Railroad Information Sheets

For Local Public Agencies

May 12, 2026

Iowa Department of Transportation
Local Systems Bureau
800 Lincoln Way
Ames, IA 50010

Introduction

The following Railroad Information Sheets are designed for LPA's to gather information for projects that will involve coordination with a Railroad. If you have questions, contact Jenifer Bates in the Local Systems Bureau, at 515.766.9402 or Jenifer.Bates@iowadot.us.

To determine the appropriate railroad contact person, refer to the Railroad Public Works Contacts provided by the Iowa DOT Rail Transportation Bureau.

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Burlington Northern and Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway

Specification

DS-23057, Work on Railroad Right-of-Way (BNSF Railway)

LPA Notification to Railroad

Submit a letter to the BNSF with a set of plans and a copy of the proposed Special Provision. For projects let at the Iowa DOT, or locally let projects using the Iowa DOT's Standard Specifications, notify the BNSF a minimum of 2 months in advance of the turn-in for letting. For projects not using the Iowa DOT's Standard Specifications, notify the BNSF a minimum of 4 months in advance of turn-in for letting, and provide a copy of the specifications that will be utilized as part of the notification packet. The BNSF Railway has a website regarding Public Projects, that has various requirements listed: http://www.bnsf.com/in-the-community/public-projects/.

Railroad Flaggers

Flagging protection is generally required during any operation involving direct and potential interference with BNSF's tracks or traffic. This may include, but is not limited to, fouling of railroad operating clearances, reasonable proximity of accidental hazard to railroad traffic, work within 25 feet horizontally of the nearest track, any work over or under any railroad track, or in any other condition that BNSF deems protective services necessary, which may include work on or off BNSF's property more than 25 feet from the nearest centerline of a railroad track, such as any equipment extension (including but not limited to a crane boom) that will reach or has the potential to reach within 25 feet of any track. The Contractor needs to provide the BNSF's Roadmaster a minimum of 30 days advance notice of flagging services. The Contractor is billed directly by the Railroad. The LPA will reimburse the Contractor all daily cost in excess of $1,600/day through a Change Order processed in accordance with Article 1109.03 of the Iowa DOT Standard Specifications.

Bid Items

The following bid item(s) will need to be added to the plans.

2595-0005105, Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for BNSF Railway Co.

Canadian National Railroad

The Canadian National Railroad is also the owner of the Chicago, Central and Pacific Railroad and Cedar River Railroad (CCP) and the Iowa Northern Railway Company.

Specification

DS-23086, Construction or Maintenance Work on Railroad Right-of-Way (Chicago, Central & Pacific Railroad Company, Cedar River Railroad Company, and Iowa Northern Railway Company).

LPA Notification to Railroad

Submit a letter to the CCP with a set of plans and a copy of the DS referenced above. For projects let at the Iowa DOT or locally let projects using the Iowa DOT's Standard Specifications, notify the CCP a minimum of 2 months in advance of the turn-in for letting. For projects not using the Iowa DOT's Standard Specifications, notify the CCP a minimum of 4 months in advance of turn-in for letting, and provide a copy of the specifications that will be utilized as part of the notification packet.

Railroad Flaggers

Flagging protection is generally required during any operation involving direct and potential interference with CCP's tracks or traffic. This may include, but is not limited to, fouling of railroad operating clearances, reasonable proximity of accidental hazard to railroad traffic, work within 25 feet horizontally of the nearest track, any work over any railroad track, or in any other condition that CCP deems protective services necessary, which may include work on or off CCP's property more than 25 feet from the nearest centerline of a railroad track, such as any equipment extension (including but not limited to a crane boom) that will reach or has the potential to reach within 25 feet of any track. The contractor will need to pay for flaggers in advance, based on the Contractor's estimated time for needing protective services. The LPA will reimburse the Contractor all daily cost in excess of $2,500/day through a Change Order processed in accordance with Article 1109.03 of the Iowa DOT Standard Specifications.

Bid Items

The following bid item(s) will need to be added to the plans.

2595-0005120, Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for Chicago, Central and Pacific Railroad Company/Cedar River Railroad Company/Iowa Northern Railway Company.

Canadian Pacific Railway

The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPKC) is also the owner of the Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad.

Specification

DS-23087 Construction or Maintenance Work on Railroad Right-of-Way (Dakota, Minnesota, & Eastern Railroad Corporation dba CPKC)

LPA Notification to Railroad

Submit a letter to the CPKC with a set of plans and a copy of the proposed Special Provision. For projects let at the Iowa DOT or locally let projects using the Iowa DOT's Standard Specifications, notify the CPKC a minimum of 2 months in advance of the turn-in for letting. For projects not using the Iowa DOT's Standard Specifications, notify the CPKC a minimum of 4 months in advance of turn-in for letting, and provide a copy of the specifications that will be utilized as part of the notification packet.

Railroad Flaggers

Flagging protection is generally required during any operation involving direct and potential interference with CPKC's tracks or traffic. This may include but is not limited to fouling of railroad operating clearances, reasonable proximity of accidental hazard to railroad traffic, work within 50 feet horizontally of the nearest track, any work over any railroad track, or in any other condition that CPKC deems protective services necessary, which may include work on or off CPKC's property more than 50 feet from the nearest centerline of a railroad track, such as any equipment extension (including but not limited to a crane boom) that will reach or has the potential to reach within 50 feet of any track. The contractor will need to pay for flaggers in advance, based on the Contractor's estimated time for needing protective services. The LPA will reimburse the Contractor all daily cost in excess of $1,200/day through a Change Order processed in accordance with Article 1109.03 of the Iowa DOT Standard Specifications.

Bid Items

The following bid item(s) will need to be added to the plans.

2595-0005125, Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for Dakota, Minnesota & Eastern Railroad Corp. dba CPKC

Iowa Interstate Railroad

Specification

A Special Provision (SP) will need to be written for projects on the Iowa Interstate Railroad. For assistance in writing an SP, it may be helpful to review previously written SPs on the Specifications web site, Series 2015 or 2023. You may also contact Jenifer Bates in the Local Systems Bureau, at 515.766.9402 or Jenifer.Bates@iowadot.us.

LPA Notification to Railroad

Use the Notification for Work in Iowa Interstate Railroad Right-of-Way. This is a one-page letter submitted to IAIS with a set of plans, a copy of the current Specification (see above), and any agreements currently in place.

For projects let at the DOT, submit as soon as the need for a construction project agreement is identified.

For projects not let at the DOT, indicate if the DOT Standard Specifications are going to be used, or if a different set of specifications will be used. If other specifications are used, provide a copy to IAIS. Notify IAIS as soon as railroad impacts are identified, preferably at the Concept Statement stage.

The LPA should notify IAIS of the following, immediately after awarding the contract on LPA let projects:

1. Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) crossing number*
2. LPA project number
3. IAIS Project number
4. Contractor's name, mailing information, and phone number
5. Contractor's contact person
6. Contractor's Railroad Protective Insurance
7. Anticipated start date
8. Number of working days
9. Number of days it is believed the Contractor will impact the railroad.

* For help in identifying the FRA number, refer to the Iowa DOT Office of Rail Transportation's Highway/Railroad Crossing Identifiers web page.

Agreements

IAIS will require an agreement with the LPA on all projects. For maintenance projects, the letter of notification can act as this document so long as plans and provisions are available. For construction projects, IAIS will need a new agreement covering construction and maintenance responsibilities, long-term insurance requirements, inspection responsibilities, cost responsibilities, proposed plans, and specifications used for the project.

The agreement shall also state whether the LPA or Contractor will be responsible for costs associated with Track Protection Services

Track Protection Services

Track Protection Services (Flagging) is generally required during any operation involving direct and potential interference with the railroad's tracks or traffic. This may include but is not limited to fouling of railroad operating clearances, reasonable proximity of accidental hazard to railroad traffic, work within 25 feet horizontally of the nearest track, any work over or under any railroad track, or in any other condition that railroad deems protective services necessary, which may include work on or off railroad property more than 25 feet from the nearest centerline of a railroad track, such as any equipment extension (including but not limited to a crane boom) that will reach or has the potential to reach within 25 feet of any track.

If work is being performed on IAIS property but outside of the 25-foot zone, IAIS will require a physical barrier to be placed at the work limits (Safety Fence, OSHA Safety Line, Concrete Barriers, etc.) or Track Protection Services be obtained.

IAIS shall be reimbursed monthly for costs associated with track protection services by either the LPA or Contractor as outlined in the project agreement.

Safety Training

IAIS requires that all parties that will be on IAIS ROW go through railroad safety training. This includes but is not limited to contractor employees, utilities, and project inspectors. For the most current training information, please visit the IAIS website.

Site Inspections and Scheduling

Site inspections may be performed by IAIS at significant points during construction, including those applicable but not limited to the following:

1. Preconstruction meetings.
2. Pile driving, drilling of caissons or drilled shafts.
3. Reinforcement and concrete placement for railroad bridge substructure and/or superstructure.
4. Erection of precast concrete or steel bridge superstructure.
5. Completion of the bridge structure.

Site visits to check progress of the work may be performed at any time throughout the construction as deemed necessary by IAIS.

Bid Items

The following bid item(s) will need to be added to the plans.

2595-0005135, Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for Iowa Interstate Railroad LTD.

Union Pacific Railroad

Specification

DS-23081 Construction or Maintenance Work on Railroad Right-of-Way (Union Pacific Railroad)

LPA Notification to Railroad

Prior to advertising the project for letting, the LPA will negotiate and obtain an agreement with UPRR for work on UPRR ROW. Contractor is not required to enter into an agreement with the UPRR except for the sole purpose of a temporary crossing (Article DS-15098.22) that is not included in the contract documents.

Railroad Flaggers

Flagging protection is generally required during any operation involving direct and potential interference with UPRR's tracks or traffic. This may include but is not limited to fouling of railroad operating clearances, reasonable proximity of accidental hazard to railroad traffic, work within 25 feet horizontally of the nearest track, any work over any railroad track, or in any other condition that UPRR deems protective services necessary, which may include work on or off UPRR’s property more than 25 feet from the nearest centerline of a railroad track, such as any equipment extension (including but not limited to a crane boom) that will reach or has the potential to reach within 25 feet of any track.

If flagging or other special protective or safety measures are performed by the UPRR, such services will be provided at Contractor’s expense and paid at the prevailing hourly rate in effect for an 8-hour day for the class of worker used during regularly assigned hours and overtime in accordance with Labor Agreements and Schedules in effect at the time the work is performed. The Contractor shall pay the UPRR all charges connected with such services within 30 calendar days after presentation of a bill. The LPA will reimburse the Contractor all daily cost in excess of $1,400/day through a Change Order processed in accordance with Article 1109.03 of the Iowa DOT Standard Specifications.

Bid Items

The following bid item(s) will need to be added to the plans.

2595-0005150, Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for Union Pacific Railroad Co.

All Other Railroads

Specification

A Special Provision (SP) will need to be written. For assistance in writing an SP, it may be helpful to review previously written SPs on the Specifications web site, Series 2015 or 2023. You may also contact Jenifer Bates in the Local Systems Bureau, at 515.766.9402 or Jenifer.Bates@iowadot.us.

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Bid Items

The following bid item(s) will need to be added to the plans, as applicable:

2595-0005100, Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for (insert RR name)

2595-0005110 Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for CBEC Railway Inc.

2595-0005115 Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for Cedar Rapids and Iowa City Railway Inc.

2595-0005130 Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for D & I Railroad Co.

2595-0005145 Railroad Protective Liability Insurance for Norfolk Southern Railway Co.