

# Why High Speed Rail

- Planning for Ultra High Speed Rail is essential for growth and development of regional economic development and mobility. A small investment today may yield great benefits in the future.
- Two recent studies <sup>[1]{2}</sup> highlight the potential that Seattle and Vancouver, BC, have to become an integrated innovation corridor and the benefits that high speed rail would bring to both cities and our region.
- Transportation is the most important factor in the economic integration of a region.

# 1992 High Speed Rail Study

## A. Background

In the Spring of 1991, the Washington State Legislature enacted Chapter 231, Laws of 1991 (SHB 1452) which directed that a comprehensive assessment be made of the feasibility of developing a high speed ground transportation system in the State of Washington. As justification, the Legislature stated their recognition that major transportation corridors in the state were reaching unacceptable levels of congestion, that most improvements were at best only temporary and that in addition to congestion in large metropolitan areas, intercity travel between the state's major cities was becoming increasingly difficult.

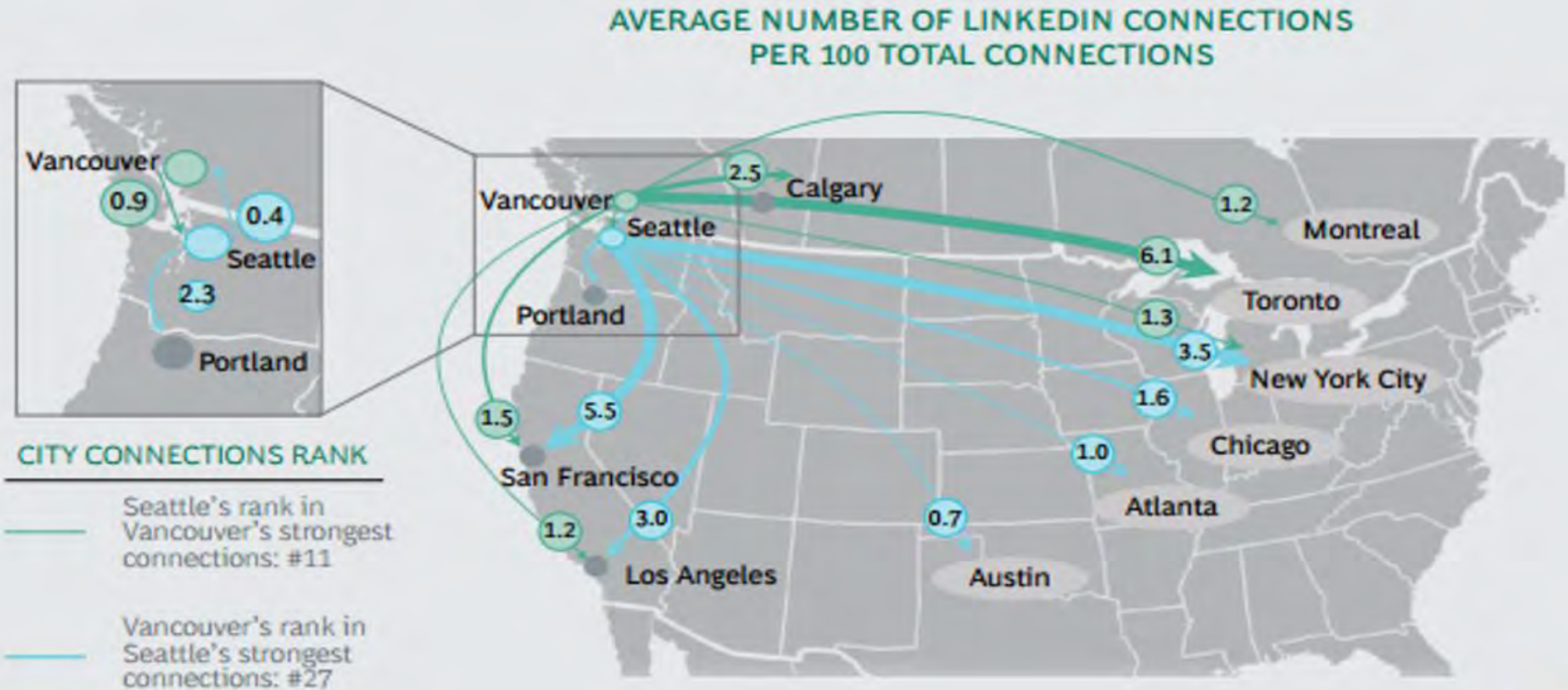
High speed ground transportation systems have gained world-wide attention both in this country and elsewhere in the world. State legislators and transportation officials were aware of the successful Japanese "bullet" trains, the French high speed trains and the German "magnetically levitated" vehicles. Other states either had carried out similar studies or were in some stage of development, though none have systems in operation. In fact, this study was not the first to be carried out in the state. A similar, but less comprehensive study, was carried out in the mid 1980's.

In addition to authorizing the study, the legislation created a steering committee to oversee the study work and content, and created an Office of High Speed Ground Transportation within the State Department of Transportation to provide staff support to the steering committee. The steering committee is composed of fifteen members including representatives from cities and counties (including both elected officials and planners), public transportation systems, the U.S. Department of Transportation, public ports, and the private sector including representatives from the financial community, the engineering/construction business, railroad companies, environmental interests and the legal profession. The committee also included the Secretary of Transportation (or designee), and voting liaison members representing the governor, the legislature, the transportation commission, and non-voting liaison representatives from the State of Oregon and the Province of British Columbia. The steering committee met starting in the fall of 1991 to review their charge and to formulate a scope of work. Early in 1992 they selected a consultant team to carry out the actual study work. The steering committee met monthly with the consultants, reviewing and approving work through most of 1992, until the acceptance of this final study report in October of 1992.

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# Average Number of LinkedIn Connections

EXHIBIT 2 | The Professional Network Connections of Seattle and Vancouver Residents



- This study is an important next step to exploring the use of ultra-high speed rail to connect hubs throughout the region
- High speed rail is not a goal unto itself but a critical investment that will unleash the potential of our region.
- A comprehensive regional vision for high speed rail will be a catalyst for building an integrated regional cluster that can unleash the potential of our businesses, innovators, and improve the quality of life of our citizens.

[www.fasttrackwa.org](http://www.fasttrackwa.org)



**FAST TRACK  
WASHINGTON**

High Speed Rail: Planning Washington's Economic Future

# Who We Are

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## **ABOUT**

**Who we are:** Fast Track Washington is a diverse coalition of business groups, labor unions, elected officials, and community based organizations that believe we need to think beyond borders and break down barriers to cooperation to improve our regions' economic potential and quality of life. We believe a key component of realizing that potential is Ultra High Speed Rail.

### **Coalition Partners:**

- Association of Washington Business
- Washington Roundtable
- Microsoft
- Washington Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO
- Puget Sound Regional Council
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
- Futurewise
- WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff
- Parametrix
- Governor Jay Inslee
- King County Executive Dow Constantine
- Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers
- Everett Mayor Ray Stephanson

# www.fasttrackwa.org resources

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## RESOURCES

**U.S. High Speed Rail Association:** <http://www.ushsr.com/>

**Ultra - High Speed Rail One Pager PDF**

[ultra-high-speed-rail-one-pager](#)

**Ultra - High Speed Rail Proviso in Governor Inslee's 2017-2019 Transportation Budget**

**Proviso Language:** [proviso-in-governor-inslees-2017-2019-transportation-budget](#)

The proviso can be found on page 22 of Governor Inslee's Proposed 2017-19 Transportation Appropriations Bill. Link: [http://www.ofm.wa.gov/budget17/bills/Tran1719\\_Z0220\\_3.pdf](http://www.ofm.wa.gov/budget17/bills/Tran1719_Z0220_3.pdf)

**1992 study that will be updated as referenced by Governor Inslee's proviso:** [1992-high-speed-ground-transportation-study-final-report](#)

**Letter of support from British Columbia Premier Christy Clark:** [british-columbia-premier-christy-clark-letter-of-support](#)

**Boston Consulting Group study on economic potential of Greater Seattle/Vancouver B.C. region:** <http://bcbc.com/pdfs/BCG-Better-Together-Cascadia-Innovation-Corridor-Sep-2016-00000.pdf>

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# Governor Inslee's Proviso

## Proviso in Governor Inslee's 2017-2019 Transportation Budget

The appropriations in this section are subject to the following conditions and limitations:

\$1,000,000 of the multimodal account—state appropriation is provided solely for a consultant study of ultra high-speed ground transportation. Ultra high-speed is defined as 250 mph and above. The study must identify the costs and benefits of ultra high-speed ground transportation along a north-south alignment in Washington state. The study must provide:

(1) An update to the "High Speed Ground Transportation

Study" commissioned by Chapter 231, Laws of 1991 and delivered to the governor and legislature on October 15, 1992;

(2) An analysis of an ultra high-speed ground transportation alignment between Vancouver, British Columbia and Portland, Oregon with stations in Vancouver, British Columbia, Bellingham, Everett, Seattle, SeaTac, Tacoma, Olympia, Vancouver, Washington and Portland, Oregon, with an option to connect with an east-west alignment in Washington state and with a similar system in the state of California;

(3) An analysis of the following key elements:

- (a) Economic feasibility;
- (b) Forecasted demand;
- (c) Corridor identification;
- (d) Land use and economic development and environmental implications;
- (e) Compatibility with other regional transportation plans including interfaces and impacts on other travel modes such as air transportation;
- (f) Technological options for ultra high-speed ground transportation both foreign and domestic;
- (g) Required specifications for speed, safety, access and frequency;
- (h) Identification of existing highway or railroad rights-of-way that are suitable for ultra highspeed travel including identification of additional rights of way that may be needed and the process for acquiring those rights of way;
- (i) Institutional arrangements for carrying out detailed system planning, construction and operations; and
- (j) An analysis of potential financing mechanisms for an ultra high-speed travel system.

(4) The department shall provide a report of its findings to the governor and transportation committees of the legislature by December 15, 2017. |



# Footnotes

- 1. Carol, David J. "Cascadia High-Speed Rail Opportunity." 2016.
- 2. Wenstrup, John Andersen, Phillip and St. Clair, Will Boston Consulting Group, "Better Together: The Cascadia Innovation Corridor Opportunity." 2016.