

Support SB 1572 – ODOT Study Connecting Portland Metro-Area WES Commuter Train to Salem/Keizer Metro, Extending from Wilsonville to Salem

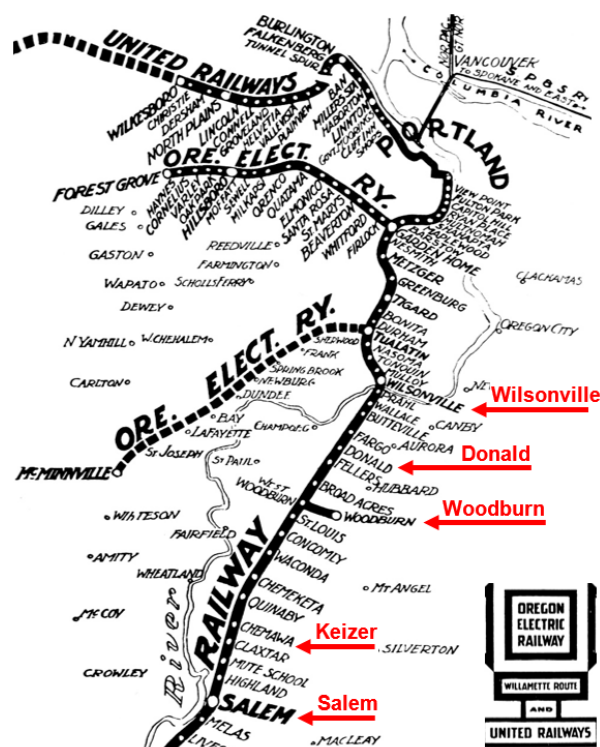
Portland–Salem/Keizer Metro Areas WES I-5 Commuter Rail Extension Study Coalition

With 27 legislators as co-sponsors, SB 1572 is a bipartisan, bicameral legislative concept to advance high-capacity transit option for Oregonians and visitors.

SB 1572 creates a multi-organizational task force—the Westside Express Advisory Committee—composed of local governments, transit agencies, railroads and public-interest groups to study extending the current rush-hour-only Westside Express Service (WES) commuter train from the current southern terminus in Wilsonville for 31 miles to Salem, with stops in Donald, Woodburn and Keizer. The bill calls for ODOT to report back to the legislature in December 2024 with study findings and recommendations. A similar bill during the 2023 session, HB 2662, passed unanimously by the Joint Committee on Transportation.

- **Increasing population** of Portland metro and North Willamette Valley region needs mobility options, especially for commuters and seniors, many who require transportation for jobs, education and medical appointments.
- **I-5 traffic congestion continues to worsen** and prospective ODOT tolling of I-205 and I-5 in Portland metro area requires a reliable public-transit alternative unaffected by highway traffic congestion and tolls.
- **Additional Federal Transit Administration (FTA) support** for high-capacity transit WES commuter rail service connecting METRO and SKATS—two federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) Transportation Management Areas (TMAs)—that can increase ridership.
- **Transit commuting and shopping option supports economic-development efforts** of North Willamette Valley communities.
- **Use of former Oregon Electric Railway line**, now owned by Portland & Western and BNSF Railroads, which support the WES extension study, that operated 1908 – 1933.

- **SB 1572 is supported** by the Cities of Aurora, Beaverton, Donald, Hubbard, Keizer, Salem, Tualatin, Tigard, Wilsonville and Woodburn; the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments; Salem Area Mass Transit District (“Cherriots”), SMART (South Metro Area Regional Transit) and Yamhill County Transit; 1000 Friends of Oregon; Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates, Travel Salem; and the railroads.



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