



October 1, 2013

Preliminary Alternatives



Preliminary Alternatives

Oct. 3, 2013

Multiple preliminary alternatives were developed for intercity passenger rail travel between the Eugene-Springfield and Portland-Vancouver, Wash. urban areas, each under the assumption that they would carry up to seven round-trip trains per day. The preliminary alternatives and options are based on the corridor concepts that passed initial screening in January.

The corridor concepts were refined into the preliminary alternatives after extensive stakeholder engagement from February through May and following additional engineering work. Portions of some corridor concepts (e.g., purple) passed the initial screening and are part of preliminary alternatives that also use parts of other corridor concepts. In addition to the main alignment, each preliminary alternative has one or more options that were also evaluated. These options are described below and shown on the accompanying map as dashed lines.

Blue Alternative: The blue alternative generally follows the existing Amtrak Cascades route, along or near the Union Pacific Railroad line between Eugene-Springfield and Portland. It crosses the Willamette River in Portland near Union Station before continuing north, either on or near existing BNSF tracks, to Vancouver, Wash. The blue alternative could use existing stations.

One option for the blue alternative would include adding new track through Parrish Gap south of Salem to shorten the route. A second option would provide a new station east of the Willamette River near Portland's Rose Quarter, and then continue on new track through northeast and north Portland to Vancouver, Wash.

Red Alternative: The red alternative runs along Interstate 5, either just inside of or near the current highway right of way. It follows I-5 from Springfield to the Interstate 205 interchange. Turning east, it follows I-205 north and Interstate 84 west into central Portland (this section was presented previously as the "brown" corridor concept). North of Union Station in Portland, the red alternative would continue on the BNSF line to Vancouver, Wash.

The red alternative along I-5 and I-205 would be on all new track dedicated to intercity passenger rail service. It would use existing rail lines west of the I-205/I-84 interchange to Vancouver, Wash. The red alternative could use Portland Union Station, but would bypass existing stations in Eugene, Albany and Salem. It could include new stations in Springfield, Albany, Salem/Keizer and the southern Portland metro area communities for all passenger trains traveling through Oregon.



Preliminary Alternatives

One option for the red alternative would leave the I-5 corridor south of Albany and use existing track to the existing Albany station and then return to I-5. Another option would provide a route to a new station in Portland's Rose Quarter and continue through northeast and north Portland to Vancouver, Wash., using an eastside alignment option described above for the blue alternative. For this option, the Portland Union Station would be bypassed.

Purple Alternative: The purple alternative uses portions of the existing Oregon Electric line operated by Portland & Western Railroad. It also includes portions of the blue alignment from the Eugene station to the Eugene rail yard; from south of Albany to Keizer; and from Aurora to Vancouver, Wash. It would follow the Oregon Electric line from the Eugene rail yard to south of Albany, where a new connection to the blue alternative alignment would be built. The purple alternative would leave the blue alternative alignment near Keizer and use the Oregon Electric line to just south of Donald, where a new connection to the blue alternative alignment south of Aurora would be built. This alternative could use the existing stations.

One option for the purple alternative is to go to Wilsonville and then connect to the red alternative alignment. A second option would bypass Aurora before connecting to the blue alternative alignment south of Canby.

Yellow Alternative: The yellow alternative would use the purple alternative alignment from the Eugene station to Junction City. New track would be built from Junction City to Monroe, and then would connect to the existing rail line through Corvallis to Albany, where it would join the blue alternative. This yellow alternative could use most of the existing stations, but it would bypass the Albany station and include a new station in Corvallis.

An option for the yellow alternative is to leave the existing rail line in south Corvallis and build new track along Highway 34 that would connect to the blue alternative south of Albany. This option could use the existing Albany station.