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# ABOUT

## Who We Are

For over forty years, All Aboard Washington (AAWA) has promoted better passenger and freight rail service in the Pacific Northwest. We champion safe, reliable, frequent, competitive, and convenient passenger rail services that meet the needs of all Washingtonians. We are especially active supporters of intercity passenger rail service and intermodal connections to local transit.

## Mission Statement

To promote rail as an integral part of Washington state's transportation solutions and as a means for connecting our urban and rural communities.

## Goals

AAWA's goal is to create a safe, accessible, and sustainable transportation network that connects and benefits all Washingtonians.

### Improve Transportation Safety

Safety is All Aboard Washington's first priority. We support the continuous improvement of transportation safety for the benefit of the traveling public.

### Make Washington Accessible

The success of any society is predicated on how effectively it invests in its future and how comprehensively sustainable it is. All Aboard Washington supports fiscally, socially, and environmentally responsible investment in transportation solutions that carefully consider direct and indirect costs, benefits, and externalities.

### Make Sustainable, Responsible Transportation Investments

The success of any society is predicated on how effectively it invests in its future and how comprehensively sustainable it is. All Aboard Washington supports fiscally, socially, and environmentally responsible investment in transportation solutions that carefully consider direct and indirect costs, benefits, and externalities.

## Vision Statement

Our vision is for a transportation network that

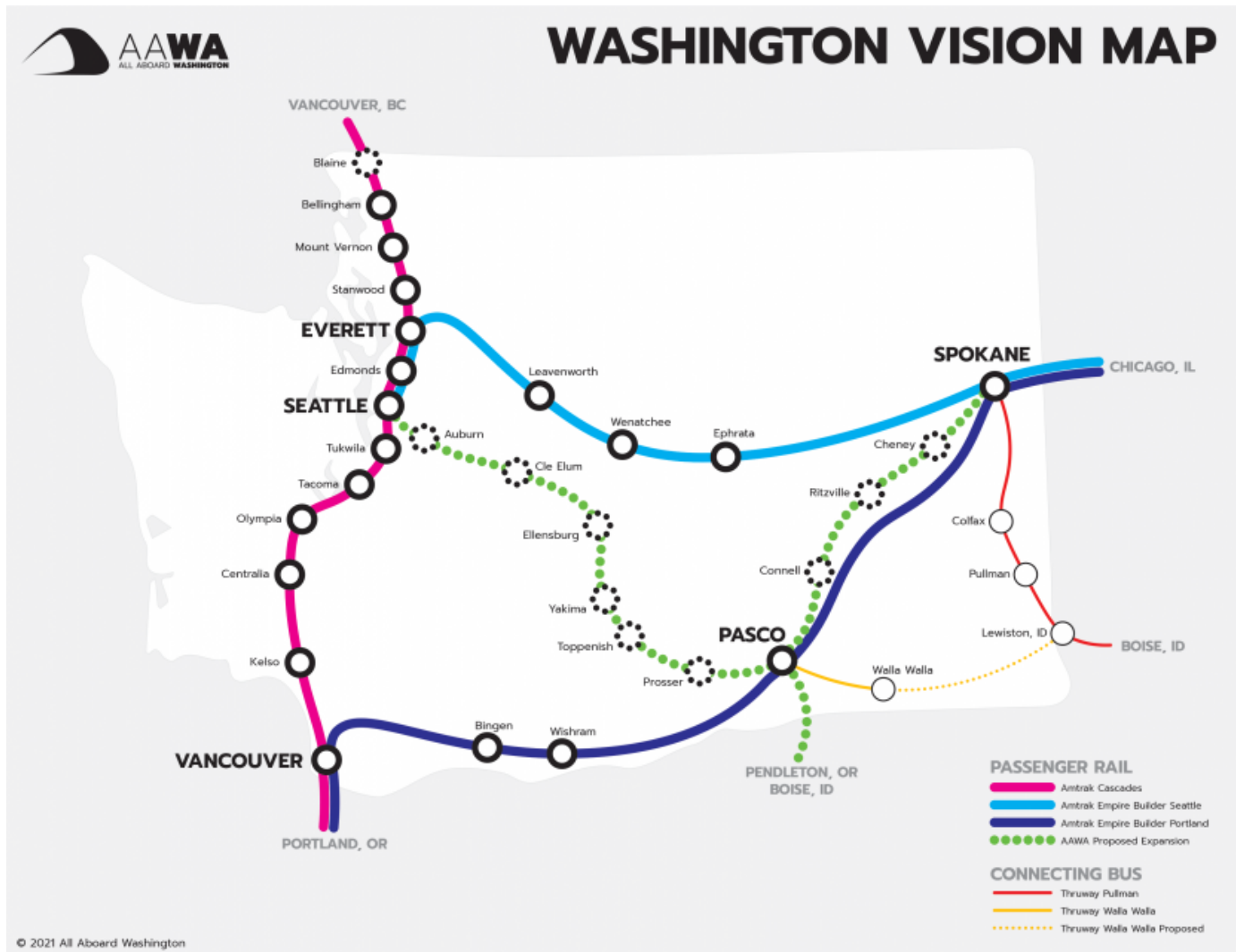
- Provides **seamless, door-to-door connectivity** to everyone in the region; and
- Offers **economic, environmental and equity benefits** to all, including **low-income, tribal, disability and rural communities**, locations where transportation alternatives are limited, and **those who cannot drive**

We must build a transportation network that will allow anyone to get from their homes to where they need to go – work, school, medical care, family and friends – even if they don't use a car. Non-drivers are a large and increasing fraction of the population, including the young, the old, the disabled, the poor, and those who are concerned about the planet's future.

We must join together with a coalition of environmental, economic development, equity, labor, and health organizations, and those representing rail, port, transit and other transportation modes to amplify our voices. No one will get exactly what we want, but we must take advantage of the unique circumstances we see today.

## Our Vision for Improving Rail in Washington

AAWA's vision is for a robust, interconnected transportation network, including improved train service, more frequencies on current *Cascades* service, new connections between Western, Central and Eastern Washington, and connections to local transportation.



We believe an expansive network of useful intercity passenger rail services is key to improving travel safety, increasing accessibility, facilitating economic stability, making the most of our limited financial resources, and reducing the environmental burden of transportation in the Northwest. In order to maximize the benefits of our rail network, we believe it is imperative that we:

### Maintain and Upgrade Existing Rail Infrastructure

Plenty of existing, underused freight rail infrastructure is spread across the Northwest and can be [restored or upgraded to accommodate passenger use](#). AAWA supports utilizing existing rail rights of way to create a comprehensive system of local, regional, and interstate train routes that serve communities small and large. We are especially supportive of improvements that foster the creation of [Emerging High-Speed Rail \(EHSR\)](#). EHSR allows existing passenger train equipment to be operated at top speeds that exceed conventional limits, but without the same infrastructure needs and freight train exclusion required for full HSR. Maximizing the utility of our current rail infrastructure will help us be prepared for HSR, which can serve as a faster, greener alternative to short-haul flights when integrated effectively with local and regional connecting services.

## Create a Multimodal Northwest Transportation Grid

While trains cannot reach every community on their own, rail lines act as spines from which other localized services can branch. AAWA encourages the agencies that interface with rail services to craft a [multimodal transportation grid](#) by creating and improving local connecting services. We strongly support improving the pedestrian, cycling, ferry, and local transit experience to make accessing train stations easy.

## Provide High-Quality Amenities and Services

Travelers have higher expectations than ever, and [passenger rail should rise to meet them](#). AAWA believes train stations and passenger cars should be equipped with the amenities needed to make them accessible, comfortable, and useful by modern standards. The latest scheduling, ticketing, and mapping technologies should be leveraged to make the entire experience seamless for every passenger. Offering reasonably frequent departures for every line will allow us to take advantage of economies of scale with track upgrades, station improvements, and equipment orders that give us a better bang-for-the-buck without compromising on utility.

## What We Want

Our vision is for a transportation network that

- Provides [seamless, door-to-door connectivity](#) to everyone in the region; and
- Offers [economic, environmental and equity benefits](#) to all, including [low-income, tribal, disability and rural communities](#), locations where transportation alternatives are limited, and [those who cannot drive](#)

We must build a transportation network that will allow anyone to get from their homes to where they need to go – work, school, medical care, family and friends – even if they don't use a car. Non-drivers are a large and increasing fraction of the population, including the young, the old, the disabled, the poor, and those who are concerned about the planet's future.

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AAWA's goal is to promote the development of Washington's rail system for the benefit of the traveling public. With state-supported services like Amtrak *Cascades*, we have the opportunity to improve our mix of transportation options by leveraging existing rail infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner as we work toward advanced, high-speed service in the future.

Many aspects of our current passenger rail system need to be improved:

- **Safety:** prioritize passenger safety
- **Frequency:** more trains on existing routes
- **Speed:** offer competitive travel times
- **Punctuality:** improve on-time performance
- **Serving more communities:** open stations in current trackside communities like [Blaine](#)
- **Cooperation:** ensure local, state, and regional agencies coordinate their activities to maximize connection opportunities
- **Expansion:** implement new routes on existing tracks where feasible, like [Yakima Valley service via Stampede Pass](#)

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