

Vancouver Rail Project Fact Sheet

What is the Vancouver Rail Project?

The Vancouver Rail Project, located in Vancouver, Washington, will add two new bypass tracks at the Vancouver rail yard, by West 39th Street and Fruit Valley Road. A new vehicle/pedestrian/bicycle bridge will also be constructed at West 39th Street to eliminate the rail/vehicle conflicts.

More than 100 trains pass through the Vancouver rail yard each day. It serves as a major hub for freight and passenger rail traffic.

Will this project affect traffic on West 39th Street?

Studies conducted show that during afternoon peak travel time on West 39th Street traffic will increase with the completion of the project by 60 percent for vehicles heading eastbound, and by 14 percent for vehicles heading westbound. Other traffic in the vicinity will decrease as a result of the bridge. Traffic on Fourth Plain Road will decrease by 5 percent heading eastbound, as well as a slight decrease heading westbound.

What work was recently done along West 39th Street?

From May 8 through May 19, minor lane closures occurred along West 39th Street while crews completed drilling to test soils and gather data for the bridge that is scheduled for construction as part of the project.

How long will the West 39th Street railroad crossing be closed during construction?

West 39th Street closure is scheduled to be closed one to two years during construction.

Will this project increase the number and frequency of trains?

Beginning July 1, the number of Amtrak trains through this area will increase from the current eight passenger trains per day to ten. This increase of passenger trains is possible as a result of several smaller rail improvements over the last five years. Amtrak's on-time performance will improve as a result of the project.

Freight traffic will continue to grow, whether or not the project is built. The BNSF Railway Company projects the number of trains will grow at about three percent per year for the next 20 years.

Will there be access changes along with the project?

Access to some businesses and residences along West 39th Street will be changed to allow for the construction of the bridge and approaches.

Olive Street

BNSF owns the property to the south of 39th Street where Olive Street connects to West 39th Street. Olive Street, east of the railroad tracks and south of West 39th Street, will be terminated in a cul-de-sac, separating it from West 39th Street.

Cherry Street

Cherry Street, east of the railroad tracks and north of the West 39th Street, will be rerouted to allow for continued access to the city street system. It will access West 39th Street directly to the east and up hill from where it connects now.

Thompson Avenue

Thompson Avenue, which connects to West 39th Street where a new frontage road will be built, will continue to connect to the frontage road or may end in a cul-de-sac short of the frontage road. Continued pedestrian access between Thompson and West 39th Street will be maintained regardless of the roadway access.

To the west of the tracks, a one-way frontage road that loops under the new bridge will allow access only to Fruit Valley Road. This frontage road is necessary for local residential and business access.

Will the noise levels warrant a noise barrier?

WSDOT and FHWA have established criteria and a process for measuring and analyzing noise. Engineers use the results from these tests to determine the need for noise barriers. The project team will continue to address potential noise issues as they move through project design.

How will this project affect access for emergency services?

The bridge over the railroad tracks at West 39th Street will allow emergency vehicles to use this route instead of detouring around it, as currently done due to the high amount of time trains block today's railroad grade crossing.