

**June 2014 – in review**

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#### **WSDOT recommends central location for Freighthouse Square Station in Tacoma**

In the fifth public meeting since January 2014 on the location for Freighthouse Square station, WSDOT shared research and analysis on costs, schedules and future expansion needs for the final three potential sites (central, east end and west side). Cost estimates indicated that the east end would cost about two times more for operations and maintenance than the central or west side locations and would not have additional benefits for the higher cost. In addition, the east end location is an unacceptable distance for passengers to walk to the south platform and limits future growth opportunities for service. WSDOT asked the 75 attendees for feedback on the west and central locations. The preferred central location, which will be forwarded to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), is a compromise that meets the expectations and requirements for an Amtrak station location. WSDOT will continue to work with stakeholders from Amtrak, Sound Transit, City of Tacoma, City Council and community groups during the design phase for the central location. A public meeting will be scheduled to share design concepts and to gather ideas on several design elements. Once approved by the FRA, construction will start in late 2015-early 2016.

#### **FRA goes on site at Kelso Martins Bluff projects**

In late May 2014, officials from the FRA safety and policy development divisions visited southwest Washington for an on-site review of the Kelso Martins Bluff projects (near Kalama). FRA had a special interest in the Toteff Road project near the Port of Kalama, where WSDOT and BNSF Railway Company are proposing an at-grade crossing at the Toteff Road and Hendrickson Drive intersection off of I-5. WSDOT Rail, BNSF, Port of Kalama, Utilities and Transportation Commission, and Cowlitz County staff answered questions from FRA officials. The federal rail agency will use this data-gathering trip to provide concurrence on the proposed design. The Kelso Martin's Bluff projects are scheduled for construction in early 2015.

#### **WSDOT, BNSF and Amtrak minimize summer construction impacts**

At WSDOT's request, Amtrak worked closely with BNSF to determine ways to minimize impacts to Amtrak Cascades customers north of Seattle during construction of federally funded passenger rail improvements in summer 2014. As a result of the negotiations, all trains will be in operation, and schedule changes and resulting revenue loss will be nominal. Earlier proposals by BNSF would have shifted train schedules by one hour or more, causing significant losses in revenue. More information on the Seattle to Vancouver, B.C., schedule changes that go into effect July 7, 2014, are available online:

[www.amtrakcascades.com/Schedules.htm](http://www.amtrakcascades.com/Schedules.htm).

**Trains at Tukwila Station arrive only on west platform during construction**

Construction continues at the Tukwila Station through September 2014. The project includes a 390-stall parking lot, including 10 ADA stalls. A new driveway at the southwest corner of the parking lot will connect to the new portion of Strander Boulevard. Bicyclists can use this roadway to connect to the nearby bicycle trails. The final scheduled platform closure began June 23, 2014, and will last four weeks. During this time, the east platform is closed and passengers are using the west platform.

**WSDOT and ODOT collaborate on Dump the Pump campaign**

The Amtrak Cascades train service was well represented in Washington and Oregon for the ninth annual national [Dump the Pump](#) campaign, sponsored by the [American Public Transportation Association](#). WSDOT collaborated with Washington State Ferries and local transit services to educate the public on transportation options for local and intercity travel. WSDOT and ODOT led separate Dump the Pump marketing campaigns using email, posters, contests and social media to spread the word. WSDOT's campaign will continue through mid-July.