

Dave Rowe testimony to
Joint Interim Committee on Interstate 5 Bridge
December 15 ,2023

I have lived in Battle Ground since 2000

I am a member of AORTA and All Aboard Washington (AAWA).

My comments reflect both Rail Advocate organizations.

California has proven that more highways will not solve transportation gridlock and produce more smog. Yet the IBR program promises to add more cars to Southwest Washington.

Southwest Washington is blessed with three rail corridors. On the west side of Clark County is a rail corridor going north and south. On the south side of Washington state is a rail corridor going east and west. And then there is a rail corridor through the middle of Clark County which is owned by Clark County.

These assets could be upgraded to improve rail freight movement and add passenger service for the region. The cost would be much less than building more highways. Greenhouse emissions would be greatly reduced.

In 1915 alone four million citizens rode trains from Vancouver throughout the Willamette Valley.

We do not need to build more freeways in Clark County.

But a tunnel is a better alternative than the IBR planned high bridge. I am attaching a photo of a scale model Immersed Tube Tunnel designed by Robert Wallis and built by Dave Rowe

Email: DLRowe1910@icloud.com

Washington State Department of Transportation should include passenger rail service in the SR 503 Corridor Study Plan in. Rail travel is safer and provides equity to all citizens. To comment on SR-503: engage.wsdot.wa.gov/sr-503-corridor-study.

The Chelatchie Prairie Railroad parallels SR 503 from Vancouver to Yacolt. WSDOT is currently welcoming public comments for a study to improve transportation opportunities for SR 503 in Clark County. This concept study could use federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding for a cost-benefit analysis and economic analysis. Regional Rail could greatly reduce the 143,000 autos crossing the Columbia River. Plus reduce travel time to Portland by 50% compared to MAX light rail. The current **Cascades/AMTRAK** trains travel from Vancouver to Portland in fifteen minutes. The planned MAX light Rail from Vancouver to Portland would take 35 minutes. To combat global warming SW Washington needs Regional Passenger Rail service. More info: contact *Dave Rowe* Email DLRowe1910@icloud.com

Clark County RR

State Highway 503

Chelatchie Prairie



Yacolt



Battle Ground



Brush Prairie



Hazel Dell



Vancouver



Portland

Yacolt

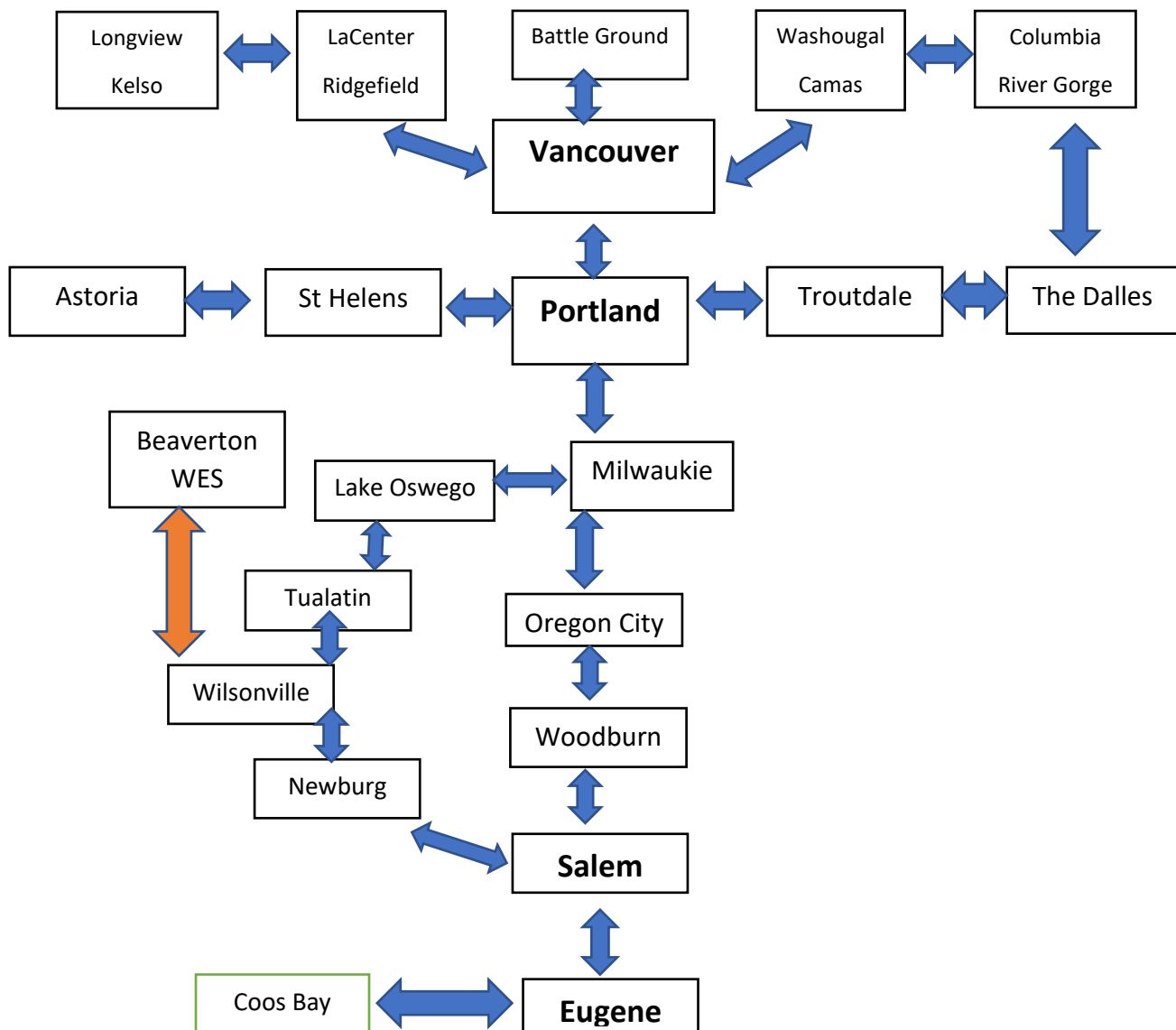


Vancouver

Regional Passenger Rail Service could help Climate Change and Equity

ODOT and WASHDOT needs to plan for passenger rail development. I-5 congestion could be reduced by developing regional electric passenger rail service on the existing rail lines from SW Washington through the Willamette Valley. Climate change can be reduced by regional electric passenger rail development in Oregon and Washington. A bus goes about one mile on a fifth of a gallon of diesel, costing about one dollar to move **40** passengers. The San Francisco BART passenger and other rail cars uses about 3.5 Kilowatt/Hour per mile costing about 35 cents to move **150** passengers. A fleet of Stadler Battery powered Passenger Cars (FLIRT) are in service in Germany which has proved to reduce carbon emissions. Battery or Hydrogen powered Rail cars could be used in the Northwest to reduce greenhouse gases. Regional Rail travel is faster than automobiles. Rail commuters could bypass the I-5 Bridge and the congested Rose Quarter to cross from Vancouver to Portland in less than 15 minutes. Tolling does little to reduce carbon emissions, while electric powered passenger rail cars have tremendous emission reduction. Rail travel provides safer travel and equity to all citizens. In 1915 four million people rode passenger trains in our area, we need to bring back rail service.

A Regional Passenger Rail system with only 17 foot wide right of way can move as many passengers per hour as a four-lane freeway. Rail is much cheaper and faster to build than a freeway. Passenger trains could travel during the day and Freight trains can use the same rails at night. The following map shows corridors which have freight rail tracks and could be modified relatively cheaply to add regional rail passenger service.





COLUMBIA RIVER WATERLINE

NORTH

43 FOOT WATER DEPTH
15 SOUTH
43 FOOT WATER DEPTH

WHO SOHO AND LARRY'S RESTAURANT

PURPOSE GREENSPACE



COLUMBIA WAY

APPROXIMATE SCALE