Refreshments will be provided and please visit our exhibitors.

3:15 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Grand Ballroom

Diagnostic Review Process

The Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) has developed a diagnostic process that emphasizes collaboration, technical expertise, and regulatory alignment. Rather than prescribing rigid procedures, UDOT empowers diagnostic teams—comprising UDOT staff, railroads, local roadway authorities, and other stakeholders—to apply their professional judgment in identifying safety improvements and operational needs.

Tyler Schmidt, Utah DOT

Travis Bailey, Olsson

Lance Kippen, Olsson

4:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Grand Ballroom

Autonomous Train Operation Technology

Learn about the latest development utilizing self-propelled, zero-emission, battery-electric rail vehicles to transport freight without train locomotive engineers, autonomously, along the freight corridor, including negotiating through grade crossing locations.

Frank Frey, Federal Railroad Administration

5:00 p.m. | Atlanta

Dinner on Your Own

Enjoy Atlanta! For information on the arts, entertainment, sports, and culinary scene in the area, please see the Explore Georgia website at:

<https://exploregeorgia.org/city/atlanta>

Or scan the QR Code:



Wednesday, April 8, 2026

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Foyer

Registration

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. | Foyer and Ballroom A

Exhibitor Booths

Please visit our exhibitors.

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. | Restaurant, Ground Floor

Breakfast

Breakfast is included for all registered attendees.

8:00 a.m. – 8:15 a.m. | Grand Ballroom

Housekeeping

The Executive Planning Committee will recap and wrap-up the previous day, plus repeat the safety briefing for all attendees.

8:15 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. | Grand Ballroom

Coffee Hour, 10 Minute Quick Hits to Start the Day

Learn about some new ideas being implemented nationwide. Each topic will show a 10-minute overview, with 10 minutes at the end for questions of the panel.

- Inventory data best-practices
FRA and NCDOT
- Left-turn gates
Matt Bond, California Public Utilities Commission
- Traininfo blocked crossing detection
Gareth Remple, Traininfo
- Wireless crossings
Caltrain
- Amtrak loss-of-shunt research
Amtrak
- Questions of the panel

9:15 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. | Grand Ballroom

Florida Rail Safety Coalition

Learn about a unique partnering initiative that Florida DOT has initiated, and how this can be a model for other states.

Kelli Phillips, Florida DOT

9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Foyer

Mid-Morning Break

Refreshments will be provided and please visit our exhibitors.

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Class I Railroad Updates

Hear an overview of Class I crossing safety programs and priorities, and they'll also be an opportunity to ask questions for the panel.

Cherita Hunter, NS
Chris Keckeisen, UP
Will Roseborough, CSX
French Thompson, BNSF
CN
Annka O'Brien, CPKC

11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Rail Bikes

Learn about how rail bike companies have proliferated a lot in the last few years. Hear about the risks associated with them, and how agencies are dealing with the issue.

Frank Frey, Federal Railroad Administration

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | [Restaurant, Ground Floor](#)

Lunch

Lunch will be provided and please visit our exhibitors.

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Autonomous Vehicles and Rail Crossings

You'll learn about the latest in research and development, regulatory issues, and safety data trends with the growing use of autonomous vehicles and how they interact with rail crossing.

Allan Rutter, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Top 100 High-Risk Crossing Initiative – Nationwide with FRA & State Partners

Hear an overview of FRA's initiative to address safety at high-risk crossings nationwide.

Jim Dahlem, Federal Railroad Administration
Frank Frey, Federal Railroad Administration

2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | [Foyer](#)

Afternoon Break

Refreshments will be provided and please visit our exhibitors.

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Design of Intersections and Pedestrian Treatments for Light Rail

Learn about the unique and complex design that went into the Maryland Purple Line light rail currently under construction. This presentation will share how preemption was used at intersections, how pedestrians were incorporated into the design, and new innovative equipment and technology will improve safety on this new light rail transit corridor.

Rick Campbell, Benesch

4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Overview and Updates to the Section 130 Program

This overview will show new updates to the funding program, what projects are eligible, how states can most effectively use the program funds, and noteworthy-practices from around the country.

FHWA

4:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Hoy A. Richards Career Achievement Award Presentation

This award recognizes a career of exemplary achievement milestones in improving safety at level-grade crossings.

Presented by: Allan Rutter, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

6:00 p.m. | [Final Details Coming Soon!](#)

Evening Reception and Networking Event

Join us for a relaxed night out at a historic Atlanta institution. You will enjoy complimentary food, beverages, and a fun atmosphere where you can network and also enjoy part of what makes Atlanta unique! This event is included for all registered attendees. In additions, spouses and guests of attendees may register and attend for an additional fee.

Information about the transportation to and from the event will be provided at a later date.

Thursday, April 9, 2026

7:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | [Foyer](#)

Registration

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. | [Restaurant, Ground Floor](#)

Breakfast

Breakfast is included for all registered attendees.

8:00 a.m. – 8:10 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Housekeeping

The Executive Planning Committee will recap and wrap-up the previous day, plus repeat the safety briefing for all attendees.

8:10a.m. – 9:10 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

“Money, Money, Money” – FRA Grant Programs

After hearing this week about projects, new technologies, and best-practices, now learn how to pay for those improvements. You will gain an understanding of the various grant programs offered by FRA, including who can apply for them, what types of projects are eligible, and what prior years’ programs have yielded.

FRA Office of Railroad Development

9:10 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Research Update

Learn about the latest research in rail-highway crossings going on at the USDOT Volpe Center. This will provide a great snapshot into what new technologies or practices are under development and may be coming to a crossing near you in the future.

Marco DaSilva, USDOT Volpe Center

9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | [Foyer](#)

Mid-Morning Break

Refreshments will be provided and please visit our exhibitors.

10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Pedestrian Crossing Safety

Learn about the latest in pedestrian safety accident trends at crossings and what types of countermeasures are being used to mitigate the risks. Also, you’ll hear how our partners at other agencies such as NHTSA have been working to improve pedestrian safety.

Jim Dahlem, FRA

Matt Bond, CPUC

NHTSA

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Open Session – Odds & Ends

This is your chance to ask questions of any topics that was not covered, or to revisit a topic already discussed. This could be anything such as (but not limited to) Quiet Zones, Emergency Notification System (ENS) Sign, Grade Crossing Handbook, GXAPS, Reg Reform Updates, AREMA, etc..

Moderated by: Executive Planning Committee

11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | [Grand Ballroom](#)

Closing Remarks

The Executive Planning Committee will recap the event with closing remarks, and they talk about updates for the next workshop and other upcoming events.

Jason Mobley, Georgia Department of Transportation

Jim Dahlem, Federal Railroad Administration

Frank Frey, Federal Railroad Administration

Matt Bond, California Public Utilities Commission

Allan Rutter, Texas A&M Transportation Institute

12:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Lunch will be on your own. Please travel safely and thank you for attending.

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Notes

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Thank you for attending!



2026 National Rail Crossing Conference

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