



Oregon

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February 27, 2014

TO: Land Conservation and Development Commission

FROM: Jim Rue, Director
Bill Holmstrom, TGM Coordinator

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item 3, March 13-14, 2014 LCDC Meeting**

PASSENGER RAIL PROJECT UPDATE

I. SUMMARY

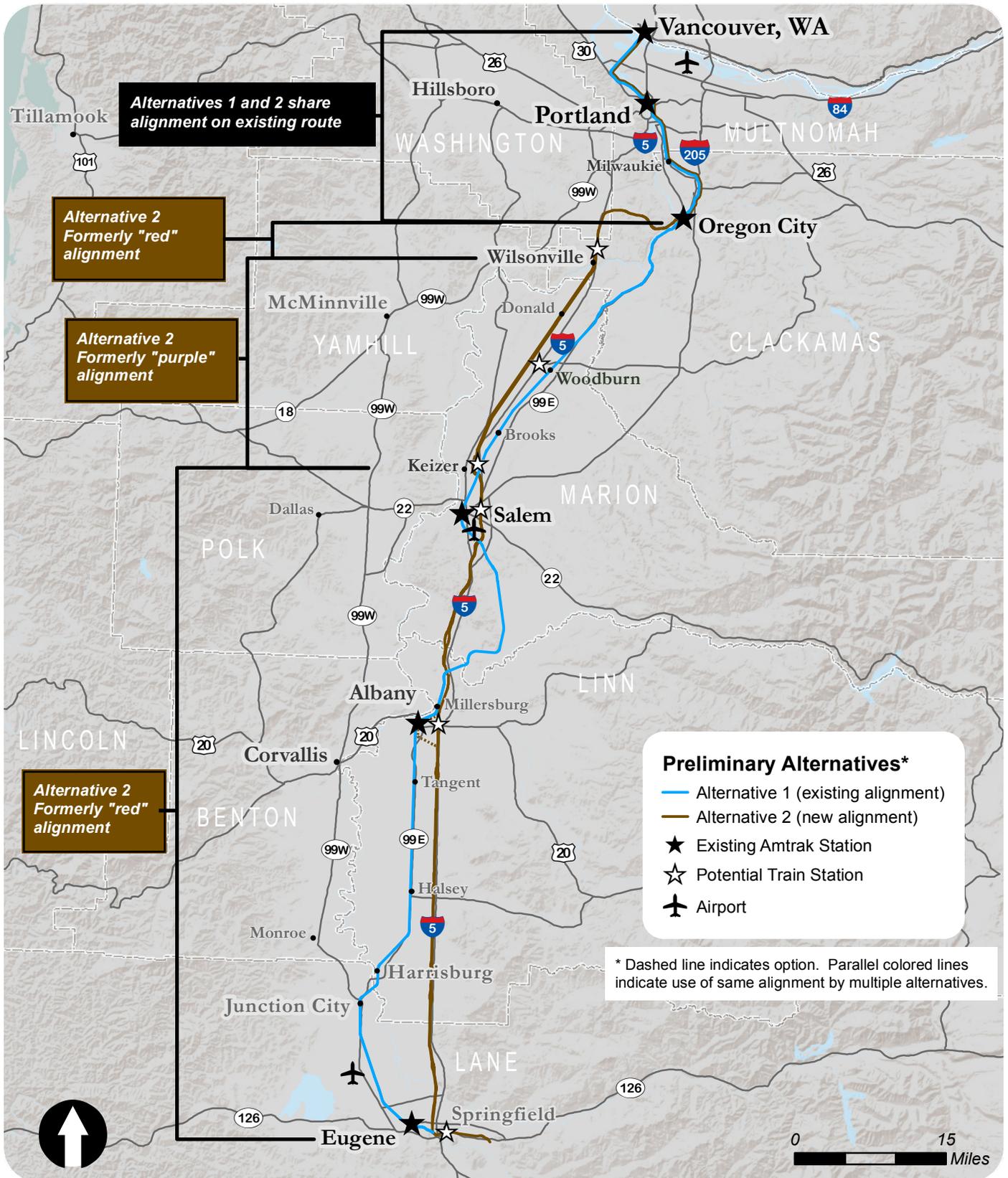
The Oregon Passenger Rail project is a detailed study of passenger rail in the Willamette Valley from the Columbia River at Portland to Eugene/Springfield. The Oregon Department of Transportation is undertaking a Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) with funding from the Federal Railroad Administration. The project began in 2012 and is now planned to continue to 2016. The study area is the Oregon portion of an intercity rail corridor reaching north to Seattle and Vancouver, British Columbia.

The project will result in an EIS containing decisions for future rail service, including the general rail alignment and communities where stations would be located. The EIS also determines several service characteristics, such as the number of daily trips, travel time objectives and the technologies to be used. Once the EIS is complete, the state may use it to apply for future federal funds to improve the corridor.

The department has been active in monitoring the project and providing input. Commissioner Macpherson represents the commission on the Passenger Rail Leadership Council, which provides policy direction to the project. Recently, the Leadership Council selected two alternative corridors for further study (Attachment A).

The department will continue ongoing participation in the project.

For additional information about this report, please contact Bill Holmstrom at 503-934-0040 or by email at bill.holmstrom@state.or.us



December 17, 2013

Project Team Recommended Alternatives

Draft Environmental Impact Statement Alternatives - Map and Descriptions

The following alternatives were recommended for further analysis in the Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement by the Leadership Council on December 17, 2013. The recommendation included a number of considerations, including the technical evaluation findings, guidance from the Federal Railroad Administration, maintenance considerations, and feedback from agency stakeholders and the broad public. The Leadership Council's recommendation is being forwarded to Federal Railroad Administration, for final determination on alternatives to be studied in the DEIS.

Alternative 1

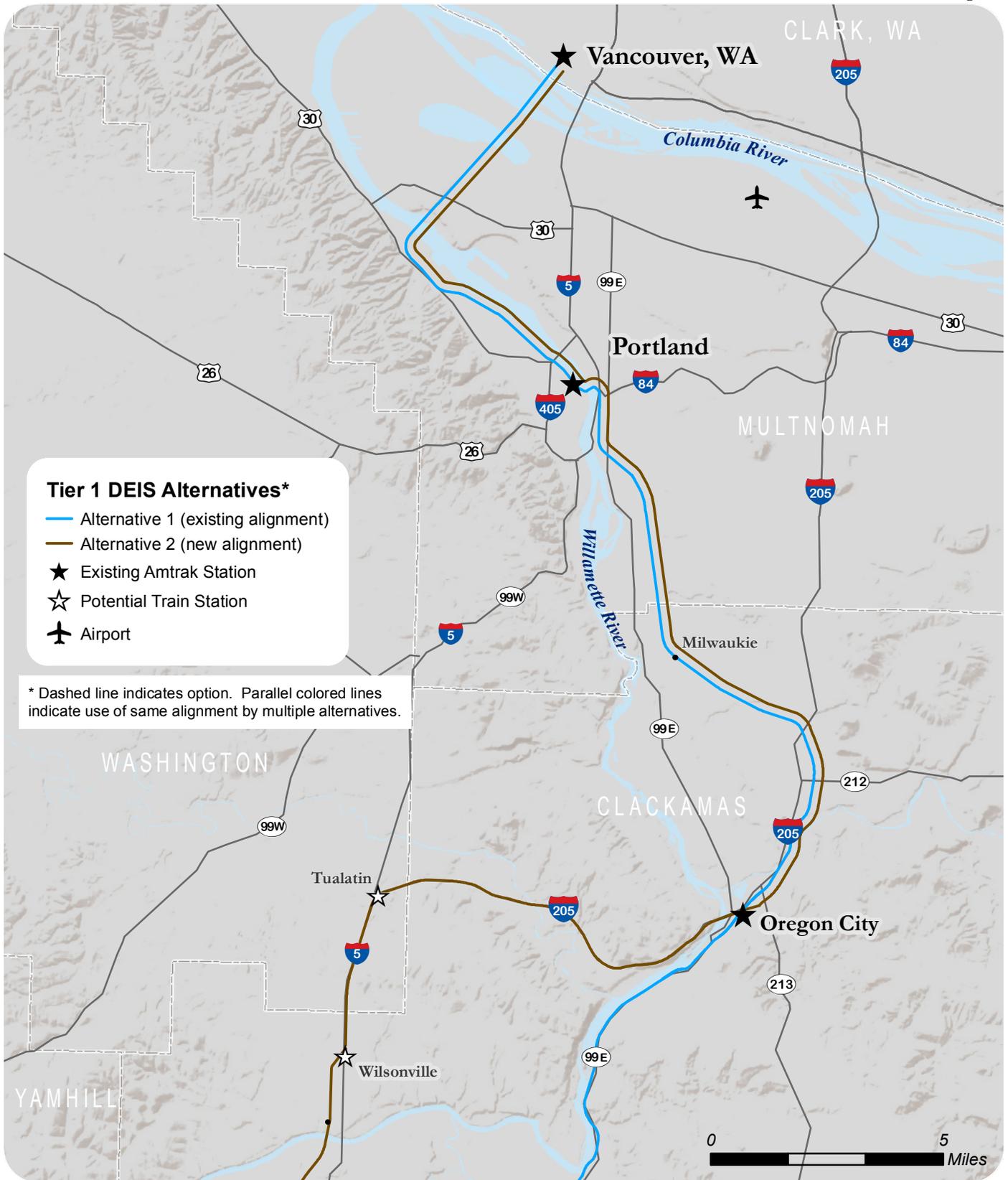
Alternative 1 generally follows the existing Amtrak Cascades route, along or near the Union Pacific Railroad line between Eugene-Springfield and Portland. It crosses the Willamette River in Portland near Union Station before continuing north, either on or near existing BNSF tracks, to Vancouver, Wash.

Alternative 2

Alternative 2 runs along or near Interstate 5 from Eugene-Springfield to Keizer (formerly the red preliminary alternative), then follows the Oregon Electric rail line from Keizer to Wilsonville (formerly the purple preliminary alternative), follows I-5 and I-205 between Wilsonville and Oregon City (formerly the red preliminary alternative), where it merges with the existing Amtrak alignment.

Alternative 2 (Central Albany Option)

This design option leaves the I-5 corridor (Alternative 2 corridor) in south Albany and travels along an existing freight rail alignment from south Albany into central Albany, where it ties into the existing passenger rail alignment to serve the Albany train station. This design option leaves central Albany via the existing passenger rail alignment and reconnects to the Alternative 2 corridor north of Millersburg.



Project Team Recommended Alternatives, Portland Metro Area

December 17, 2013