

# Rail Division Action Plan – 2016



**W**ashington state’s rail system is an integral part of the multimodal transportation system that keeps people and business moving. The system provides efficient transportation of both freight and passengers, and is critical to maintaining our economy, environment and quality of life. The Washington State Department of Transportation sponsors Amtrak Cascades intercity passenger rail service, in coordination with the Oregon Department of Transportation, and leads construction of capital improvements for passenger and freight rail in Washington State. This Action Plan serves as a strategic blueprint for the WSDOT Rail Division in 2016 based on four overarching goals:

## Goal 1: Align with the strategic goals of WSDOT and the Governor’s Office

*Results* WSDOT, the agency’s strategic plan for 2014-2017, provides the vision, mission, values, goals, priority outcomes and strategies to guide the work of the agency in support of *Results Washington*. The WSDOT Rail Division is implementing changes that foster a more efficient, effective and accountable government through strategic investments, modal integration, environmental stewardship, organizational strength, community engagement and smart technology.

## Goal 2: Deliver capital projects on time and within budget

### High-speed intercity passenger rail

The state of Washington was awarded nearly \$800 million in federal grants to improve Amtrak Cascades service through 20 capital projects. As of 2015, 10 projects are completed and the other half are in construction. All High Speed Rail projects will be completed in 2017.

### Connecting Washington and freight rail projects

The WSDOT Rail Division is responsible for administering rail projects for the department. This includes the loan and grant programs—Freight Rail Investment Bank Program (FRIB), Freight Rail Assistance Program (FRAP)—and *Connecting Washington* projects. *Connecting Washington* projects include funds for local projects and landslide mitigation. WSDOT is delivering 33 projects worth more than \$20 million for the 2015-2017 biennium.

## Goal 3: Manage costs and maintain revenue

WSDOT works with ODOT, Amtrak and other partners to provide quality service: that is comfort, convenience, clean, safe and reliable travel. Rising costs and increasing budget constraints require WSDOT to minimize the financial impact to the state while continuing to achieve WSDOT’s transportation goals. The WSDOT Rail Division is identifying opportunities for cost reduction and developing priorities to generate the highest business value. Maintaining current revenue levels is key to minimizing the financial impact to the state.

## Goal 4: Implement service enhancements and efficiency improvements

WSDOT is working with our partners to implement enhancements that increase service quality, such as providing real-time schedule information and expanding bicycle and baggage policies. WSDOT is also working to implement efficiencies that improve system performance, such as border crossing preclearance protocols to reduce travel time for trains returning to the U.S. from Vancouver, British Columbia.

These goals, along with key objectives and strategies as outlined in this plan, will help the WSDOT Rail Division in achieving in 2017 the programmatic service outcomes of the High Speed Rail program related to:

- 10** *Reduction of 10 minutes travel time*  
The scheduled run time between Seattle and Portland will be reduced by 10 minutes, from 3 hours 30 minutes to 3 hours 20 minutes.
- 2** *Two additional round trips*  
Two additional daily round trips will be added between Seattle and Portland, for a total of six daily round trips.
- 88** *88% on-time performance*  
The quarterly on-time performance of the Amtrak Cascades passenger trains operating in Washington state will be improved to 88 percent.

## Key Objectives

These key objectives will guide business decisions and strategy implementation.

### Reduce Costs

 Reduce capital and operational costs using lean and practical solution principles

### Maximize Revenue

 Maximize revenue earnings through sensible, innovative business practices

### Enhance Passenger Experience

 Enhance the quality of customers' experience

### Expand Accessibility

 Promote broader access and multimodal connectivity to the service throughout the corridor

### Implement Safety Improvements

 Raise safety emphasis and coordination with partners and stakeholders

### Improved On-Time Performance

 Improve reliability and performance in support of 2017 levels of service

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## Strategies

**Capital program:** Administer ongoing capital delivery program through 2017. Coordinate with operations to ensure seamless transition and operation of new projects and equipment.

Objectives addressed:



**Revenue during construction:** Minimize service impacts during construction through improved schedule coordination, timely service announcements, and active marketing/pricing strategies.

Objectives addressed:



**Holiday train service:** Continue to meet holiday service demands.

Objectives addressed:



**Contract compliance:** Improve quality and service through enhanced compliance, cooperation and contracting efficiencies.

Objectives addressed:



**Stations:** Pursue cost-sharing opportunities. Assess stations' safety and suitability.

Objectives addressed:



Business Focus

**Quality customer service:** Focus on convenience, productivity and access when making customer service and amenity improvements. Explore improved WiFi, baggage, pet and parking policy options.

Objectives addressed:



**Multimodal connectivity:** Expand multimodal connectivity and strengthen relationships with station owners, transit agencies and local jurisdictions.

Objectives addressed:



**Preclearance:** Monitor federal action to decrease travel times between British Columbia and Seattle; assist partner agencies with implementation.

Objectives addressed:



**Innovative marketing:** Ensure customers know the service is available. Expand marketing and partnerships through special pricing and promotions to raise awareness and revenue.

Objectives addressed:



Customer Focus

**2017 Launch Plan:** Prepare for launch of new service, including the financial and workforce needs for expanded service.

Objectives addressed:



**Future plans:** Planning studies and initiatives will continue to inform future costs, budget needs and service improvements. Engage in available FAST Act opportunities.

Satisfies these Objectives:



Future Focus

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