



AORTA

**Association of Oregon Rail and
Transit Advocates**

JCT Testimony - April 8th, 2025

Support for SB 1202

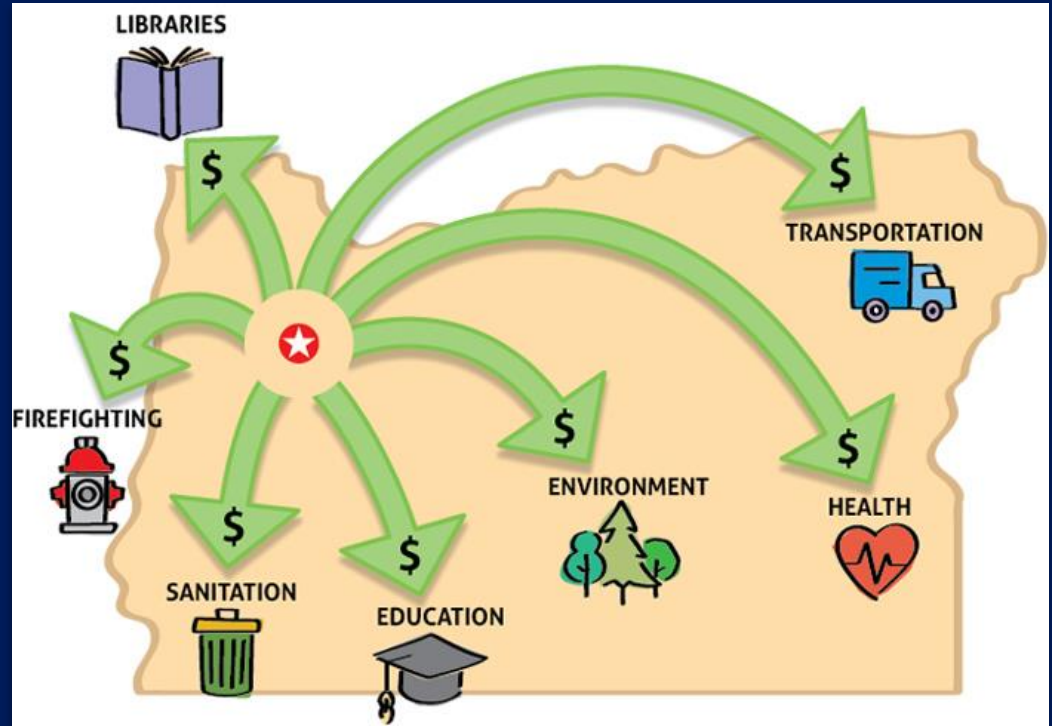


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Government 101

Departments, funding, and projects all come from community needs and shared priorities.





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SB 1202

Create a new department,
**Oregon Department of Rail
and Public Transportation**,
to reflect a need for a
dedicated 'home'





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**Unasked, unanswered questions
regarding our statewide passenger
rail and statewide public
transportation connectivity...**





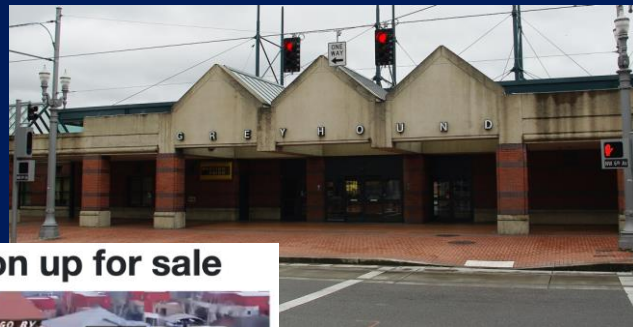
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Unasked, unanswered questions

What should be done about Portland Union Station and Greyhound Station, amidst record breaking ridership of Amtrak Cascades passenger rail in 2024 and 2023?

Oregonians and visitors, tourists rely on connection.



Portland puts Union Station up for sale



FOX 12 Now visits Portland Union Station and talk with Shawn Uhlman of Portland Prosper about the history of the building and the city's desire to sell it.



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Unasked, unanswered questions

What does Oregon / ODOT need from the transportation package to be shovel ready and 'seize the moment' following a 2025 Federal Railroad Administration report recommending restoration of the **Amtrak Pioneer**?

Could we have Eastern Oregon passenger rail within a decade?

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OPB

contribute



In The News

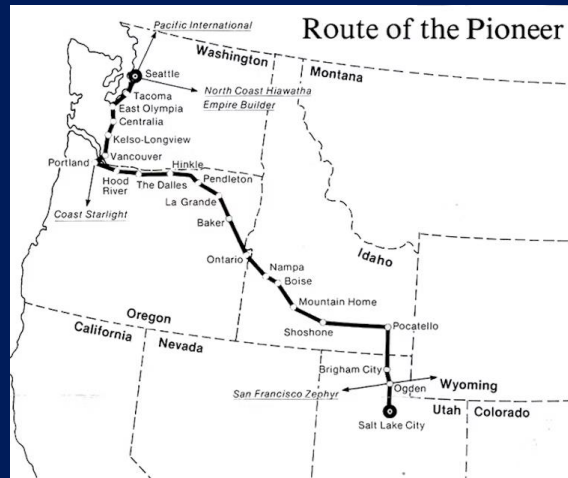
Thornburgh resort

Flooding

Preschool For All

Plane crash

Federal report recommends bringing Amtrak service back to Eastern Oregon





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Unasked, unanswered questions

Why didn't we all know the STIF was headed towards a fiscal cliff? Either the past 6 months, or projected into forward years?

What is the state of effective STIF coordination between ODOT and agencies?

The screenshot shows the OPB (Oregon Public Broadcasting) website. The top navigation bar includes the OPB logo, a 'contribute' button, and a search icon. Below the navigation bar, there is a 'In The News' section with links to 'Thornburgh resort', 'Flooding', 'Preschool For All', and 'Plane crash'. The main article is titled 'Oregon transit agencies warn lawmakers of service cuts without a funding hike' and is categorized under 'POLITICS'. The article is by Dirk VanderHart (OPB) and was published on March 28, 2025 at 2:58 p.m. A share icon is visible below the title.



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Unasked, unanswered questions

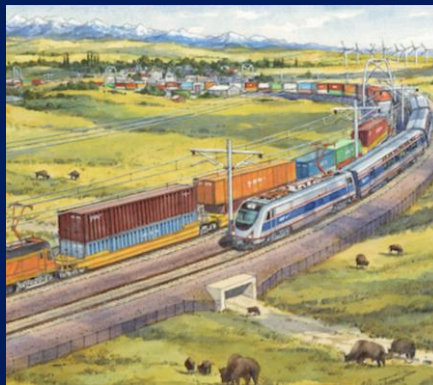
What are plans, opportunities, and funding needs for electrification of passenger rail or the WES?

Do we have a timeline or vision for faster, greener, reliable electric rail?

A Cleaner, Faster, and More
Reliable Commuter Rail Powered
by Electricity

A Progress Report on the Electrification of
Massachusetts' MBTA Commuter Rail.

JUNE 25, 2024 | ALI HIPLE



TRAVEL

Caltrain's electrification project is paying off big-time

By **Olivia Harden**, Travel Reporter
Nov 14, 2024





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Unasked, unanswered questions

What should we doing to build a
strong and trained **railway workforce**
through HECC + education partners?

Oregon, through the Higher Education
Coordinating Commission, is
developing **trucking workforce**
partnerships with institutions and
2025 HB 3826, for example.

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OREGON WORKFORCE
PARTNERSHIP

A-Engrossed

House Bill 3826

Ordered by the House April 4
Including House Amendments dated April 4

Sponsored by Representative BOSHART DAVIS; Representatives BOICE, HARBICK, MUNOZ, WRIGHT

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act makes new laws for workforce development programs for the trucking industry. The Act takes effect when the Governor signs it. (Flesch Readability Score: 68.7).

Establishes a program within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to promote workforce development initiatives in the trucking industry.

Directs the commission to award grants to local workforce development boards to administer the program.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.



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Unasked, unanswered questions

What can, or should, Oregon and our freight railways do to mitigate or avoid hazards associated with oil and combustible train stock rolling through our most populous Portland city center?

Should we be investing in safer rail paths, or alternatives?

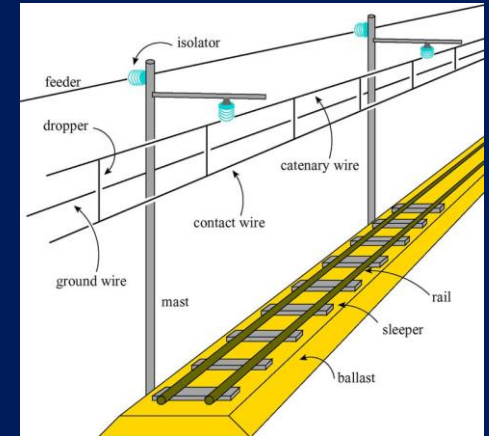
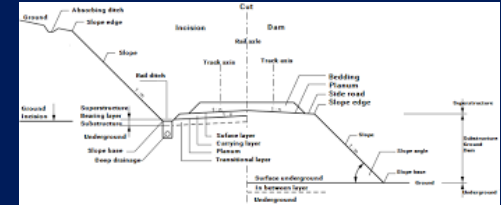
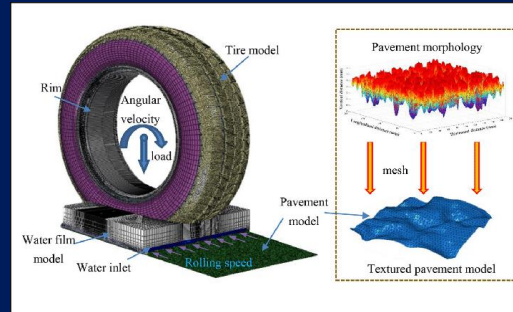
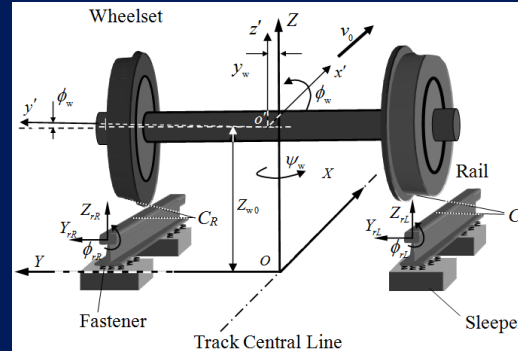
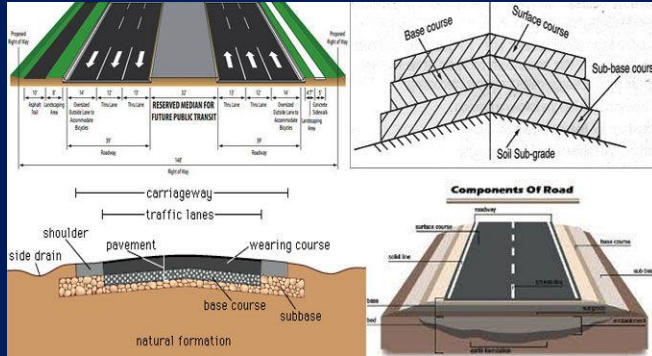




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Different engineering needs Steel-on-Steel vs. Rubber-on- Pavement





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Dedicated Statecraft Departmental Champion

Direct communication of
projects, progress,
opportunities.

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The screenshot shows the Oregon.gov website. The top navigation bar includes links for ODOT Home, Programs, Planning & Technical Guidance, Drivers & Vehicles, and a dropdown menu. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with Local Governments, Get Involved, and About Us. The main content area features a large image of a highway with cars and a truck, overlaid with the text "Public Transportation" and a stylized "T" logo. A breadcrumb trail at the bottom of the image reads: Home > Public Transportation > Rail Resources > Passenger Rail. Below the image, the heading "Passenger Rail" is displayed. To the left of the main text is a sidebar titled "ADDITIONAL RESOURCES" containing links for Training Opportunities, Public Transportation Programs Overview, and Public Transportation. The main text area contains a paragraph about passenger rail as part of the state's intermodal system, a link to learn more about Oregon's rail system, and a paragraph about the Amtrak Cascades service managed by the Oregon Department of Transportation in partnership with Washington State.

OREGON.GOV

ODOT Home Programs Planning & Technical Guidance Drivers & Vehicles ▾ Doi

Local Governments Get Involved ▾ About Us ▾

Public Transportation

Home > Public Transportation > Rail Resources > Passenger Rail

Passenger Rail

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Training Opportunities
- Public Transportation Programs Overview
- Public Transportation

Passenger rail is part of the state's intermodal and intercity transportation system. It provides an important transportation option for residents and visitors traveling the congested I-5 Corridor and connecting to Oregon's communities, regional and out of state destinations. You can learn more about Oregon's rail system [here](#).

The Oregon Department of Transportation manages the Amtrak Cascades intercity passenger rail service along the Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor in partnership with Washington State's Department of Transportation. The states pay Amtrak to operate the Amtrak Cascades service from Eugene to Vancouver, B.C.

- AMTRAK Cascades**
Portland to Eugene - 6x daily
Seattle 16x daily, Vancouver, BC 4x daily
- AMTRAK Coast Starlight**
Seattle, WA to Los Angeles, CA - 1x daily
- AMTRAK Empire Builder**
Portland, OR to Chicago, IL - 1x daily

- Northwest**
Portland to Astoria via Highway 26
- Willamette**
Portland to Eugene via Highway 99
- Cherriots BOX**
Salem to Lincoln City
- BAT Coast to Valley Express**
Albany to Newport
- Santiam**
Salem to Bend
- TCTD Coastliner**
Portland to Tillamook
- Columbia**
Portland to Astoria via Highway 30
- Lane Link**
Eugene to Florence
- Pacific**
Astoria to Brookings
- Umpqua**
Eugene to Ashland
- Warm Springs**
Portland to Bend
- McKenzie**
Eugene to Redmond via Bend
- Basin**
Bend to Klamath Falls
- Southwest**
Klamath Falls to Brookings
- High Desert**
Bend to Ontario via Highway 20
- Northeast**
Portland to Boise
- Greyhound Pasco**
Portland to Pasco
- John Day**
Bend to Ontario via Highway 26
- Deschutes**
Bend to Hood River

- CAT Columbia Gorge Express**
Gateway TC to Hood River - 7x daily
- Mt. Hood**
Portland to Mt. Hood - 3x daily (6x winter)
- Crater Lake**
Bend to Ashland - 2x daily, summer only



TRANSFER STATION
Color & logo denote
timed transfers

MINOR STATION

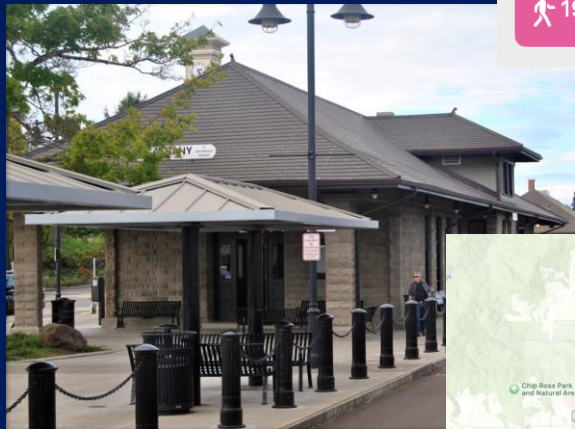


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Ability to integrate local transit and passenger rail

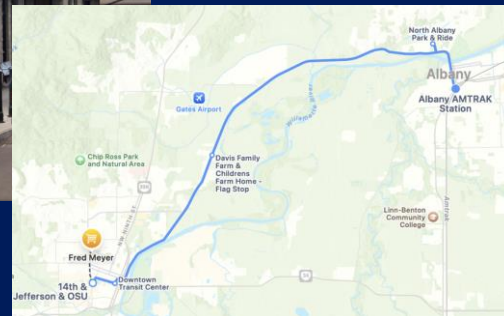
For my own family friends to
visit Portland, they to leave
around 2 hours early to take
public transit from Corvallis to
Albany Amtrak Station.



48 min

Leave by 6:18 AM · 7:06 AM ETA

19 min ▶   ▶ 2 min



“Oregon needs a dedicated department for Rail & Transit planning and operations to deliver fast, reliable, and frequent service. This could unlock connectivity, mobility, and economic prosperity for every Oregonian.”



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YES on SB 1202