



Corridor Policy for Station Stops

Amtrak Cascades overview

Amtrak Cascades provides intercity passenger service on the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor between Eugene, Oregon and Vancouver, British Columbia, via Seattle and Portland.

Sponsored by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Amtrak Cascades service is an essential element of the two states' multi-modal transportation system. The service provides transportation and connectivity options to communities along the I-5 corridor region.

Service Improvements

WSDOT is currently investing nearly \$800 million in federal high-speed rail funds to deliver critical rail infrastructure improvements that will expand travel choices and foster economic growth across our two states. By the end of the funded program (Fall 2017), WSDOT will be able to achieve the following service outcomes:

- Add two additional daily round trips between Seattle and Portland, for a total of six
- Improve on-time performance to 88 percent
- Reduce travel time between Seattle and Portland by 10 minutes

These service outcomes are a requirement of the funded program and committed through agreement between WSDOT, BNSF, Amtrak, and Sound Transit. All future projects, improvements, and additions/changes to stops must align with these commitments.



Station locations on the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor

Station Stop Policy

WSDOT developed an interim policy on station stops in 2013. This policy was established to guide consideration of new stops on Amtrak Cascades until a formal process was adopted.

2013 Interim Policy

- Washington and Oregon are working to manage their respective services together as a unified corridor. Both the WSDOT and ODOT operating budgets are very constrained: the WSDOT operating budget for Amtrak Cascades was cut by \$1 million in 2013-2015. The agencies will work together to reduce station costs and implement other cost saving alternatives.
- WSDOT and ODOT will evaluate proposals to add station stops based on benefits and disadvantages for the entire service. Evaluation criteria include: Consistent with State Rail Plan; Operational Feasibility; Customer Demand; Station Suitability; Interconnectivity Benefits; and Fiscal Viability.
- The addition of a station stop should not degrade service or add cost for WSDOT, ODOT, Sound Transit, BNSF, UP, Amtrak or other partners in intercity passenger rail service.
- Rail planning budgets at WSDOT and ODOT are not sufficient to complete new stop studies without additional funds. Proponents should provide funding for new stop evaluation studies.
- Major service changes will not be implemented until after 2017 due to construction and service outcome agreement commitments.

As recommended by each States' Rail Plan, and through a community engagement process, a final corridor-wide policy on station stops will be developed and formally adopted.

What is the work?

- Engage WSDOT, ODOT and advisory committee
- Address questions not previously posed
- Finalize corridor policy on station stops
- Develop guidance for station stop proposals

Who's participating?

We are convening an **advisory committee** that represents the broad range of perspectives along the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor. We are also engaging **other stakeholders/interested parties** who will receive project updates and copies of meeting materials.

Advisory Committee Invitees

- WA: City of Blaine, WCOG, WA Legislature, City of Auburn, City of Tukwila, Sound Transit, Intercity Transit, Amtrak, BNSF
- OR: Metro, TriMet, City of Albany, City of Woodburn, OR Trans. Commission (OTC), OR Legislature, UP

Advisory Committee Role/Expectations

- Represents constituents
- Provides input and feedback from a stakeholder's perspective
- Be a conduit for external project communications

Other Stakeholders/Interested Parties

Additional parties will be informed throughout the process.

- WA: All Aboard WA, Cascadia Center, Cascades station owners, MPOs/RTPOs within the Corridor, Leg. Transportation Committee Chairs, BCMoTI
- OR: AORTA, PDC, cities and MPOs on the Corridor, Assoc. of Oregon Counties, League of Oregon Cities

When and Where?

Committee meetings will be held between Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 at a centrally located venue:

- WSDOT Southwest Region HQ: Vancouver, WA
- Tentative Meeting Dates: October 2015, January 2016, and April 2016

Contacts

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