Passenger Rail Service in Washington State

Washington State Transportation Commission

Spokane

15 November 2017
Today’s Information

• Passenger Rail Service in Washington State
  – National Long Distance Trains
  – *Amtrak* Cascades – State Supported Service

• Amtrak in Washington State
  – Amtrak Facility, Employment, and Investments

• Economic Impact of Passenger Rail Service

• Public Transportation Issues, Challenges and Successes
Amtrak National Long Distance Trains

• **Empire Builder**
  – Service between Chicago and Seattle/Portland
  – 2 trains daily
  – Seattle Amtrak Facility provides mechanical, inspection, and turn-around service

• **Coast Starlight**
  – Service between Los Angeles and Seattle
  – 2 trains daily
  – Seattle Amtrak Facility provides mechanical, inspection, and turn-around service
Amtrak Cascades – State Supported Corridor

- **Amtrak Cascades Corridor**
  - 467 mile corridor total
    - 18 stations
    - 300 miles in WA State

- **Amtrak Cascades Service**
  - Four (4) round trips Seattle-Portland
  - One (1) round trip Portland-Eugene
  - One (1) round trip Seattle-Eugene, via Portland
  - One (1) round trip Portland-Vancouver, BC, via Seattle
  - One (1) round trip Seattle-Vancouver, BC

**A total of 6 round trips between Seattle and Portland—an increase of 2 round trips as a result of the Federal ARRA program**

- **Washington State Rail Plan**
  - planned growth for hourly service between Seattle and Portland - 13 roundtrips daily
Passenger Rail Ridership in WA State – All Services

Washington State Amtrak Ridership - Total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ridership</th>
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<tr>
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<td>1,098,115</td>
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<td>2016</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>1,284,638</td>
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Passenger Rail Riders – State Supported Corridor

Amtrak Cascades Ridership

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<th>Year</th>
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Amtrak in Seattle and Washington State

• Employment
  – At the end of FY16, employed 511 Washington residents with total wages of $37,116,528
  – Over 300 employees at the S.Holgate facility that operates 24/7, 365 days/yr

• Procurement/Contracts
  – FY17 - Amtrak spent $18,472,224 on goods and services, Kirkland, Redmond, Seattle, Spokane, & Tacoma

• Major Facilities
  – Seattle Amtrak Facility. Amtrak invested $42 million in the first 2 phases of a comprehensive facility to address the needs of long distance, state-supported, and commuter partner trains.
  – Amtrak spent $2 million design process for Phases 3 & 4
  – In 2017, Amtrak awarded a construction contract (approx. $30M) for the new locomotive shop
Economic Impact of Passenger Rail Service – FY 16

• Amtrak in WA State
  – Supports 1,740 jobs
  – $84,428,000 in earnings

• Effect on Tourism/Broader Economy
  – Tourism
    - 49% of riders are tourist
    - $4,457,000 in tourist spending
    - $445,000 in federal taxes
    - $141,000 in State taxes
  – Broader Economy
    - Emission reduction from traveling by train - $966,000
    - Cost saving from lower risk of traveling by train - $7,947,000
Public Transportation Issues, Challenges and Successes

• State Rail Plan
  – Comprehensive document that has positioned the State to..
    - Leverage federal funding
    - Incrementally grow the rail passenger service
    - North/South based on current plans
    - East/West service supported by long-term vision
Public Transportation Issues, Challenges and Successes

• Successes
  
  - **Ridership**:  
    - rebounding after a slight decline due to major capital projects (in WA and adjacent states) and congestion
  
  - **Stations**:  
    - 2 additional stations in WA State, Stanwood (Amtrak Cascades), Leavenworth (Empire Builder SEA-SPK)
    - Request from Ritzville (Empire Builder PDX-SPK)
  
  - **Service**:  
    - 2 additional round trips between Seattle and Portland
    - Interest in new service to Eastern Washington
      - via Stampede pass serving Ellensburg, Yakima, Tricities
    - Additional Seattle/Spokane round trip on existing route
Public Transportation Issues, Challenges and Successes

• Challenges
  – Constrained fiscal environment at both the State and Federal Level
  – Federal Legislation
    - Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA)
      - Section 209 – States must pay the operating costs on routes that are less 750 miles in length

• Opportunities & Observations
  – State Rail Plan
  – Federal Grant Programs
  – Population of the State
    - Growth
    - Decline in use of automobiles: aging population & younger generation
  – Type of Rail Passenger Service
    - Conventional and higher speed service
      - Providing efficient and productive transportation that is competitive with the car and air markets – city center to city center.
  – Leverage, and increase, multimodal transit (bus/light rail) connections to intercity rail service-both state-supported and long distance
  – Develop an integrated/layered passenger rail transportation system
Passenger Rail Service in Washington State

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• Thank you