2019 Washington State Rail System Plan

OBJECTIVE

Update the 2014 Washington State Rail Plan to provide a framework for future actions that meet federal and state requirements.

Specific goals for the plan include:

- Identify a preferred growth/performance scenario for Amtrak Cascades, with a plan to achieve that scenario (including needed infrastructure, improvements, and equipment).
- Identify performance objectives for the state-owned shortline rail system and strategies to achieve them.
- Identify strategies to improve connections between rail and other modes.

KEY TASKS

Describe rail system and economic effects
- Freight railroads
- Passenger rail services
- Contribution to local and state economies

Detail institutional framework and funding sources
- Ownership, operators
- Regulators
- Funding programs

Update emerging trends and issues
- Review trends and issues from 2014 plan
- Address current topics (including landslides, inland seaports)
- Explore cross cutting topics (including climate resiliency, road-rail crossings)

Analyze rail system
- Rail demand, volume forecasts, and system capacity
- Safety systems (including PTC)
- Multimodal accessibility (including ridesharing and funded future regional transit investments)
- Performance measures

Outline strategies and investments
- Strategies for planning, programming, and coordination
- Investment plan (including infrastructure and equipment)
OUTREACH

Continuous outreach will be conducted with targeted stakeholders with interest in the freight and passenger rail system, metropolitan planning and regional transportation planning organizations, tribal governments, adjacent state and provincial governments, and local communities. Outreach will be coordinated with other WSDOT planning initiatives.

**April – June 2018:** Initial scoping to solicit input and information, focusing on scope and approach for the plan update, and the issues and trends that will affect it.

**July – December 2018:** In-progress updates to present results of analysis for system capacity, identification of a preferred growth/performance scenario for Amtrak Cascades, and identification of performance objectives for the state-owned shortline rail system and rail programs.

**January – May 2019:** Sharing the draft version of the plan and soliciting feedback on analysis and strategies.

Ad hoc meetings and presentations will be scheduled to facilitate information sharing, including data collection and input into the plan update process.

SCHEDULE

Public review of the plan is scheduled for March 2019, with the final plan completed by June 2019.

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PROPOSED PLAN OUTLINE

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Rail System, Service, and Investment Programs
- Chapter 3: Trends, Issues, and Needs
- Chapter 4: Recommendations, Strategies, and Investments for the Future of the Rail System
- Chapter 5: Next Steps
- Appendix A: Rail system description
- Appendix B: Freight rail demand and forecasts
- Appendix C: Passenger rail demand and forecasts
- Appendix D System capacity analysis
- Appendix E: Multimodal connectivity analysis
- Appendix F: Plan development

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