



Connecting Cascadia

A High-Speed Rail Vision for the Pacific Northwest



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Introduction

Overview

On July 8 and 9, a group of regional stakeholders, planners, business leaders, elected and appointed officials from throughout the Cascadia Megaregion gathered at Metro in Portland to test the transportation, economic, land use, climate change, and livability implications of connecting the Cascadia Megaregion with high-speed rail. This document summarizes the key discussion points, principles, and ideas proposed at the Connecting Cascadia planning charrette, and a series of next steps toward making high-speed rail in Cascadia a reality.

This workshop took place at a critical point in planning efforts for passenger rail in the United States and in Cascadia. The \$8 billion provided in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and a subsequent \$2.5 billion appropriated in the 2010 federal budget, signals the most serious financial commitment to passenger rail in America in decades. The selection of the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor for a grant award of almost \$600 million puts Cascadia in the top five of key national corridors in the United States.

At the same time, the “livability” partnership among US federal agencies for housing, the environment, and transportation (HUD-EPA-DOT) to promote more sustainable land development patterns is consistent with the goals of Cascadia’s metropolitan regions that for decades have led North America in building “livable communities.” There may be no better megaregion in America to bring together the combination of high-speed rail and livability.

In addition to our workshop, many of our partners are hard at work advancing local, state and provincial coordination to successfully implement the ARRA grant and maintain momentum for passenger rail investment and improvement. Beginning in May of 2009, the Cascadia Center of the Discovery Institute has sponsored a series of high profile train rallies and interlocal compacts with Mayors from Eugene, Oregon to Vancouver, BC. Larger regional and national audiences are being enlisted through the meetings of the Pacific Northwest Environmental Region (PNWER) and the binational Pacific Coast Collaborative.

Workshop Objectives

The workshop sought to answer the following questions:

- What vision for Cascadia will high-speed rail help to achieve?
- How can high-speed rail promote a more productive and inclusive Cascadian economy?
- How can high-speed rail underpin and help achieve Cascadia’s land use and livability goals?
- How does high-speed rail integrate with and serve the large and smaller transportation networks that exist or are planned for the megaregion?
- What is the Cascadian-scale governance model and financing strategy that can help us achieve this vision?

To understand the opportunities and implications of high-speed rail in Cascadia, the group tested a high-speed rail scenario in Cascadia against the land use and station area development scenarios, economic strategies, and transportation connections required to optimize high-speed rail investment. The high-speed rail scenario was evaluated in the context of a “Cascadia Megaregion Planning Framework,” generated by assembling the regional plans and growth strategies of the major and medium-size cities along the corridor, including plans for natural resource protection and land preservation. The briefing book prepared for the workshop, containing detailed analysis of regional plans, economic trends, and transportation connections in the large and small cities and regions of Cascadia is posted online at: <http://tinyurl.com/cascadiaBB>.

To answer the questions above, participants divided into three working groups:

- **The New Economic Geography:** Ethan Seltzer and Robert Yaro, co-chairs. What are the specific economic implications for large, medium-size and small cities and communities throughout Cascadia? How does high-speed rail promote greater economic productivity, new business relationships, increased tourism, industry clusters and agglomeration in the Cascadia megaregion? What strategies are needed, in addition to the transportation investments to achieve these benefits?
- **Land Use, Climate Change and Livability:** Robert Lane and Pat Condon, co-chairs. How does high-speed rail complement or conflict with existing regional plans and growth strategies for the future of the megaregion? How can we connect high-speed rail investment to other federal programs and goals, such as the HUD-DOT-EPA livability partnership? How can future investment decisions in infrastructure and land development help leverage high-speed rail investment?
- **Network Benefits:** Bruce Agnew and Andy Cotugno, co-chairs. How does high-speed rail integrate with and serve the large and smaller transportation networks that exist or are planned for the megaregion? How can connections among different modes provide greater choice and benefits for passengers and freight?

Background: A Vision for Cascadia

Since the early 1990s, regional planners, civic leaders, and politicians have recognized the promise of an interconnected Cascadia Megaregion. The Cascadia Center of the Discovery Institute led by Bruce Agnew launched its Cascadia Transportation Task Force and Economic Council in 1994 with support from major political leaders including then-Vancouver Mayor Gordon Campbell, US Senators Mark Hatfield from Oregon and Patty Murray from Washington. The Council’s charter was to promote “conservation, community and commerce” to address issues related to improving passenger rail, the trade corridor, binational tourism and sustainable communities.

The 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver rekindled interest in Cascadia. From the special Olympic edition of the *BC Business Magazine* came these thoughts:

Cascadia is deeply interconnected. Proponents of the idea maintain that the region can’t fully achieve its potential, be it

ecological conservation, a strong cultural identity or global economic competitiveness, unless we somehow learn to work together. "Integration of transportation has been hit and miss in the last 15 years, but we've enjoyed an upsurge in the last three or four years," [Cascadia Center's Bruce] Agnew says.

Another proposal in the dreaming stage is to one day build a new rail line for next-generation high-speed trains, which could take passengers from downtown Vancouver to downtown Seattle in about three hours – about an hour faster than the current trains. Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson signed a memorandum of understanding with the mayors of Seattle and Portland supporting a high-speed line last spring.

And on the grander issue of Cascadia cooperation and culture, the *BC Business* piece went on to note,

...Vancouver, for example, looks to Portland to learn about streetcars, whereas Seattle is looking at Vancouver to learn about high-rise downtown housing. But perhaps the most valuable lessons that have come out of the relationship have been about how to design sustainable and livable communities.

This will likely give the region a competitive edge as the global economy comes to rely more and more on service-oriented work, [Vancouver's Institute for Sustainable Development's Larry] Beasley says, by drawing valuable creative professionals from around the world. "These people can be anywhere they want to be, and they go to places of quality," he says. "If you look at Vancouver, Seattle and Portland, we are places of quality, and we present ourselves that way; that's our brand.."

Since 2005, Ethan Seltzer has led four graduate planning classes at Portland State University on the Cascadia megaregion, each building upon one another to explore issues of transportation, economic development and specialization, sustainability, and livability. The PSU reports focused on the concept of a Cascadia "Ecolopolis" – a megaregion united not by continuous urbanization, as defines the Boston-Washington Northeast Megaregion, but by a connected network of distinct metropolitan regions and cities separated from each other by working and wild landscapes.

Imagine boarding a high-speed train in downtown Portland. Your coffee steams while you sit down to open your laptop. As the train's speed increases, rivers and snowy volcanic peaks come in and out of view. The city vanishes into a mossy haze of temperate rainforest.

This is Cascadia. It encompasses two states (Oregon and Washington), one province (British Columbia) and an international border (USA/Canada). After just over two hours, the train pulls up amidst the sleek high-rise towers of Vancouver. Roundtrip your travel tops 600 miles, but high-speed rail will allow you to return to Portland after your meeting in time for dinner.

Fact or fiction? For this tale to become true, the fundamental underpinnings of Cascadia, and the identity of the region as a

place, would need to become much stronger and more carefully articulated. From the outside, we are one region. From the inside, it's difficult to get the citizens of the Portland metropolitan region today to embrace the issues (let alone the professional sports teams) of the Seattle and Vancouver, BC metropolitan areas as their own.¹

The Pacific Coast Collaborative, an effort of the California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, governors and British Columbia premier, was formalized in 2008 with the signing Pacific Coast Collaborative Agreement which declares their intentions to collaborate on a common future in the "Pacific Century." Their priorities include: clean energy, high speed rail linking British Columbia and California, emergency management, regional transportation, research and innovation, and sustainable regional economy.

While these recent studies and collaborations represent steps in the direction of a more interconnected megaregion, the challenge of building and operating high-speed rail will test the limits of cross-border collaboration. Despite the challenge, there are few investments besides high-speed rail with the potential to realize the promise of greater economic integration for the Cascadia Megaregion.

Charge to the Group

At the workshop, each working group tested the impact of a "high-speed rail scenario" on their topic area and articulated the changes to *business as usual* this scenario would bring about. Participants were asked to set aside for a moment whether the high-speed rail scenario *will be* or *should be* achieved, for the purpose of understanding the most dramatic effects that high-speed rail would produce in Cascadia. Once the high-end effects are understood, workshop participants worked backwards to articulate the desired vision for passenger rail service and its impacts in the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor.

Our scenario was constructed by applying average speeds (125 mph) and frequencies of European and Asian-style high-speed rail to the Cascadia Corridor. A frequency of 26 trains per day between Seattle and Portland corresponds to 2 trains per hour during peak hours and 1 per hour during off-peak hours. These trip times and frequencies are presented in the diagram on the next page in the rightmost column, compared to current, ARRA investments, and long-range plans for the Corridor.

The scenario ridership of 4.5 million is not a modeled estimate but is believed to be a plausible number based on overall travel market size and increases in level of service. Increasing the number of trains per day from 4 to 13 (approximately a three-fold increase) is projected to increase ridership to about 3 times the current level. Doubling the frequency again is assumed here to increase this ridership further, though these ridership increases will have diminishing returns as trains are added. Furthermore, while the overall market size for intercity travel is unknown, past estimates place it at around 8 million between the major cities (Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver). The total intercity travel is likely to be significantly higher, but this estimate assumes high-speed rail could capture approximately half of the estimated market.

¹ Portland State University (2006) "Cascadia Ecolopolis 2.0"

High-Speed Rail Scenario

	Current Amtrak <i>Cascades</i> Service (round trips; trip time)	With ARRA Investments	Long-Range Plan	High Speed Rail Scenario
Vancouver 157 miles ↑ Seattle	2 / day; 4:25 hrs	2 / day; 3:55 hrs	4 / day; 2:37 hrs	12 / day; 2:00 hrs
Seattle 187 miles ↑ Portland	4 / day; 3:30 hrs	6 / day 3:20 hrs	13 / day; 2:30 hrs	26 / day 1:50 hrs
Portland 124 miles ↑ Eugene	2 / day; 2:35 hrs	2 / day 2:35 hrs	6 / day, 1:55 hrs	12 / day 1:25 hrs
	0.8 million riders	??	3 million riders	4-5 million riders
	Approximate Investment:	\$598 million	\$6,500 million	??

Workshop Results

High-speed rail presents an opportunity to reshape the economic geography of the Cascadian megaregion. Cities along the corridor share a strong cultural association rooted in a do-it-yourself attitude and an affinity for the natural environment depicted by iconic fir trees and snow-capped mountains. However, despite this common identity, economic ties along the corridor have been limited. In fact, some argue that Cascadia's quality of life has not been matched by a quality economy. The major cities of Seattle, Portland, and Vancouver (BC) have been buoyed by blue-chip companies (e.g. Intel, Microsoft) but Cascadia has struggled with declining manufacturing and resource economies. The region aspires to foster exchange of ideas to create world-class research and development hubs like those present in other U.S. megaregions. As Cascadia grows in the coming years, high-speed rail has the potential to fulfill its economic goals by stitching together the region's knowledge economy while providing a world-class amenity to attract and retain educated workers. High-speed rail could provide global competitiveness by elevating the Cascadian brand through unique tourism. Firms will then be drawn to Cascadia's high quality of life while taking advantage of new efficiencies that emerge from linking specializations in the economies in Seattle and Portland. The rail system also serves as an insurance policy against economic downturn by creating a more resilient network of workers and jobs, and providing some security against an uncertain energy future.

High-speed rail also has the potential to match Cascadian ideals for sustainability through a transportation system less dependent on automobiles and fossil fuels. However, high-speed rail will only fulfill the region's sustainability goals if the system does not contribute to sprawl in outlying communities. Care must be taken regarding potentially negative effects on smaller cities, which could suffer without proper strategies for economic development and land use. Despite these challenges, Cascadia also has many potential synergies with high-speed rail. Strong existing commitments to compact land-use and transit investment give Cascadia an advantage over more sprawled, auto-oriented regions. High-speed rail itself could reinforce these patterns by centering growth in downtowns rather than land outside of urban growth areas. There is growing interest in rail as a form of transportation as evidenced by the success of Amtrak Cascades service. Distances between major population centers in Cascadia are on par with those in high-speed rail systems around the world. And as a major trade gateway to the Pacific, enhancing passenger rail efficiency could also provide systemic benefits to the region's vital freight system. Furthermore, the region seeks to export renewable hydroelectric power, and there may be opportunities to develop rail in conjunction with new transmission lines.

For high-speed rail to be successful in Cascadia, it must first overcome several roadblocks, the first being Cascadia's modest overall population for potential riders. Second, topography makes acquisition of new right-of-way expensive and difficult, though not

impossible. Third, border crossing between the U.S. and Canada is currently problematic and limits movement of people and services. And finally, coordination between two states and one province could make governance a challenge, though not an unprecedented one. If successful, this coordination could enhance future Cascadian collaborations and create a template for further developing the Cascadian identity and joint planning efforts in the future.

Political support for rail in Cascadia appears to be gaining momentum. However there is lack of agreement over whether efforts should be geared towards advancing incrementally higher level of rail service versus developing a bolder vision for true high-speed rail in the region. Consensus around a unified vision needs to be developed quickly over the coming year. This could be aided by continued research and advocacy efforts in the coming year. A desirable outcome may be to have an adaptive model where incremental steps are made along trajectory towards an overarching vision for true high-speed rail.



Key Conclusions

Each bullet represents a key conclusion that emerged from discussions during the Connecting Cascadia workshop. Though most conclusions are crosscutting, an attempt was made to organize them according to the breakout groups.

Economic Geography

- Cascadia has a high quality of life, but struggles with high rates of unemployment. High-speed rail could serve as an amenity to help Cascadia compete in the global economy, and encourage more firms to locate in the region. "If Cascadia is going to show up in the global knowledge economy, then HSR is the price of admission."
- High-speed rail will alter the dynamic between cities, especially Seattle and Portland. It might help the cities compete less with each other and instead benefit from the efficiencies that emerge from economies of

agglomeration. For example, Portland's specialization in manufacturing may make it an attractive satellite for firms to relocate since Seattle has become expensive and congested. In turn, Portland companies can take better advantage of Seattle's strength in the information industry.

- Companies in Cascadia claim to have great employees but have difficulty finding top-level talent and must recruit out-of-state. These people are often willing to move to the excellent quality of life. High-speed rail may help to elevate top-level talent in Cascadia by providing better connections between academia, industry research, and innovation. In particular, high-speed rail might have an advantage in recruiting sustainability-related businesses desired in Cascadia.
- The difficulty of crossing the U.S.-Canadian border poses a serious threat to high-speed rail and economic development in Cascadia more generally. It is easy enough to move goods across, but very difficult to move people or services. The Cascadian corridor shares a strong cultural identity; however economic activities are typically oriented east to west rather than north to south.
- As a major North American link to the Pacific Rim, and traditionally a resource-based economy, transportation has played an important historic role in Cascadia's economy. I-5 is increasingly congested and has little room for expansion. High-speed rail could help alleviate congestion, and may become a necessity to add capacity. Providing improvements to the passenger system provides systematic benefits that spill over to the freight system as well.
- High-speed rail can help increase tourism, especially for high income-travelers, thereby promoting ties between Cascadian cities and raising its profile among global megaregions, building on the existing "Two-Nation Vacation" marketing campaign.
- BC Hydro and the Province of BC are interested in expanding BC's power grid to Washington, Oregon and California. There may be opportunity for a partnership in a joint rail-power corridor.
- All three cities in Cascadia are port cities and trade gateways to the interior of North America. This makes them especially vulnerable to the widening of the Panama Canal in 2014 and necessitates joint action to sustain Cascadia's trade economy. High-speed rail could contribute to a more resilient, robust, and unified Cascadian economy.



- The Pacific Northwest has made land-use decisions to increase density in urban areas and promote transit-use while curtailing sprawl. This pattern could be advantageous to the success of a high-speed rail system. In turn, high-speed rail could serve as a tool to reinforce the compact, centered development patterns valued by Cascadian residents.
- There is concern over the potential for high-speed rail to add to sprawl if it connects less developed areas to a larger geography. High-speed rail may allow more people to live in smaller cities, thereby increasing Cascadia's overall energy footprint. Meanwhile, new development from high-speed rail may encroach on those who wish to live in less urbanized areas. A continued commitment to land use regulations and simultaneous investments in regional centers are needed to address the connected issues of land use and energy.
- Alternatively, high-speed rail might increase the likelihood that smaller communities are unable to retain population if they become less relevant in the face of metropolitan growth. However, with proactive strategies and incentives, these smaller cities can take advantage of opportunities afforded by high-speed rail to serve as centers for back office operations, conference facilities, etc.
- High-speed rail is seen as an insurance or preparation for future trends including increasing population, aging boomers, and uncertain energy prices. High-speed rail can help increase economic resilience by increasing the labor pool for employers and access to job opportunities for workers.
- Livability, in terms of safety and noise, may be negatively affected near high-speed rail crossings and station areas. Grade separation is a necessity to address these concerns.

Network Connections

- Acquiring right-of-way may become a more difficult challenge as time goes on. It is essential to take a proactive stance and seek early action to reserve or acquire this land. Cascadia faces particular challenges in acquiring right-of-way due to the presence of mountains and water. Right-of-way used by existing Amtrak Cascades service includes some portions that will never be able to support true high-speed rail service due to engineering constraints.
- Transit connections in major Cascadian cities are excellent and have continued to expand in recent years. Ridership on Amtrak Cascades and inter-city bus services has steadily risen, demonstrating latent demand for public transportation.
- The exact location of high-speed rail stations still needs to be resolved. For example, in Portland, advantages exist for both East Side and West Side stations. In Vancouver, BC, population and jobs in nearby



Land-Use, Livability, & Climate Change

- Greenhouse gas emission reductions are a unifying regional goal and required by law in Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia alike. High-speed rail could provide a local tool to address this global problem by reducing emissions from long car trips and airplane trips, where emissions are high on a per-trip basis.

Surrey are expected to outstrip the downtown within 20 years and may be an important location for an additional high-speed rail station (perhaps integrated with the transit hub at Simon Fraser University).

- For cities south of Portland, there is lack of consensus about what level of service to recommend. High-speed is viewed as less of a priority than simply increased level of service. High-speed rail development should be prioritized or demonstrated first along the Portland to Seattle leg.
- Cascadia is a center for transportation innovation, for example, FlexCar service began in the Seattle area. Ridership on intercity bus and rail has risen remarkably in recent years showing a willingness of the local populations to embrace new modes of transportation.
- Floods and earthquakes pose risks to large-scale infrastructure projects in the Pacific Northwest, including high-speed rail. However, since the region is primarily served by highways, high-speed rail could provide a critical redundancy to the transportation system in case such a disaster occurs. In fact, portions of I-5 are not currently designed to withstand severe flood events, while a new high-speed rail system could be engineered to do so.
- Cascadia is already characterized by commuters who drive long distances to work, especially in Seattle. For example, the largest employers in Skagit County are Boeing and Microsoft, many miles away. High-speed rail offers an opportunity to improve quality of life for long-distance commuters and opens up new opportunities for those in smaller cities.

Implementation, Governance, Finance, and Advocacy

- As the deficit climbs, the era of easy federal financing may be over. For financing high-speed rail, it seems appropriate to develop a business plan that integrates multiple revenue streams over the course of the high-speed rail project. It's important to refrain from "siloe" thinking on the revenue side, and look to many sources, such as value capture at stations, federal grants, public transit taxes, public rail districts, national security funding and so on.
- The fact that Cascadia crosses two states and a province creates a unique challenge for governance. An appropriate historical model to follow is the St. Lawrence Seaway. This multi-state binational compact followed a bold vision, but it was carried forward by the individual actions of states and provinces combined with federal funding. The governing body for such an agreement, tentatively titled the "Cascadia Compact," could be used to encompass all future efforts for research, financing, and so on.
- Recently, U.S. infrastructure projects have been difficult to accomplish in a timely manner due to both regulatory and financial barriers. To improve the prospects for high-speed rail in the region, Cascadians must focus on building political will to make a strong, dedicated push for the project. Stakeholders need to explore options for changing the value proposition, focusing on the idea that new infrastructure creates lasting value and create mechanisms to capture some of that value.
- For advocacy, several additional stakeholders still need to be brought to the table including: environmentalists, BC Hydro & the energy community, ports, freight, commodities such as agriculture and manufacturing, businesses and chambers of commerce, the general public, city councils, and associations of cities.

- There is a general sense that the public is sympathetic to high-speed rail, but they are unfamiliar with the notion of a Cascadia Corridor. This might be remedied with a strong branding, powerful visuals, and general awareness campaigns.



Statement of Principles

This statement of principles is a broad set of ideas that stakeholders agree should guide any effort to implement high-speed rail service along the Cascadia Corridor. They are intended to reflect the Cascadian values that were voiced over the course of the workshop.

Cascadia should strive to build a passenger rail system that:

- Increases global competitiveness by growing a knowledge economy and linking the major metropolitan areas;
- Reduces the region's energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions;
- Increases resilience through reduced reliance on petroleum and better connections to jobs;
- Takes advantage of unique Cascadian assets such as hydropower and transit networks;
- Provides systemic benefits to Cascadia's freight network;
- Fosters collaboration between stakeholders and solidifies the Cascadian identity;
- Provides a world class amenity for business travelers and tourists alike;
- Fully considers and strives to protect needs of smaller communities;
- Prioritizes electric propulsion over diesel to maximize environmental benefits;
- Works toward a dedicated right of way with grade separation;
- Is governed by an appropriate structure agreed upon by stakeholders in WA, OR, and BC. This governance may be informed by historic efforts like the St. Lawrence Seaway.
- Includes a business plan that takes into account multiple revenue streams including federal funding, value capture near stations, public transportation taxes, public private partnerships, and so on.

- Facilitates border crossings and ease of travel between the U.S. and Canada
- Focuses first and foremost on the critical link between Portland and Seattle, achieving trip times of 1:30 hours by 2030.



A 2030 Vision

This fictional storyline is designed to help illustrate what a high-speed rail line would mean for the region, assuming the principles outlined above are maintained.

The year is 2030. Marta, an engineering consultant, steps out of her house in Bellevue, Washington ready for the workday. It's cloudy in Puget Sound but the sun peeks through the clouds enough for her to catch a glimpse of Mt. Rainier in the distance. She picks up the morning paper and walks down to the light-rail station to catch a ride over to King Street station where she'll board the Cascadia Corridor Express, the new high-speed train service. Knowing the trains come every half hour on the half hour, she didn't even bother to look up the schedule. Marta is headed for a business meeting in Portland to meet with some new clients. The Fortune 100 renewable energy firm Solexant wants her input on hiring more workers in Portland to expand their manufacturing facility. 10 years ago, this trip would have been unthinkable with all the traffic on I-5. Driving down there would have taken at least 3 hours but now she can get there in half the time and get work done on the train. No time wasted in airport security lines either.

Taking a look at the headlines, she notices that BC Hydro is also hiring new workers in Bellingham. Ever since the success of the joint electricity-rail link between Seattle and Portland the company has been looking to upgrade the train service from Seattle to Vancouver to reach 250 miles per hour. She knew from a friend at the company that the big reason for this move was because California needs to purchase more renewable hydropower to meet its climate goals. To do this they were willing to put up some cash to expand capacity on the electricity-rail line. Vancouver sounds nice this time of year, thought Marta. If today's meeting went well, perhaps she could take the kids for day trip there on the train this Saturday to visit Stanley Park and do some shopping.

Life wasn't always this great in Cascadia. Growing up in Tacoma,

Marta's father worked for a shipping company and she remembered how tough it was for him to find a job after the Panama Canal was widened. And after gas spiked permanently to \$8 a gallon, Seattle's economy was hit pretty hard in the late '10s. But that all changed after the new high-speed rail opened for business a few years ago. Now companies are flocking to the region. Everyone wants to be part of the startup scene that straddles Portland and Seattle. Linking universities like OSU, PSU, and UW seemed to be a masterstroke; ever since they have been producing top talent for the thriving clean tech industry. Combined with the ability to ship products directly to consumers in Asian markets, Cascadia has even managed to bring some manufacturing back to the region.

She waved to some wealthy Chinese tourists snapping photos of Mt. St. Helens as the train blazed through Centralia. Once a sleepy little town, Centralia was now highly sought after real estate since it's halfway between Seattle and Portland. A forward-thinking downtown development plan was able to accommodate these new residents without sacrificing Centralia's small-town character. Marta even thought about trying to move there herself – she never thought before that a two-unit home could be so tasteful and appealing. But in the end she decided to stay in Puget Sound since the high-speed rail could more than accommodate her occasional travel down to Portland.



Next Steps

This section charts a potential course of action over the next 1, 5, and 10 years for high-speed rail development.

1 Year Benchmarks

Research/Planning

- Identify lead partners to carry out actions described below.
- Develop Cascadia map into a “design brief” -- an iconic proposition that maps out a potential universe of options for high-speed rail in Cascadia.
- Create a university consortium to study the issues of what scenarios look like, what the costs, benefits are etc. (academia: Pat Condon, Ethan Seltzer)
- Study intercity travel demand and potential ridership scenarios for high-speed rail.
- Conduct cost benefit analysis, including various scenarios such as peak oil, Panama Canal, flooding, unemployment, etc.
- Study the potential for high-speed rail to reduce GHG emissions in Cascadia under different population and ridership scenarios.
- Identify station locations and integrate high-speed rail into local land-use planning decisions.
- Identify and take steps to obtain the right of way for a dedicated high-speed rail corridor, while moving ahead with incremental improvements to the existing corridor. Study the cost, and prioritize key segments of the corridor.
- Complete initial engineering cost analysis (The Cascadia Center hopes to complete a study by 2011).
- Research and recommend different governance forms suitable for Cascadia high-speed rail.
- Conduct analysis on existing/planned transmission lines in Cascadia beginning with RPA-generated maps.

Governance and Organization

- Establish a corridor long entity to own the project, and provide research funding.
- Develop consensus around a common vision and finalize a statement of principles to be signed by stakeholders.
- Develop a business plan for HSR with funding sources identified for 5, 10, 20 years ahead.
- Recruit a client for the work of the collaborative (e.g. state legislature).

Outreach & Advocacy

- Introduce the concept of combined power/rail corridor to BC Hydro and BC representatives. Develop a working group between hydro-power and transportation officials.
- Reach out to Senator Murray and request that Secretary Clinton address border crossing issue between the U.S. and Canada via rail.
- Reach out to Pacific Coast collaborative to promote a long-term vision through three states and BC.
- Organize a joint public hearing to educate state legislators in Washington and Oregon.
- Encourage city councils to adopt resolutions in support of HSR.
- Reach out to newspapers, chambers of commerce, local governments, and freight rail partners to promote the issue.
- Begin an awareness campaign for the general public.

5 years

- Robust public support is established for high-speed rail.
- Priority rights-of-way are purchased.
- A multistate, binational compact is in effect to coordinate the project.
- First phase of corridor is financed and under construction.

10 years

- Construction is on track for a 150 mph average speed Seattle to Portland link.

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Mary Fleckenstein, Washington Joint Transportation Committee
Lloyd Flem, All Aboard Washington
Hayley Gamble, Washington Senate Transportation Committee staff
Ray Gastil, Gastilworks Planning & Design
Mitch Greenlick, Oregon House of Representatives
Mara Gross, Coalition for a Livable Future
Jeff Hale, HDR
Mary Margaret Haugen, Washington State Senate
Charles Kelly, The Cascadia Center
George Kloepfel, Lane Council of Governments
David Knowles, CH2M Hill
Brian Lawson, Portland State University
Robert Liberty, Metro Council
Lloyd Lindley, Landscape Architect
Anne-Marie Lundberg, Tangent Services
Mary Kyle McCurdy, 1000 Friends of Oregon
Geoff Meggs, City Council, Vancouver, BC
Linda Modrell, Benton County, Oregon
Sara Morrissey, Portland State University
Ralph Munro, Talgo
Nancy Nathanson, Oregon House of Representatives
Robert Paddon, TransLink
Brian Painley, CH2M Hill West Transportation
Jeff Parker, David Evans & Associates
Brad Perkins, Perkins Realty
Kitty Piercy, City of Eugene
Michael Pracht, US Railcar Company
Chris Rall, Transportation for America
Victor Salemann, David Evans & Associates
Sam Seskin, CH2M Hill
Rosemary Siipola, Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments
Tom Skancke, The Skancke Company
Elliot Smith, Western Washington University
Lainie Smith, Oregon DOT
Dorthy Walker, Office of Representative Nancy Nathanson
Dave Warner, Parsons
Brendalee Wilson, City of Eugene
Andrew Wood, Washington State DOT
David Wu, U.S. House of Representatives
Martin Yurth, Amtrak Seattle