



February 23, 2023

Joint Committee on Transportation

HB 2692 Directs ODOT to work with WSDOT and BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to develop plans to operate and fund rail transportation.

Introduction – Address Committee – Brad Perkins, Co-Owner/President/CEO of Cascadia High Speed Rail Co. - Opposed to HB 2662, and Perkins Realty as a commercial real estate broker

Cascadia High Speed Rail Company (CHSR) supports HB 2692 and 2691. The CHSR Company has taken the lead in designing a high-speed rail corridor between Eugene and Vancouver, BC over the past 17 years.

Transportation Economics Management Systems (TEMS), based in Frederick Maryland, was hired to register with the federal government's Fix America's Surface Transportation Program for funding. Since then, the CHSR Company hired TEMS to complete a financial feasibility study of our corridor between Eugene and Seattle and a Tier I Environmental Impact Statement study between Portland and Seattle. TEMS is currently completing a more in-depth study of the financial rewards for companies such as Amazon, Fed Ex, UPS and Walmart to move parcel freight late at night or mid-day on the CHSR system to their transfer facilities near freeway interchanges. By leasing the CHSR corridor, private companies can help pay for up to 50% of the capital costs of construction via a private/public partnership. Private funding support for CHSR is very important to help get federal IIJA funding.

CHSR Company also hired Ankrom Moisan Architects in 2018 to plan and sometimes change the zone type to finance and develop CHSR stations in Portland, Vancouver WA, Tacoma and Seattle. This type of land-use planning around station transportation hubs for livable communities includes mixed housing, retail, office, food stores and entertainment gives people a great opportunity to not having to own a car. The transportation hubs will be centers for buses, Uber, MAX, bikeways and pedestrians, reducing CO2 emissions and satisfying equity goals.

At the February 21<sup>st</sup> JCT Hearing, Keith Wilson stated that Amtrak's northwest corridor is on record as being the worst on-time service in America. He also informed the Committee that Pete Buttigieg, US Secretary of Transportation, stated that the Cascadia region is number 3 on the list to get IIJA high-speed rail funding. Wilson's contacts with the NW Congressional Delegation and CHSR Company's advanced planning, economic feasibility and environmental studies may result in the Cascadia region receiving \$1 billion in IIJA funds for high-speed rail.

It makes no sense to "low ball" our efforts by improving a 150 year old, privately owned freight rail corridor built in a bygone era to move freight with an average speed of 42 miles per hour. No matter how much money and time are wasted on Union Pacific Railroad's antiquated system, it cannot move commuters, long-distance passengers and parcel freight at speeds and frequency to attract private investment in a new, double-track, electrified, dependable, high-speed rail system.

In the near future, we will be completing financial studies to show Amazon and other companies who transport parcel freight the efficiency and profitability in leasing CHSR tracks. CHSR Company will also show to public representatives the economic and political advantages in investing only half of the capital expenditure in development of the CHSR corridor.

The Cascadia High Speed Rail Company funding plan will save the public 50% in corridor development cost and also save a great deal in construction costs by avoiding the California model of construction and instead using the section pre-fab gantry lift system used all over China and other counties which saves time and materials.

Brightline is building and operating high-speed rail corridors in Florida and southern California to Las Vegas, Nevada, and is a company we may join forces with to build and operate the CHSR system using the Japanese Shinkansen private/public partnership model with 50% of the costs paid by the public, 40% paid privately and 10% paid in property tax revenues from new station hub developments.

Of the nearly 5,000 employees at the Oregon Department of Transportation, no one has the technical knowledge in corridor planning, financing, coordinating, building and promoting a new transportation system as challenging and technically advanced as high-speed rail. It can only be developed privately with funding and corridor acquisition support from ODOT and WSDOT.

Surveys conducted by Cascadia Innovation Corridor prove that 65% of the public is in support of high-speed rail in Cascadia. TEMS studies have shown that there is great return on investment for both the private and public sector.

CHSR Company is ready to work in partnership with ODOT and WSDOT in securing \$20 million to conduct a Tier II Environmental Impact Statement study for a high-speed rail corridor between Eugene, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington. Within 18 months the EIS study could be ready for a Record of Decision from the Federal Rail Administration.

The future is now to move forward with an advanced CHSR cost and time saving plan for funding and constructing a fast moving, green job creating, transportation system. Oregon and Washington Legislatures' and Governors' help is needed to have ODOT and WSDOT work with us in this stepped-up approach to climate and equity changing need.