What is the Purpose of the State Rail Plan?

- Fulfills federal and state requirements.
- Incorporated into State Freight Mobility Plan and Washington Transportation Plan.
- Provides an integrated plan for freight and passenger rail, including 5- and 20-year funding strategies, that meets federal and state requirements.
- Builds on previous plans and guides future efforts.
- Serves as a strategic blueprint for future public investment in the state’s rail transportation system.

Years of collaborative, consistent planning and substantial state investment prepared WSDOT to compete for and ultimately secure nearly $800 million in federal funds for passenger rail improvements.

It’s time to be thinking about what’s next for freight and passenger rail.
Plan Approach

• Articulate the vision
• Understand rail system strengths and challenges
• Define rail system needs
• Recommend strategies
• Establish an implementation plan
State Rail Plan Timeline

2014 and beyond – Plan Implementation

- Incorporate results into State Freight Mobility Plan and Washington Transportation Plan.
- Continue collaborative planning with stakeholders and partners to refine and focus investment priorities.
- Initiate scoping and project development to prepare for future funding opportunities.
Freight Rail in Washington State

Class I Railroads: BNSF and UP
• Privately-owned enterprises.
• Fund their own system improvements.
• Own the majority of the rail infrastructure.
• Occasionally partner with the public sector on capital projects (grade crossings, etc.).

Short-line railroads:
• 23 throughout Washington.
• Mixture of private and public ownership.
# Passenger Rail in Washington State

## Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Sponsors</th>
<th>Daily Round Trips</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long Distance - Coast Starlight and Empire Builder</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Coast Starlight: Seattle to LA</td>
<td>Amtrak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empire Builder: Seattle to Chicago</td>
<td>Amtrak</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intercity Passenger Rail - Amtrak Cascades</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Seattle to Vancouver, B.C.</td>
<td>WSDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seattle to Portland, OR</td>
<td>WSDOT, ODOT, Amtrak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portland to Eugene</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Regional/Commuter - Sounder</strong></td>
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<td>Seattle to Everett</td>
<td>Sound Transit</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle to Tacoma/Lakewood</td>
<td>Sound Transit</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Diagram

- **Light rail**
- **Regional, commuter rail**
- **Intercity passenger rail, emerging high-speed rail**
- **Long-distance rail**

### Distance

- **Short distance**
  - Within a metro area
  - Suburbs to major metro
  - Between major metros
- **Long distance**
  - Cross-country
State-owned and sponsored rail assets

Washington State owns the PCC rail system and the Royal Slope Railroad

Amtrak Cascades Intercity Passenger Rail

Source: WSDOT Freight Systems Division
Publication Date: January 2012
Rail System Needs

State Transportation Planning Goals set the direction for what we want to achieve and help us identify and prioritize needs.

- **Economic Vitality**: To promote and develop transportation systems that stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.

- **Preservation**: To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services.

- **Safety**: To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system.

- **Mobility**: To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State.

- **Environment**: To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.

- **Stewardship**: To continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.
Washington’s Rail System

Strengths:
- Providing good mobility for existing train volumes.
- Extensive network connects citizens and industry.
- Supports industries that contribute $106 billion to GDP and support 1.2 million jobs.
- Most fuel-efficient mode and produces the least amount of carbon.

Challenges:
- Bottlenecks, constraints and access issues on Class I system.
- Delays and reliability concerns.
- Deferred maintenance degrading level of service on short-line railroads.
- Access to national and global markets.
- Meeting future demand.
- Maintaining a safe rail system.
Rail System Needs

“What”
Rail Operations and Infrastructure Needs

“Why”
Rail’s Role in Economic Development

“How”
Rail System Priorities and Goals
Rail Operations and Infrastructure

Needs

- Address constraints to ensure that future capacity meets future demand.
- Preserve existing rail capacity and infrastructure.
- Enhance the efficiency and reliability of existing services.

Recommendations

- State action and investment based on performance measures.
- Continue incremental improvement of intercity passenger rail.
- Assess short-line railroad system conditions and needs.
- Seek cost effective approaches.
Rail’s Role in Economic Development - Needs

Needs

• Rail should support Washington’s economy by providing access to people and industry.

• Preserve access to global markets by ensuring access to Washington's ports.

Recommendations

• Include “first and last mile” connectivity in investment priorities.

• Include support or enhancement of domestic or international trade in investment priorities.
Rail System Priorities and Goals

Needs
• Prioritize cost-effective investments into the state’s rail system.
• Strengthen rail to maximize benefits and minimize negative impacts.
• Continue to support safe and secure passenger and freight rail movement.

Recommendations
• Use performance measures to assess funding needs.
• Consider expansion of funding partnerships
• Communicate the benefits of rail
• Support state and federal programs that promote rail safety and security.
Investment and Investment Plan

• 5- and 20-year strategies
• Priorities for state-owned and state-sponsored assets
• Capital projects (identified in adopted transportation plans) that address system needs

Near-term priorities:
(*Funding from existing sources is very limited*)
• Deliver funded projects
• Maintain and preserve existing infrastructure
• Improve efficiency
• Establish short line system inventory
• Support *State Freight Mobility Plan* effort to define freight priorities based on performance measures
Next Steps

• Release draft Washington State Rail Plan for public review and comment in September 2013.

• Next event:

  Regional Rail Workshop  
  Monday, September 30  
  1pm to 4pm, Centralia Library  
  Hosted by: Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments, Thurston Regional Planning Council, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council, Grays Harbor Council of Governments and Lewis County Transportation Strategy Council

• Final Washington State Rail Plan in December 2013.

• Continue collaborative planning with stakeholders and partners to refine and focus investment priorities.
Contact Information

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