

Rail Advisory Committee (RAC)
Tuesday, June 16, 2026
9:00 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.
Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)

Attendees, RAC Members

<i>In-Person Attendees</i>	<i>Virtual Attendees</i>
<i>Johan Hellman, Chair, BNSF Railroad</i> <i>Ross Lane, Co-Chair, Portland & Western Railroad</i> <i>Aaron Hunt, Union Pacific Railroad</i> <i>Tom Bouillion, Port of Portland</i> <i>Toby Van Altvorst, Goose Lake Railroad</i> <i>Chris Myron, Brotherhood of Locomotive, Engineers & Trainmen</i> <i>Bob Krebs, AORTA</i> <i>Daniel Garrison, SMART-ID</i> <i>Doug Allen, AORTA (alternate)</i>	<i>Jeff Van Schaick, Jaguar Holdings</i> <i>Chase Kitchen, Amtrak Government Relations</i>

Introductions and Committee Business

- Quorum confirmed with 11 members in attendance.

Connect Oregon IX - Kathy Holmes

- Process Overview:
 - Connect Oregon rail applicants will provide a brief presentation and RAC members will have time to ask additional questions of the applicants.
 - This afternoon the committee will be ranking the rail project applications.
- Conflict of Interest:
 - Kathy Holmes reviewed the list of projects and asked committee members to declare any conflict or potential conflict of interest for each project. (see table attached)

Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation (ORHF) – Renee Deveraux

- 1R524-Acquisition of Oregon Pacific Railroad (OPR) East Portland Branch-Active Freight Rail Corridor
- ORHF will acquire the East Portland Branch of OPR—an active freight and excursion rail corridor with over 30,000 track feet of mainline, spurs, and sidings serving Portland’s Central Eastside Industrial District.

Timberlab – Jared Revay

- 2R528 - Philomath Planer Mill Phase 1
- The project will rehabilitate approximately 400 feet of existing rail spur at the Philomath Planer Mill to restore active rail service.

Timberlab – Jared Revay

- 2R540-Timberlab Connection to Portland & Western Railroad (PNWR)
- Project will construct approximately 3,000 feet of new industrial rail track, including a rail spur, two industry tracks, turnouts, ballast, drainage, and related improvements connecting Timberlab's manufacturing facility to the PNWR.

Allweather Wood – David Anzur

- 3R546 Allweather Wood Rail Spur
- Project will construct a new 1,500 foot rail spur at Allweather Wood property near Coos Bay.

City of Harrisburg – Jeff Schultz (DEA)

- 2R541 - Harrisburg 4th Street Corridor Railroad Rehabilitation and Grade Crossing Improvement Project
- The project area is the railroad line that runs on 4th St between Smith St and LaSalle St in Harrisburg, OR. The project will daylight Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF)-owned train tracks embedded in the center of 4th St and rehabilitate them. It would separate overlapping motorized and non-motorized transportation facilities by isolating tracks with curbing and closing three at-grade crossings. The project would improve safety, mobility, and state of good repair of the railroad in the project area.

Oregon Eastern Railroad – Jeff Van Schaick

- 5R555 - Oregon Eastern Railroad Infrastructure (OERR) Upgrade Phase 4
- OERR will install 6,500 ties and 3,500 tons of ballast between Ontario and Vale to strengthen its most critical mainline segment. The project supports over 400 new annual rail carloads from Vale Transload customers, resulting in longer, heavier trains. With a total cost of \$1.25M and a 31.8 percent match, this investment improves track integrity, drainage, and safety while reducing derailment risk and supporting agricultural and hazardous material shipments.

Portland & Western Railroad – Ross Lane

- 2R530 - Woodburn to Wilsonville Rail Modernization, Safety, and Capacity Improvement Project
- The project will involve removing the bolted sections of rail between railroad Milepost (MP) 42 and MP 57.4 on the Oregon Electric District of the PNWR, located between Woodburn and Wilsonville. After the bolted rail is removed, the segments will be welded together in the field to create continuous welded rail (CWR), enhancing reliability, improving safety and performance, and increasing speed along this key rail corridor.

Columbia Rail – Jared Jungmann

- 5R552 Weston Industrial Lead Rehabilitation Project
- The Weston Industrial Lead Rehabilitation Project will restore 4.21 miles of track between Walla Walla, WA and Weston, OR.

Western University of Health Sciences – Dr. Denise Cornish

- 2R539 – Western University Oregon Railroad Grade-Separated Undercrossing
- Rail Underpass Construction Project will support the construction of a rail underpass and public street access at Western University's second campus development in Lebanon, Oregon.

Mount Hood Railroad – John Boren

- 1R556 Mount Hood Railroad Freight Track Enhancements – Federal Grant Match application
- This request is seeking match funds from Connect Oregon so that Mt. Hood Railroad can be more competitive when seeking their federal funding through their Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) application. The RAC was asked for an up or down vote on the project so Mt. Hood Railroad could move forward to get at least initial approval from the Oregon Transportation Commission. The RAC voted to move the project forward in their request for match funds.

Review Process and Conflict of Interest

- When ranking projects, committee members need to keep the statutory considerations in mind as well as the State Rail Plan.
- The statutory consideration score on the tabulation sheet is an accumulation of multiple internal scores.
- The RAC has the option to change the ranking, if the rationale is clearly stated.
- Once ranking begins there can be no outside discussions or input beyond the committee and staff.
- John Boren reviewed the process of Oregon Transportation Commission review which occurs at the December 2026 meeting.

Project Ranking

- The RAC will rank the rail projects from 1 to 9. If the ranking is changed by the committee, and reasons need to be clearly documented.
- Bob Melbo noted that Columbia Rail is a branch line that they lease from Union Pacific. It used to go to Pendleton and ends at the area that is being utilized by a food company. The line recently went back into service in March. Columbia Rail has been making progress at growing its customer base. This project preserves a secondary line and secures alternate transportation for industry and businesses. Project estimated to increase carloads to 2000.
- Chair Hellman offers support for the Portland & Western project. The committee discusses what the strongest showing for rail would be in reference to the order of the projects.
- The committee agrees with the list as presented.
- Toby Von Altvorst will represent the RAC at the final review committee meeting on September 9, 2026. Chris Myron will serve as alternate.

Public Comments

- Doug Allen, Alternate for AORTA – acknowledges the great job done by Bob Krebs who is resigning from the RAC. Doug agreed with the selections and order of the projects. Doug will serve the Rail Advisory Committee upon approval by the interim director.

Closing comments and adjourn – Johan Hellman

Meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM

APP. #	APPLICANT	PROJECT NAME	Aaron Hunt	Johan Hellman	Chris Myron	Jeff Van Schaick	Chase Kitchen	Doug Allen	Ross Lane	Toby VanAltvorst	Jacob Snodgrass	Tom Boullion	Daniel Garrison
3R546	Allweather Wood LLC	Allweather Wood Rail Spur	P										
2R528	PHILOMATH SAWMILL, LLC	PHILOMATH PLANERMILL Ph1.	P						x				
2R540	CLTLab, LLC	Timberlab Connection to P&WR		X					x				
5R552	Columbia Rail	Weston Industrial Lead Rehabilitation Project	X										
2R530	Portland & Western Railroad	Woodburn to Wilsonville Rail Modernizatio n, Safety, and Capacity Improvement Project							x				
5R555	Oregon Eastern Railroad	Oregon Eastern Railroad Infrastructure				X							

		Upgrade Phase 4											
1R524	Oregon Rail Heritage Foundation	OPR East Portland Branch Acquisition and Improvement									X		
2R541	City of Harrisburg	Harrisburg 4th Street Corridor Railroad Rehabilitation and Grade Crossing Improvement Project		P					X				
2R539	Western University of Health Sciences	WesternU Oregon Railroad Grade- Separated Undercrossin g	X								X		