

Joint Transportation Committee

Feasibility of an East-West Intercity Passenger Rail System for Washington State

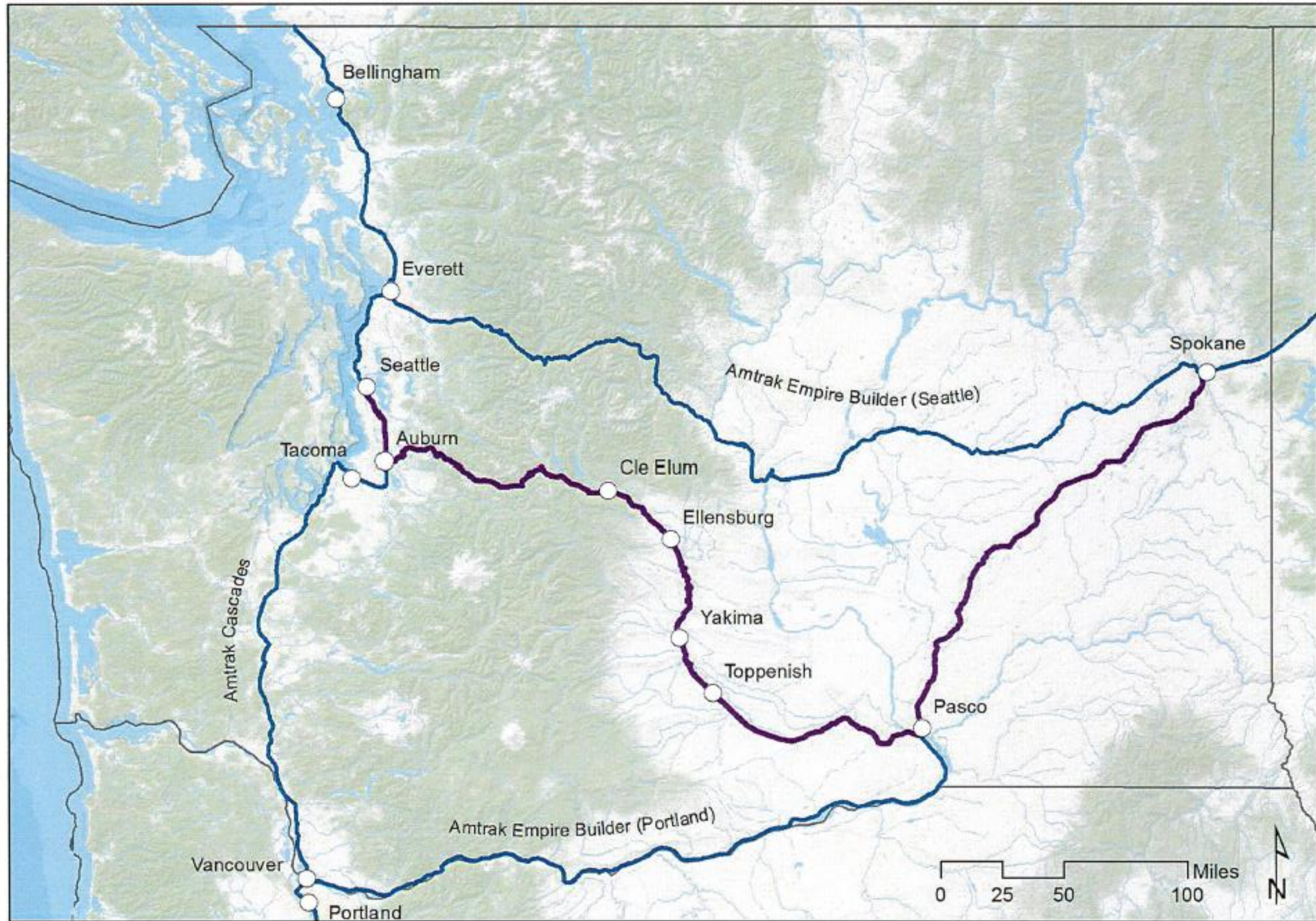
Study overview and update

December 2019

steer

Content

- 1 Study Scope
- 2 Work to Date
- 3 Key Next Steps



Steer

Steer is an international transport planning company

We are employee-owned

We have 480 staff world-wide

With offices in Boston, New York, Washington, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Vancouver and Toronto.

Recent work includes:

- Washington Ultra-High Speed Ground Transportation Study with WSP
- Link Light Rail – Operational Analysis Framework consultant
- Sounder South Rail Planning
- Amtrak Ridership and Revenue Forecasting
- MBTA Rail Vision

Scope of Work



Study Scope - Objectives

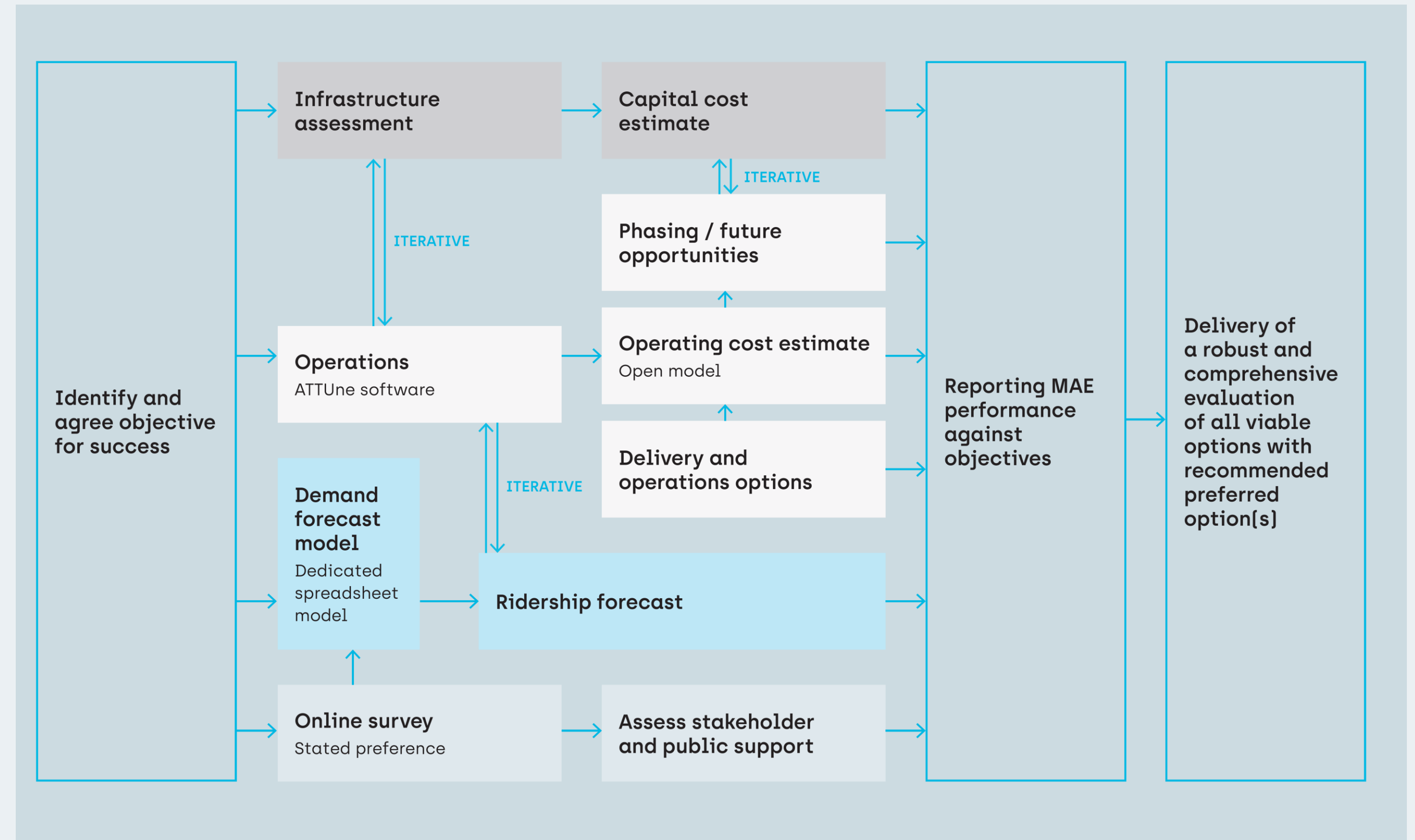
Undertake an analysis of providing a rail service on the Stampede pass corridor to best serve Auburn, Cle-Elum, Yakima, Ellensburg, Tri-Cities, Toppenish and Spokane. To identify possible service patterns and their associated:

- Ridership;
- The infrastructure improvements needed and the costs;
- The equipment needed and associated costs;
- The cost and approach to operation.

Study Scope

The key elements of the study include:

- Undertake an iterative process to:
 - Identify possible operating strategies and schedules
 - Undertake an assessment of the current infrastructure
 - Estimate potential ridership
 - Identifying any infrastructure needed
 - Capital costs
 - Ridership
 - Options for operation
 - Equipment needs
 - Operating costs



- Completion in June 2020

Work to Date

- Engagement / stakeholder outreach
 - Engaged with the JTC Workgroup
 - Met with BNSF and gained their support for the study
 - Undertaken two stakeholder events in Yakima and Pasco
- We have obtained the information to develop a ridership model for the corridor
 - Model development is ongoing
- We have obtained track data from BNSF
 - Scheduling model constructed and ready to test options
 - We are developing passenger journey times for corridor
 - We are assessing where alignment or speed improvements are possible

What we have Learned to Date

- Stakeholder support of passenger rail
 - Greater support in the Yakima Valley
 - Tri-cities and surrounding stakeholders concerned by the possible length of a trip
 - The need for journey times to be competitive to the car
 - Concerned by the reducing options – loss of intercity bus service
- BNSF
 - Supportive of the study
 - Highlighted that when the highway and roads have issues with snow they also have issues on the Stampede corridor
 - Long distances without passing facilities on a predominantly single track corridor (Auburn to Pasco)

Next Steps



Next Steps – Early Next Year

- Identify possible operating strategies and schedules
 - Considering one or two trains per day in each direction – Spokane to Seattle via Pasco
 - Consider service connectivity to provide east connection to
 - Empire Builder
 - Cascades services
 - Sounder services (Commuter and LRT)
 - Amtrak services
- Undertake wider online public and stakeholder engagement
 - To identify needs, opportunities and support for rail service
 - Inform the calibration of the ridership model
- Test possible options within Scheduling tool and Ridership model
- Identify infrastructure improvements and adjust operating strategies and schedule to optimize

Next Steps – Spring

- Refine the options
- Estimate operating and capital costs
- Identify possible operator strategies
- Document the findings

Deliverables - Early Summer

- Report, including
 - Ridership chapter detailing:
 - Methodology
 - Assumptions
 - Ridership projections
 - Operations chapter detailing:
 - Options developed
 - Results
 - Infrastructure chapter detailing:
 - Current conditions
 - Improvements needed
 - Costs
 - Equipment chapter detailing:
 - Equipment needs
 - Costs
 - Operator options chapter detailing:
 - Possible options for service operation
- Community support chapter detailing:
 - Outreach undertaken
 - Results
- Multiple account evaluation chapter detailing:
 - Metrics identified
 - Overview of the options considered
- Draft; and,
- Final report

Account	Criteria	Option 1	Option 2
Financial	Capital Cost	\$350 M	\$400M
	Operating cost	\$8 M	\$12 M
	Revenue	\$2.5 M	\$4.0 M
Transportation	Service Quality		
	Journey time	7 ½ Hrs	6 ¾ Hrs
	Ridership	125,000	200,000
	Catchment	1.5 M	1.5 M
	Connectivity (wider)		
	Connectivity (transit)		
Economic	Equity		
	Economic benefits		
	Journey time reliability		
Deliverability	Complexity of infrastructure		
	Phasing Opportunity		

Questions



Thank you

Please contact:

Ian Sproul

Associate

ian.sproul@steergroup.com

604 629 2873

DISCLAIMER: This work may only be used within the context and scope of work for which Steer was commissioned and may not be relied upon in part or whole by any third party or be used for any other purpose. Any person choosing to use any part of this work without the express and written permission of Steer shall be deemed to confirm their agreement to indemnify Steer for all loss or damage resulting therefrom.