# 1992 RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY PRESERVATION AND USE STRATEGY FOR THE THURSTON COUNTY REGION

March 1992

Prepared By: Thurston Regional Planning Council

**THURSTON REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL** is a 16-member intergovernmental board made up of local governmental jurisdictions within Thurston County, plus the Washington State Capitol Committee, The Evergreen State College, and Intercity Transit. The Council was established in 1967 under RCW 36.70.060 which authorized creation of regional planning councils.

Thurston Regional Planning Council undertakes land use, environmental and transportation research and planning programs of interest to the member jurisdictions. Each member jurisdiction funds the Council's operations based on a per capita formula. The Council is governed by representatives from the member jurisdictions. They determine the budget and work program annually for Council projects and operations.

As a separate function, Thurston Regional Planning Council by intergovernmental agreement also provides the planning staff for the Planning Departments of Thurston County and the City of Olympia. In this function, the contracting governments are the sole determinants of the work program and funding levels for the local planning department work.

This report was prepared as part of the Thurston Regional Planning Council's 1992 regional work program.

## 1992 MEMBERSHIP OF THURSTON REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

| Governmental Jurisdiction | Name of 1992 Representative |
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| City of Olympia | **Mark Foutch**, Councilperson |
| City of Tenino | **Reola Robinson**, Councilperson |
| City of Tumwater | **Greg Gurske**, Councilperson |
| City of Yelm | **Robert A. Sanders**, Mayor |
| Town of Bucoda | **Alan Carr**, Mayor |
| Town of Rainier | **Mark Tietjen**, Councilperson |
| Thurston County | **George L. Barner, Jr.**, County Commissioner |
| Intercity Transit | **John F. Conrad**, Transit Authority Citizen Representative |
| Port of Olympia | **Jeff Dickison**, Port Commissioner |
| Griffin School District | **Keith Clark**, School Board Director |
| North Thurston School District | **Nancy Matlock**, Director of Planning and Governmental Liaison |
| Olympia School District | **Barbara Roder**, School Board Member |
| Tumwater School District | **Jim Brown**, School Board Member |
| The Evergreen State College | **Russell Fox**, Faculty Member |
| State Capitol Committee | **Wendy Holden**, Director, Department of General Administration |

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**Harold Robertson**, AICP, Executive Director

## Railroad Right-of-Way Advisory Committee

| | |
|---|---|
| **George L. Barner, Jr.** | Thurston County |
| **Jane Boubel** | Olympia Parks Department |
| **Bob Bregent** | Rail Historian |
| **John Conrad** | Intercity Transit |
| **Kathy Coombs** | Economic Development Council |
| **Doug DeForest** | Chambers of Commerce Transportation Committee |
| **Ray Dinsmore** | Port of Olympia |
| **Lloyd Flem** | Washington Association of Rail Passengers |
| **Joe Ganem** | Rails to Trails, Bicycle Federation of Washington |
| **Tom Gorman** | Yelm Telephone Company |
| **Loren Herrigstad** | Washington Association of Rail Passengers |
| **Bob Jensen** | City of Lacey |
| **Stewart Martin** | Capital Land Trust |
| **Jean Muller** | City of Tumwater |
| **Walter Olson** | Rails to Trails |
| **Jerry Petheram** | Tumwater Parks Department |
| **Sandra Romero** | City of Olympia |
| **Jim Shanafelt** | Washington State Department of Transportation |
| **Duane Stensrude** | Columbia Beverage |
| **Michael Welter** | Thurston County Parks Department |
| **Kathy Wolf** | City of Yelm |
| | City of Tenino |
| | Town of Bucoda |
| | Town of Rainier |
| | Washington State Department of General Administration |
| | Audubon |

## Thurston Regional Planning Council Staff

| | |
|---|---|
| **Kathy McCormick** | Associate Planner, Lead Project Staff |
| **Carl Wilson** | Senior Transportation Planner |
| **Robert Smith** | Associate Planner |
| **Jackie Kettman** | Assistant Planner |
| **Ken Brown** | Graphics Technician II |
| **Larry Harnish** | Graphics Assistant |
| **Lynn Lee** | Office Assistant III |
| **Karen Black** | Office Assistant II |
| **Shelli Lund** | Office Assistant II |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Harold Robertson** | AICP, Executive Director |
| **Kathleen Burgess** | Deputy Director |

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# 1992 RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY

# ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT

## Analysis and Action Recommendations for the Preservation and Future Use of Rail Lines and Corridors in the Thurston County Region

### Background

Concern over several pending rail line abandonments in Thurston County prompted the Thurston Regional Planning Council to investigate ways to preserve rail lines and rail right of way corridors. Increasing concern over the 3000 miles of rail lines that are abandoned each year throughout the U.S. has caused public officials around the country to examine the values of rail corridor and to look for ways to maintain and use them. This emerging awareness comes at a time when there is renewed interest in finding solutions to growing transportation problems, and when we are looking for ways to preserve green spaces and to provide outdoor recreation opportunities.

In 1990 the Thurston Regional Planning Council's Railroad Right of Way Strategy Report presented a comprehensive inventory of each of the rail lines in Thurston County. It also looked at the potential for future use, ways to maintain ownership, and funding sources. The results of a survey of rail users, jurisdictions and interest groups were also included in the report.

Because of the strong support and interest in preserving rail lines and corridors that emerged from the survey, the TRPC asked that a Rail Advisory Committee made up of jurisdiction representatives, rail users and interest groups be established. They asked the Committee to examine the 1990 analysis and survey results and identify short and long term strategies for each of the rail corridors in the County.

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# OVERALL FINDINGS

## 1. Save The Rail Corridors

Because of the potential that most rail corridors have to satisfy current or future transportation, recreation or utility needs in our community we should not allow the ownership of these linear corridors to break up. The analysis of each rail corridor identifies the short and long term priority uses and recommends strategy and actions to be taken.

## 2. Support Continued Operation of Active Rail Lines

The continued use of freight and passenger operations on active lines is a priority and should continue to be supported by the Economic Development Council and the jurisdictions. Industrially zoned land adjacent to rail should be promoted to assure continued operation. Effort to find new users for operating rail lines should continue.

## 3. Include Future Rail Corridor Use In Comprehensive Plans

In order to assure that the short and long term strategies are followed, each jurisdiction should include the recommendations about the applicable rail corridors in each of their comprehensive plan updates. The value of maintaining the integrity of these "linear corridors" should be assured.

Transportation - Rail corridors should be considered when looking for current and future transportation solutions. Several corridors in the urban area are recommended for freight or a combination of freight and passenger use. The current and future value of the corridors lies in the opportunity to move freight or passengers off of existing roads. This saves capacity on roads and in combination with other transportation management programs may help to defer road improvements or widening in some areas. At the very least it will ensure some decrease of traffic on roads. Streetcars or trolleys on existing lines would be the cheapest rail alternative. In addition, the rail and wire used for a vintage streetcar or trolley system is similar to that needed for more high tech rail systems. Conversion in the future may not require replacement of the rail and wire network. Therefore, an investment in a low tech system (trolley) could be used later if a more high tech rail system ever became a viable option.

Recreation - Rail corridors not needed for transportation uses should be considered for recreation trail use including some combination of foot, bicycle or equestrian use. Opportunities for linking these linear corridors should be considered so that a network of trails that serve commute or recreation bicyclists or other recreational uses can be developed. The use of these linear green spaces for open space or animal habitat should also be considered.

Utilities - Rail corridors can be used for utility rights of way. Utility uses such as fiber optic cable or even sewer or water lines are an accessory use allowing transportation or recreation uses to occur in the same right of way. Private utility companies will pay for the use of the linear corridors. The ease of installation and maintenance outside of the usual road right of way is valuable to them.

## 4. Take Action Before Official Abandonment Occurs

Taking action before abandonment occurs is vital. Failure to prevent the official declaration of abandonment by the Interstate Commerce Commission results in the breaking up of the ownership of the linear corridor and right of way. This occurs due to the various legal instruments that were used by the railroads when they pieced together the right of way for rail operations. Attempts to piece corridors back together after official abandonment are costly and can be a legal nightmare.

Notification from the Interstate Commerce Commission about rail operators intentions to abandon rail lines is sent each June to the Washington State Department of Transportation. They in turn send these annual rail classification notices to the Thurston Regional Planning Council under a current agreement. Since the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation often receives the first inquiries when a move to abandon is made they have also agreed to notify TRPC. This occurs due to the requirement that any National Register properties be identified before abandonment can occur.

This notification process is important since in some cases an expedited abandonment process is allowed giving local jurisdictions only 10 to 30 days to act to prevent abandonment. In order to prevent this expedited abandonment process, notification of an interest and intent to preserve the rail corridor can be made with the Interstate Commerce Commission before action is taken by a railroad company. (See the Railroad Right-of-Way Strategy Report for additional information about the abandonment process.)

5. **Use The National Trail System Act To Acquire Rail Corridor That Is Threatened With Abandonment**

The National Trail System Act is federal legislation that was intended to be used as a tool for maintaining rail corridors for recreation use and the possible future reuse for transportation purposes. It is the least expensive method for acquiring rail corridor since only the portion of the rail corridor owned outright by the railroads must be purchased. Mapping of ownerships of Thurston County corridors was completed for the 1990 rail report. With this information we can estimate the percentage of corridor and the cost to acquire.

An important decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1990 reinforced the intent and use of the National Trails System Act. The decision supported use of the Act and made challenges by property owners very difficult and costly. It also made any successful challenges the responsibility of the Federal Government.

The Railroad Right of Way Strategy Report explains in detail the procedures for filing an interim trail use application with the Interstate Commerce Commission when a jurisdiction wants to preserve a rail corridor. (Value of Right-of-Way and Rail Lines is also explained in the Railroad Right-of-Way Strategy Report.)

6. **Explore Opportunities For Joint Uses Of Rail Corridors**

The opportunity for several different uses to share rail corridor should be considered. Use of rail corridor for different kinds of recreation and for transportation are fairly new around the country. Examples of shared uses in the State and around the country should be tracked in order to learn how other communities are solving the issues related to joint use such as safety, liability, and management.

7. **Support Cooperation Between The Port, Cities And The County To Acquire Threatened Rail Corridor**

In 1990 the Port of Olympia agreed to serve as interim "lead agency." As "lead," the Port agreed to take responsibility for filing the interim trail use application with the ICC in case a railroad made a move to abandon a line before completion, adoption and acceptance of the 1991 rail strategy analysis. Once the ICC approves the application, negotiations between the railroad and the Port or other jurisdictions can proceed.

The Port is identified as lead agency for several of the rail corridors in Thurston County and as a partner for several other lines. This reflects the Port's interest in maintaining corridor availability for future freight transport and accessibility. It is also a reflection of the legislatively mandated ability of the Port by itself or in conjunction with public or private entities to acquire, construct, purchase, lease, contract for, provide and operate rail services, equipment, and facilities. Ports also have legislative mandates to operate both passenger and freight operations.

The cities and the County are listed as lead agency or a partner for the preservation of several rail corridors. This reflects their interest in the corridors for transportation or recreation use. They may file the interim trail use application to prevent abandonment and reach an agreement for the purchase of the portion of the rail corridor that is owned outright by the railroad. The city or county may also contract out operation of a rail line. The county may operate a rail line for freight purposes by creating a rail district with the consent of those within the rail district boundaries.

8. **Consider Washington State Department of Transportation Rail Funds to Finance Freight Rail or Rail Banking Proposals**

The WSDOT has several loan programs that may be used to preserve light usage freight operations or to rail bank corridors that meet their requirements.

9. **Explore the Options for Operating Short Line Rail in Thurston County**

The viability of short line operations for freight or passengers should be explored by the Port of Olympia. Future passenger rail operations should be explored by the Port, Intercity Transit, and the jurisdictions. Contact should be made with other communities around the country who have successful short line freight and passenger operations. The options for short line operations should be analyzed. The Washington State Department of Transportation's Freight Rail Program can assist in determining the viability of short line rail operations.

## 10. Support Vintage Streetcar/Trolley Operations

Existing rail lines and corridors should be used to help reach traffic congestion reduction goals. The establishment of a vintage trolley operation would maximize the use of existing rail lines by attracting transit dollars as well as serving as a nucleus for any future modern light rail system that might become viable as the area population grows. Since such systems use basically the same track and electrical supply systems as the older trolleys, cost effective conversion to a more modern system in the future is a possibility. While the "low tech" (street car/trolley) operations still cost at least twice as much to operate per mile as bus transit, there are several new funding sources, all requiring voter approval. These include: 1) an Employee Tax up to $24 per employee per year, 2) Motor Vehicle Excise Tax up to 0.8% of license cost, and 3) Sales Tax up to 1% of purchase price within the Public Transportation benefit area (area approved for Intercity Transit Service).

Funds can be used for planning, right-of-way purchase, construction, maintenance, or operations. Eligible systems include light rail, trolley or streetcar operations off of, or largely off of roads, and off road high capacity vehicle (HOV) thoroughfares (such as a bus over a former rail corridor).

In the short term, the movement of commuters via rail within the urban area should be considered. In the long run, connections with other county urban areas will become more important.

## 11. Support Tourist Rail Operations

Effort should be made to encourage tourist rail operations. The privately owned and operated Chehalis Centralia Railroad comes into Thurston County over the Chehalis Western, Grand Mound to Yelm rail line. The steam train is operated seasonally and brings tourists to the Offut Lake Resort for dinner. Other areas of the County have been suggested for possible tourist operations. Efforts to establish other tourist operations in Thurston County should be supported.

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## RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY STRATEGY 1991

## ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

The short and long term action recommendations, and the jurisdiction responsible for taking action are listed below. Rail corridor maps are at the back of the report. These can be unfolded for easy reference.

### Immediate Actions

1. Negotiate Acquisition of the Tenino to Yelm Rail Corridor Using the National Trails System Act

   Map Location K. See map on page 76.

   The Committee recommends that the Port of Olympia contact Burlington Northern as soon as possible with an offer to acquire the Tenino to Yelm rail corridor. This offer should point out the advantage to the railroad of saving some legal and administrative costs. The interest on the part of the Yelm Telephone Company to contribute funds for the purchase of the Yelm to Tenino corridor is the incentive for acting quickly. The telephone company wants to install a fiber optic cable along the right of way in 1992.

2. Preserve the Gate to Belmore Corridor

   Map Location A. See map on page 76.

   a. Work with DOT to investigate possibilities for restoring freight service over the Gate to Belmore Line, provided that the cross Capitol Lake/tunnel route is not endangered in any manner. The discontinuance of rail traffic over the cross lake line is not recommended, although freight traffic can be altered to offer no interference with the Heritage Park project.

The committee recommends that DOT, the Heritage Park Association, the Port, and the Cities of Olympia and Tumwater and Thurston County investigate possible ways to move freight service over the Gate to Belmore line, or through the future Heritage Park. Freight service to Mottman Industrial Park and two occasional users on West Bay now travel over this cross lake line. This option for service should only be considered if the 7th and Jefferson to Capitol Lake line and track remain intact for future transportation use and the rail tunnel maintained.

b. Negotiate acquisition of the Gate to Belmore Rail Corridor using the National Trails System Act if the above plan does not succeed.

The Committee recommends that the Port of Olympia contact Burlington Northern as soon as possible with an offer to acquire the Gate to Belmore rail corridor and rail. Thurston County and Thurston County Parks and the City of Olympia should work as partners with the Port to use the National Trails System Act to rail bank the corridor. Washington State Department of Transportation Rail Banking loan funds should be considered since this line has met DOT requirements for eligibility and has been included in the State Rail Plan.

3. Acquire the Abandoned Fones Road to Olympia Post Office Corridor

Map Location C. See map on page 76.

The Committee recommends investigating the legal options outlined by the City of Olympia (page 31) to acquire the abandoned Fones Road to the Olympia Post Office corridor. If there is interest on the part of the Port, Olympia and Lacey to acquire this critical linear corridor for future freight or passenger use then the next recommendation should be considered.

4. Investigate Acquisition and Continued Operation of the Fones to Lake St. Clair Line

   Map Location D. See map on page 76.

   The Committee recommends investigation of the advisability of including the Lake St. Clair to Fones Road corridor in a purchase agreement with BN, if there is interest in the Port, Lacey, Olympia and the County. Action could be taken if there is interest in the preservation and use of this line for freight, future passenger service, urban trail, utilities, or a combination of uses. This is an operating line however, and the priority would be to assure continued service to Weyerhaeuser and Georgia Pacific. The City of Lacey will ensure that a letter indicating interest in this rail corridor for future use is filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission.

5. Include Rail Recommendations in Comprehensive Plans

   As each jurisdiction's comprehensive plans are updated, policies related to rail use and the preservation of rail corridors, and the recommendations of the 1992 Railroad Right-of-Way Preservation and Use Strategy Plan should be included.

6. Prevent Encroachment into Rail Right-of-Way

   Action should be taken by each jurisdiction to protect rail corridors by preventing encroachment by roads, fences, trees, or anything else that would preclude or make future use of the corridor difficult or impossible.

## Ongoing Actions

1. Thurston County and BN should find a solution to the trestle on the Lacey to Deschutes River corridor that severs the connection of the northern and southern portion of this planned trail.

2. Monitor and support the Department of Transportation's efforts to increase Amtrak service for use by commuters.

3. Investigate and, where possible, integrate streetcar/trolley operations in traffic congestion reduction programs.

4. Support steam train operations.

5. Encourage the movement of freight by rail rather than on County roads.

6. Coordinate corridor usage with Urban Trails Plan developed by Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater.

**TRPC 1992 Actions**

1. Brief the jurisdictions and TRPC on the 1992 Railroad Report.

2. Continue to monitor moves to abandon rail lines.

3. Encourage the identified interjurisdictional actions that need to be taken (Immediate Actions above).

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# ACTION PRIORITIES SUMMARY

| IMMEDIATE ACTION BY RAIL LINE | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **MAP LOCATION** | **RAIL LINE** | **ACTION** | ***LEAD AGENCY AND SUPPORT** |
| A. | **Gate to Belmore** | • Work with DOT to investigate possibilities for restoring freight service over the Gate to Belmore line. If this were to occur, the future uses and rail banking of the 7th and Jefferson to Westside of Capitol Lake line must be part of the action taken. This is part of line B Downtown Olympia to West Bay and Belmore. Or | * DOT, G.A., Heritage Park Association, and the jurisdictions listed below. |
| | | • Approach BN regarding interest in banking the rail corridor<br>• Investigate cost of purchase of corridor and rail | * Port of Olympia, Thurston County, Tumwater, Olympia |
| K. | **Tenino to Yelm** | • Approach BN regarding interest in banking the rail corridor | * Port of Olympia, Thurston County |
| C. | **Fones Road to Olympia Post Office** | • Investigate the best means to acquire and act as soon as possible | * City of Olympia, Port of Olympia, City of Lacey |
| D. | **Fones Road to Lake St. Clair** | • Investigate interest in purchase for future freight/passenger trail, utility, or joint use. Future passenger use is only viable if the Fones to Olympia Post Office corridor to the west is acquired. | * City of Lacey, City of Olympia, Port of Olympia |
| F. | **Lacey to Deschutes River** | • Thurston County and BN should work to solve Main Line/Rainier road crossing. The filling in of the burned trestle area severs the north and south portions of this future trail | * Thurston County Parks |
| G. | **Main Line** | • Monitor DOT effort to increase amtrak service to encourage commuters. | * Thurston County, TRPC |
| **LONG-TERM ACTION BY RAIL LINE** | | | |
| E. | **East Olympia to the Port** | • Monitor the viability of this line | * Port of Olympia, EDC |
| I. | **Grand Mound to Yelm** | • Support steam train operations | * Visitor and Convention Bureau, Thurston County |
| J. | **Deschutes River to Vail** | • Encourage continued use to move logs by rail rather than on County roads | * Thurston County |

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# SUMMARY -- THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Cost to Purchase | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Gate to Belmore Alternatives**<br><br>Work with DOT to investigate the possibilities for restoring freight service over the Gate to Belmore line.<br><br>County Rail District purchase for operation of freight line.<br><br>Port District purchase for operation of freight or passenger lines. | • Freight rail.<br>• Freight or passenger rail. | • 80 percent WSDOT Essential Low Interest Assistance Account (loan - 15 year pay back period) 20 percent local contribution.<br>• County Rail District - General Obligation Bonds, Voted General Obligation Bonds, Revenue Bonds.<br>• Voter approved employee tax, motor vehicle excise tax, and sales tax for passenger service | • $411,320 (1989 BN estimate for corridor and track. $182,240 for ROW without track.) | • Cost to purchase.<br>• Can only be operated for freight transport (County Rail District).<br>• Positive WSDOT benefit/cost analysis will depend on the rerouting of traffic from across Capitol Lake to the Westside Burlington Northern to mainline route. |
| File Interim Trail Use Application (using National Trail System Act) before abandonment occurs - get 180 days to negotiate purchase of Burlington Northern sure title property. | • Freight or passenger rail. | • Port District tax.<br>• County, City or Port Industrial Development Bond (for line operation).<br>• Public Transportation Benefit Area.<br>• Other City or County bond or taxing authority. | • 1991 estimate @ $2,000 per acre = $301,788 (without track). | • Cost to purchase.<br>• Operation costs. |
| Purchase by the County or City to operate or contract out freight or passenger. | • Recreation trail, bike trail, utility ROW and open space.<br>• Combined users such as trail and rail or utility and trail. | County or Port Bond or taxing authority.<br><br>• State Parks, IAC, DOT, DNR and/or Wildlife. | • 1991 @ $2,000 per acre = $90,536 (estimate for the 25-30 percent Burlington Northern owned ROW only).<br>• Up to $229,000 (1989 estimate) for 12 miles of track. | Successful U.S. Claims Court challenge could result in the need to negotiate purchase of unsure title lands by the Federal Government. Claim must prove ownership and a "taking" in court. |
| Formation of Regional Rail Corridor Management Authority - a multi-county public development authority with aspects of a County Rail District. | | • Not Known - uses and cost may be the same as listed above for the County Rail District. | | |
| DOT works with BN to restore freight service over Gate to Belmore line. 7th and Jefferson to west side of Capitol Lake (part of B. below) is rail banked. | • Freight service continues to Mottman Industrial Park and West Bay. | • DOT Freight Rail program loan and grant funds. | • Unknown | Require negotiations with BN for service over Gate to Belmore and rail banking of 7th and Jefferson/Capitol Lake line and track. |

# SUMMARY -- THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Cost to Purchase | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B. Downtown Olympia to West Bay Industrial Area and Belmore**<br><br>Increase freight use at Mottman and West Bay (Port, EDC)<br><br>If freight service is restored over A. (Gate to Belmore), rail bank the D.T. Olympia to west side of Capitol Lake corridor and track, and keep it in operating condition. | • Maintain for freight use.<br>• Passenger rail is an option if the rail corridor to the east is procured for movement of commuters or tourists or if recreation uses develop at West Bay.<br>• If ever threatened with abandonment, maintain for recreation use.<br>• Look into the possibility for joint use/rail and trail or tourist trolley/bike path. | • On any portion that will serve passengers, voter approved employee tax, motor vehicle excise tax, and sales tax | | |
| **C. Fones Road/Olympia Post Office**<br><br>Examine all possibilities to purchase this right-of-way.<br><br>Use the legal methods outlined by the City Attorney in 1991. | • Recreation trail and utility corridor/or trail and tourist trolley line.<br>• Future east/west transportation link. The most direct link between downtown Olympia and Tacoma. | Olympia/Lacey/Port/County/Utility. | 1991 Urban Trails Plan estimate for purchase (5/6 of O-16 trail) $330,000 if other legal means were used and cost is unknown. | Costly, since it is already abandoned and each section would need to be researched for title ownership and purchase separately or effort put in to acquire legally. |
| **D. Fones Road to St. Clair**<br><br>Consider possible future uses of entire corridor from downtown Olympia to St. Clair (freight, passenger, utility, trail). | • Continue use for freight. Possible future shared use freight/passenger, urban trail, utility corridor, or joint use. | Lacey, Olympia, Port, Thurston County. | | |
| **E. East Olympia to Port**<br><br>Port and EDC monitor viability of line. | • Freight rail - if ever threatened, look for joint uses.<br>• Future Olympia, Tumwater rail use. | Port, Tumwater, Olympia, Thurston County, State (DOT) loan. | | Line use restricted by two narrow tunnels. |
| **F. Lacey to Deschutes River Near Offut Lake**<br><br>Thurston County Parks works to solve Main Line/Rainier Road crossing and the connections to the Woodard Bay trail. | • County trail. | County, (real estate excise tax or other parks or open space funds), State. (County purchase completed in 1991.) | | |
| **G. Main Line**<br><br>Support expanded passenger use (Thurston County, Intercity Transit, AMTRAK Depot Committee, WSDOT joint effort). | • Continued passenger/freight. | | | |

# SUMMARY -- THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Cost to Purchase | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **H. Gate to Grand Mound**<br><br>Encourage freight use in the Grand Mound area (EDC). Coordinate action with Grays Harbor County. | • County freight. | | | |
| **I. Grand Mound to Yelm**<br><br>None due to continued operation by Weyerhaeuser.<br><br>Support continued use by Centralia/Chehalis Steam Train. | • Freight - tourist train. | | | |
| **J. Deschutes River to Vail**<br><br>Encourage continued use by Weyerhaeuser for logging operations. | • Freight rail - if ever abandoned, Thurston County should purchase this potential extension of the trail corridor to the north (Lacey to Deschutes River). | | | |
| **K. Tenino to Yelm**<br><br>Port (with County and Yelm Telephone Company)<br><br>File Interim Trail Use Application (using National Trail System Act) before abandonment occurs - get 180 days to negotiate purchase of Burlington Northern sure title property. | • Recreation trail, bike trail, utility ROW and open space.<br>• Combined uses such as trail and utility.<br>• Possible future rail transportation corridor. | Yelm (Telephone Company (interest in laying a fiber optic cable), Port, Thurston County<br><br>• State Parks, IAC, DOT, DNR and/or Wildlife. | • $50,900 (estimate for the 15 percent Burlington Northern owned ROW only). | Successful U.S. Claims Court challenge could result in the need to negotiate purchase of unsure title lands by the Federal Government. Claim must prove ownership and a "taking" in court. |
| **L. Independence to South County**<br><br>Acquisition abandoned by State Parks in 1991. Support any future action to establish a use in this corridor. | • Trail-Part of the cross state system that links with the coast. | State Parks. | | |

# THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

Map Location A

## GATE TO BELMORE

Ease of Acquisition

Use of the National Trails System Act would hold the line in public ownership for some alternative use now (trail or utility) while the possibilities for passenger or freight rail were pursued. Under this method of acquisition, 25 percent to 30 percent of the of the 12.45 miles of corridor would need to be purchased (an estimated $100,000 at $2000 per acre). Up to an additional $200,000 would be needed if the track was purchased. This is a rough estimate based on 1988 BN information. The actual value would be determined through an appraisal of scrap value.

Recreation Potential

Joint use for recreation, utility and transportation was suggested for the corridor. The long term priority is to use this corridor for tourist and freight rail. For interim use the committee suggested exploring the other joint uses.

Connections

Trail - As a trail this corridor could connect the urban area to the Glacial Heritage Preserve and to the Black River Habitat Management Area. The northern 1-1/2 miles of this corridor could serve as possible future walking and bike trail with connections to Black Lake and to downtown Olympia.

Road - No recommendations were made for roads on this line since Littlerock Road parallels most of the corridor.

Utility - Use as a utility corridor should be considered and accommodated in the plans for joint uses of the corridor.

Rail - Freight - The corridor has enough future potential for freight to prompt the committee to recommend considering purchasing the track if the scrap value were determined to be reasonable. Value of the line for freight includes potential 1) for transporting logs or other freight from south county dump sites to the Port when ready to load, and for connections to the Port of Grays Harbor; 2) as an unencumbered alternative to the tunnel restricted, brewery dependent, Union Pacific connection that serves the Mottman Industrial Park and the West Bay industrial area; 3) in the event of the closure of the brewery on the East Olympia UP line, this line would serve as the only rail connection for the Port of Olympia via the cross lake line.

The line did meet the requirements of the WSDOT's State Freight Rail Plan. However, the positive cost benefit analysis was dependent on moving all the Westside freight (six users in Mottman and two light users in the West Bay industrial area) over the Gate to Belmore line rather than over the mainline, UP, BN 7th and Jefferson Street cross Capitol Lake rail line.

In January 1992, the DOT proposed that during the pre-planning for Heritage Park, that the possibility of returning service to the Gate to Belmore line be explored. This action would cause use of the 7th and Jefferson to Capitol Lake line to cease. This option for alternative service to the Mottman Industrial Park and West Bay should only be considered if the 7th and Jefferson to Capitol Lake line and track can be rail banked for future transportation use and the rail and tunnel maintained in operating condition.

Funding for this proposal would include Federal and State grant and loan programs. The WSDOT loan program requires a 20 percent local share with low interest payback over 15 years. If a County Rail District or a Port District were interested in operating a freight line or contracting out operation they would make application to the WSDOT for loan assistance to purchase and operate the entire line.

Rail - Passenger - As a future tourist and regional commuter line from downtown Olympia to Aberdeen, to the Glacial Heritage Preserve in south county and as a link to the planned steam train museum and operations in Grays Harbor County.

Threat - Burlington Northern will move to abandon the corridor at any time.

It should be kept in mind that the Pabst Brewery is the only rail customer on the East Olympia line. If the brewery were to close or cease using the rail, it is possible that the UP could file for abandonment and Olympia and Tumwater would have no rail access to Mottman, West Bay, and the Port of Olympia if the Belmore/Gate line were already abandoned.

Policy - The priority use for this corridor now is transportation if any viable freight or passenger operations can be identified. Interim or joint uses for trail and utility corridors should be considered also.

The priority use for this corridor in the future is as a freight, commuter and tourist connection to downtown from Grays Harbor and south county, and as an alternate freight connection to the Mottman Industrial Park, West Bay, and the Port.

Strategy - The Port of Olympia should take the lead to file the interim trail use application and work with the other jurisdictions (especially Thurston County, Tumwater and Olympia) to identify uses, evaluate the condition and use of the track, and coordinate efforts with Grays Harbor County.

Action - When TRPC approves the Rail Strategy Plan, Burlington Northern should be contacted immediately. The committee suggests putting together a proposal that would include both the Gate to Belmore and the Yelm to Tenino corridors and approach Burlington Northern before they actually move to abandon.

Interest Groups

* Port of Olympia
* Thurston County and Thurston County Parks
* City of Tumwater
* City of Olympia
* Economic Development Council
* Washington State Department of Transportation
* Washington State Department of General Administration
* Visitor and Convention Bureau
* Industrial Rail Users
* Port of Grays Harbor
* Grays Harbor Old Steam Train Society
* Grays Harbor Tourism Council
* Chehalis Centralia Railroad
* Olympia Heritage Commission
* Heritage Park Association
* Thurston County Historic Commission
* Thurston Vision 2020
* Grays Harbor EDC
* Olympia/Thurston County Chamber Transportation Committee
* Tumwater Chamber of Commerce Transportation

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Cost to Purchase | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Gate to Belmore Alternatives**<br><br>Work with DOT to investigate the possibilities for restoring freight service over the Gate to Belmore line.<br><br>County Rail District purchase for operation of freight line.<br><br>Port District purchase for operation of freight or passenger lines. | • Freight rail.<br>• Freight or passenger rail. | • 80 percent WSDOT Essential Low Interest Assistance Account (loan - 15 year pay back period) 20 percent local contribution.<br>• County Rail District - General Obligation Bonds, Voted General Obligation Bonds, Revenue Bonds.<br>• Voter approved employee tax, motor vehicle excise tax, and sales tax for passenger service | • $411,320 (1989 BN estimate for corridor and track. $182,240 for ROW without track.) | • Cost to purchase.<br>• Can only be operated for freight transport (County Rail District).<br>• Positive WSDOT benefit/cost analysis will depend on the rerouting of traffic from across Capitol Lake to the Westside Burlington Northern to mainline route. |
| File Interim Trail Use Application (using National Trail System Act) before abandonment occurs - get 180 days to negotiate purchase of Burlington Northern sure title property. | • Freight or passenger rail. | • Port District tax.<br>• County, City or Port Industrial Development Bond (for line operation).<br>• Public Transportation Benefit Area.<br>• Other City or County bond or taxing authority. | • 1991 estimate @ $2,000 per acre = $301,788 (without track). | • Cost to purchase.<br>• Operation costs. |
| Purchase by the County or City to operate or contract out freight or passenger. | • Recreation trail, bike trail, utility ROW and open space.<br>• Combined users such as trail and rail or utility and trail. | County or Port Bond or taxing authority.<br><br>• State Parks, IAC, DOT, DNR and/or Wildlife. | • 1991 @ $2,000 per acre = $90,536 (estimate for the 25-30 percent Burlington Northern owned ROW only).<br>• Up to $229,000 (1989 estimate) for 12 miles of track. | Successful U.S. Claims Court challenge could result in the need to negotiate purchase of unsure title lands by the Federal Government. Claim must prove ownership and a "taking" in court. |
| Formation of Regional Rail Corridor Management Authority - a multi-county public development authority with aspects of a County Rail District. | | • Not Known - uses and cost may be the same as listed above for the County Rail District. | | |
| DOT works with BN to restore freight service over Gate to Belmore line. 7th and Jefferson to west side of Capitol Lake (part of B. below) is rail banked. | • Freight service continues to Mottman Industrial Park and West Bay. | • DOT Freight Rail program loan and grant funds. | • Unknown | Require negotiations with BN for service over Gate to Belmore and rail banking of 7th and Jefferson/Capitol Lake line and track. |

LINE: BELMORE TO GATE

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

1. Map Location Key: A

Length: 12.45 miles

See Map #2 at the back of this report.

2. Location:

From Gate at Section 5, Township 16 North, Range 4 West (Southwestern County) running Northeast through Mima and Littlerock to Belmore, at Section 5, Township 17 North, Range 2 West.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

75% Right-of-Way deeds - unsure title (more difficult to acquire)
25% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easier to acquire)

4. Status:

Non-operating, could be abandoned soon

5. Track Classification:

1 (10 mph max) / Classification range from 1 (10 mph max) to 6 (110 mph max)

6. Usage:

None at present

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Lands:

Runs through mixed designated industrial and commercial area between Littlerock and Gate. Also runs through small designated commercial and industrial areas at Littlerock. These industrial and commercial areas are too small to support rail unless the zoning were changed to enlarge the area, making them more viable.

| LINE: | COMPANY: |
| --- | --- |
| BELMORE TO GATE | BURLINGTON NORTHERN |

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

Designated future bikeway will run parallel to the rail line for about a mile along Littlerock Road and will run more or less parallel with the entire line (with more than a mile between them at parts). Two other designated future bikeways will intersect: one near Tumwater, another north of Littlerock. The 1,000 acre Black River/Mima Prairie Glacial Heritage Preserve is adjacent to the line and the Black River Habitat Management Area borders it.

It should be kept in mind that if the Olympia Brewery were to close or cease using the rail, it is possible that the UP could file for abandonment. Olympia would then be left with no rail access to Mottman, West Bay, and the Port if the Belmore/Gate line were already abandoned.

Map Location B

## DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA TO WEST BAY INDUSTRIAL AREA AND BELMORE

Ease of Acquisition - Since this is an operating line there is no immediate recommendation for acquisition. However, the committee did record the importance of this corridor now and in the future for transportation and identified some additional uses for the rail line in the future. If action were taken to move freight over the Gate to Belmore line, then rail banking of corridor and track in operating condition should occur. See recommendations for A. Gate to Belmore.

Recreation Potential - The possibilities for joint use should be explored. There is already a walking path at Marathon Park along part of the cross Capitol Lake corridor adjacent to the operating rail line. While the committee saw the continuation of rail as the priority use on this corridor, they did not preclude joint uses such as rail and trail.

Connections

Trail - Potential shared use of the corridor would connect downtown and West Bay to the Gate to Belmore section of the corridor giving access from downtown to south county.

Road - No recommendation

Utility - Potential for utility right of way along the corridor connecting the urban area with south county.

Rail - Freight - Service to the Mottman Industrial area and to the West Bay connects this line to the Union Pacific and the B.N. Mainline. Alternative service via the Mainline to the Gate to Belmore corridor is an alternate connection route.

Rail - Passenger - Potential as a tourist and commute passenger line would connect downtown to south county. The corridor could serve as a tourist link connecting West Bay to the Farmers Market via Capitol Lake and the Union Pacific line to the Port.

Threat - The line is operating. No threat to this line at present. Rail on West Bay is in poor shape and has light use.

## THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

Policy - Continued use for transporting freight is the highest priority. Potential as a tourist and commute line in the future, or shared freight/passenger line or urban trail. The development of Heritage Park should include the operation of a rail line and not preclude siting of a passenger rail station to serve the State Capitl Campus and downtown. Future development as a tourist/historic rail museum or commuter line should be coordinated with the Heritage Park plans.

Strategy - Communicate with the State as they develop their State Capitol Master Plan and Heritage Park.

Action - Track the investigation of restoring freight service over the Gate to Belmore line. This would affect this corridor.

Interest Groups

* Port of Olympia
* Thurston County and Thurston County Parks
* City of Tumwater
* City of Olympia
* Economic Development Council
* Intercity Transit
* Visitor and Convention Bureau
* Industrial Rail Users
* Port of Grays Harbor
* Grays Harbor Old Steam Train Society
* Grays Harbor Tourism Council
* Chehalis Centralia Railroad
* Olympia Heritage Commission
* Heritage Park Association
* Thurston County Historic Commission
* Thurston Vision 2020
* Farmers Market
* State of Washington General Administration
* Downtown Association
* Westside Neighborhood Association
* Olympia/Thurston County Chambers
* Tumwater Chamber of Commerce

LINE: DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA TO WEST BAY INDUSTRIAL AREA AND BELMORE

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

1. Map Location Key: B

Length: 6 miles

2. Location:

From behind the Olympia Post Office to the Westside, via the 7th Avenue tunnel and Capitol Lake crossing. On the west side of Capitol Lake, the line splits North and South: North to the West Bay Industrial area; South through Percival Creek Canyon to the Mottman Industrial Park and Belmore.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

75% Right-of-Way Deeds - unsure title (more difficult to acquire) and mixture of deed types.
25% Warranty Deeds - sure title (easier to acquire).

4. Status:

Operating

5. Track Classification:

1 or 2 (10 to 25 mph max) classification ranges from 1 (10 mph max) to 6 (110 mph max). (West Bay is now limited to 5 mph due to extremely poor track.)

6. Usage:

Moderate, daily usage. Veneers are brought to the Hardel mill, West Bay Industrial area (2 cars/week). Finished plywood is trucked to the Union Pacific line (E on map) at the foot of Jefferson in downtown and reloaded to be sent out of the County. Reliable Steel brings in special order steel twice a year (2 to 5 cars). Mottman Industrial users (west of Tumwater) include Ellehammer, plastic bag manufacturer (brings in resin - averaging 1 car/week), Mutual Materials (brick and pumice - 1 car/week), Apex Supply (insulation - 1 car/week), Columbia Beverage (1 to 1-1/2 cars/day) and Hancor (plastic tubing - 2 cars/week).

LINE: DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA TO WEST BAY INDUSTRIAL AREA AND BELMORE

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

Line runs through a portion of Olympia's Westside industrial and commercial area (existing uses include plywood mill, steel fabricator, veneer and wood chips, and towing) and through an industrial area of west Tumwater (existing uses include building supply materials, construction yard, food and beverage distributing, auto body repairs and painting, heating and cooling equipment manufacturing, industrial supply, book binding, electrical supply and service, storage and warehousing, gymnastic academy, beauty supply distributor, concrete batch plant, truck service and repair, mineral extraction). Ellehammer (plastic bag manufacturer) chose Mottman Industrial Park because of rail access and plan to add their own spur with automatic unloading within 5 years. Long range plans include shipping by container or rail to Port of Tacoma and across the country.

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

One existing and two future designated bikeways cross line. A portion of an existing bikeway runs parallel to the rail line on the west side of Capitol Lake to 4th Avenue bridge. Rail line also runs through Percival Creek Management Area and alongside Marathon Park, following a popular trail to Capitol Lake Park. The track cuts through the future Heritage Park at Capitol Lake. The park proposal includes one track crossing through the park.

If in the future there was a possibility for shared use of the corridor, suggestions have been made for both pedestrian and bike trails that would be part of the urban link identified in the 1991 Urban Trails Plan. A trail over this corridor would link Downtown to West Bay, and to South County via Belmore and Gate.

As a tourist attraction as it runs through the most scenic aspects of Olympia. The westside line along the bay offers a view of Mount Rainier, the harbor and Port operations as well as the Capitol buildings.

LINE: DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA TO WEST BAY INDUSTRIAL AREA AND BELMORE

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

The loop around Capitol Lake is most scenic and offers an ideal spot for a rail museum or other type of museum, waterfront related recreation, or a trolley station. The track connects at 7th and Jefferson with the track to the Port and a return operation could be constructed by building a park and a loop of track at the site of the former Cascade Pole site. The track along the westside is part of the original narrow gauge railroad built by the citizens of Olympia in 1873. A trolley operation would provide the area with tourist revenue on a year around basis. The reload yard built by WTD Industries in 1987 at Franklin Street on leased Port of Olympia property and now rarely used could serve as a car-barn for the trolleys.

The portion that runs from Union Street to the shore of Capitol Lake through the 102-year old historic Seventh Street tunnel would be the crucial link in bringing passenger rail transit to the foot of the Capitol Buildings and downtown Olympia. Indeed, the original line offered direct rail service to Tacoma and Seattle before the bridge was destroyed over I-5 in 1987. This link could be restored by routing a rail line over I-5 across the Eastside street bridge or the construction of a new bridge. The connecting ROW is owned by the City of Olympia from Henderson Boulevard to Union Avenue.

The Seventh Street tunnel is unique as most rail lines that cross cities do so at ground level with multiple grade crossings. A transit station could be built at the current site of the Greyhound Bus Depot with access to the trains in the tunnel, a short "subway) if you will. Thus, passengers could board trains without those trains tying up the downtown traffic. Another alternative would be a passenger rail station or stop constructed at the foot of the bluff on the east side of Capitol Lake to serve State Capitol employees and downtown. It would also be possible to run a loop of street trackage down Thurston and Olympia streets to go around the Farmer's Market as some trackage still exist on Thurston.

THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LINE: DOWNTOWN OLYMPIA TO WEST BAY INDUSTRIAL AREA AND BELMORE

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **B. Downtown Olympia to West Bay Industrial Area and Belmore**<br><br>Increase freight use at Mottman and West Bay (Port, EDC) | Maintain for freight use.<br><br>Passenger rail is an option if the rail corridor to the east is procured for movement of commuters or tourists.<br><br>If ever threatened with abandonment, maintain for recreation use.<br><br>Look into the possibility for joint use/rail and trail or tourist trolley/bike path. | | |

Map Location C

## FONES ROAD TO THE OLYMPIA POST OFFICE

Ease of Acquisition - Because this line has already been abandoned, outright purchase would have to be negotiated with each title holder. The difficulty in determining title and the costs may be prohibitive unless some other legal means of acquisition were identified.

Recreation Potential - Some value as a link from DOT's bike path along I-5 directly into Downtown if some way could be found to cross Union Avenue after it has been widened.

Connections

Trail - Potential for connecting Downtown Olympia to Lacey adjacent to Pacific Avenue. This would duplicate part of the bike path connection along I-5. This corridor crosses Indian Creek/runs along the creek east and west of Fredrick.

Road - No recommendation.

Utility - Potential for easily accessed utility right-of-way along the corridor connecting urban areas.

Rail - Freight - The corridor provides the most direct link from Central Olympia and Lacey to Tacoma and Seattle.

Rail - Passenger - The most direct link for future passenger rail from Tacoma and Seattle, and a possible passenger link between Lacey and Olympia. This corridor could be used for a future trolley system for Lacey and Olympia to Capitol Lake and the waterfront area.

The link with downtown Olympia could be restored by crossing I-5 via the Eastside Street bridge, connecting to the ROW that crossed Union Avenue. If a separated ROW was needed to cross Union Avenue, a bridge would need to be constructed.

Threat - The line has already been abandoned.

Policy - The corridor should be used now for recreation. The corridor should be acquired for use as a future direct transportation link between Olympia, Lacey, Tacoma, and Seattle. Olympia should be the lead. However, because this link is so important to future connections within the County, both the Port of Olympia and Lacey should play a major role in decisions concerning this line.

Strategy - Identify jurisdiction interest in preserving this corridor (Olympia, Lacey, Port of Olympia). If interest is warranted, pursue investigation of legal acquisition and costs.

Action - Olympia, with Lacey and the Port, should pursue acquisition using the outline of legal means identified by the City Attorney in 1991. In addition, Pierce County Parks experience with the Foothills Trail project may help to define a process to use to recapture this abandoned line.

Interest Groups

* Port of Olympia
* City of Olympia and the Parks Department
* City of Lacey and the Parks Department
* Economic Development Council
* WA State Department of General Administration
* Heritage Park Association
* Adjacent Olympia and Lacey Neighborhood Association
* Downtown Association
* Olympia/ Thurston County Chamber of Commerce
* Lacey Chamber of Commerce
* Intercity Transit

## METHODS FOR ACQUISITION OF ABANDONED RAIL CORRIDOR WEST OF FONES ROAD

The East West Greenway Neighborhood Association has organized to preserve the corridor. They are aware of the interest and concern of the rail committee in preserving the corridor for possible future use. The following processes are suggested. They are taken from a compilation of legal actions suggested by the City of Olympia attorney. The Rail Strategy background information indicates that BN had acquired only an easement, indicating that the successors or heirs of the original grantors probably now have title. Under these circumstances the following options are possible:

1. File a condemnation action naming all original grantors and successors in interest. Since it is probably not possible to identify all these interest holders, the City would have to publish notice of the action and place market value funds in the court.

2. Acquire quit claim deeds from abutting owners on assumption that they have some interest in the property as successors of the original grantor. The City could then bring a quiet title action to clear its ownership interest. The risk of this alternative is that the abutting owners may ultimately be proven to not have an interest in the property or that quit claim deeds from all may not be acquired.

3. If the title search reveals ambiguous title, City could possibly assume possession and use of the property without first bringing a legal action. If for ten years no owner came forward to contest the City's use of the property, the City would possibly acquire it by adverse possession. This should be attempted only if quit claim deeds from abutting owners or other possible title holders are first procured. If a challenge is brought, the City could counterclaim for quiet title or condemnation.

In light of this information, staff suggested that the neighborhood association try to acquire quit claim deeds from abutting owners for the City. If quit claims from all owners can be acquired, the City could then file for quiet title. Another approach would be for the City to assume possession and after 10 years, if there were no objections, the City could acquire through adverse possession. If there were a challenge, the City could follow condemnation proceedings.

THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

| LINE: | COMPANY: |
|---|---|
| FONES ROAD/OLYMPIA POST OFFICE | BURLINGTON NORTHERN |

1. Map location Key: C — Length: 3 miles

2. Location:

   From the intersection of north Fones Road in Olympia, westward to Boulevard Road then southwest towards Watershed Park, then northwest to I-5, ending behind the Downtown Olympia Post Office.

3. Status:

   Abandoned (Trestle over I-5 has been removed)

4. Track Classification:

   None - track pulled up.

5. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

   100% Right-of-Way Deeds - unsure title (more difficult to acquire).

6. Usage:

   None.

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

   Right-of-way runs through a part of Olympia's commercial area.

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

   Two existing bike routes cross the line. Line runs close to Watershed Park in Olympia and ends about a half mile from Percival Landing and Capitol Lake. Could serve as a link from the bike path along I-5 directly in downtown Olympia. Crossing at the eastside overpass and at Union Avenue would be necessary.

LINE: FONES ROAD/OLYMPIA POST OFFICE

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

9. Rail Strategy Ideas/Suggested Action:

Because this line has already been abandoned, it precludes the opportunity to maintain the corridor through use of the National Trails System Act. The entire line is held in unsure title which means purchase would have to be negotiated with each title holder. While the City of Olympia is no longer pursuing purchase, they could pursue joint purchase with the Port of Olympia and Lacey or a utility provider for use as a future utility corridor. Because this rail corridor provides an alternative east-west link through an urban area all possible means to maintain the integrity of the corridor should be pursued. The right-of-way is already heavily used as a neighborhood trail. Possible future joint use for recreation and utility could offset the cost to acquire. The Olympia Parks Department abandonment of pursuit of this acquisition was based on the WSDOT appraiser estimate of $420,000 for a 25 foot right-of-way from Eastside to 8th Avenue to accommodate a parkway. 1991 estimate based on the Urban Trails Plan = $330,000.

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| C. **Fones Road/Olympia Post Office**<br><br>Examine all possibilities to purchase this right-of-way.<br><br>Use the legal methods outlined by the City Attorney in 1991. | Recreation trail and utility corridor/or trail and tourist trolley line.<br><br>Future east/west transportation link. The most direct link between downtown Olympia and Tacoma. | Olympia/Lacey/ Port/County/Utility.<br><br>1991 Urban Trails Plan estimate (5/6 of O-16 trail) $330,000.<br><br>Possible Federal sources available through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. | Costly, since it is already abandoned and each section would need to be researched for title ownership and purchase separately. |

Map Location D

## FONES ROAD TO LAKE ST. CLAIR

Ease of Acquisition - Since this is an operating line there is no immediate recommendation for acquisition. Only 20 percent of this line is owned outright by the railroad. If acquired, only 20 percent of the five-mile corridor would need to purchased using the National Trails Systems Act interim trail use.

Recreation Potential - A connection to the adjacent abandoned rail corridor to the west that is used now as an unofficial trail by the neighborhood. Use of this corridor for trail would provide a connection to the planned Lacey to Deschutes River trail (map location key D).

Connections

Trail - Potential for connecting Downtown Olympia to Lacey adjacent to Pacific Avenue. This would be an alternate path to the connection by the bike path adjacent to I-5 between Olympia and Lacey. This segment connects with Lacey south of the shopping center along Pacific Avenue.

Road - No recommendation since the corridor is directly south of Pacific Avenue.

Utility - Potential for easily accessed utility right-of-way along the corridor connecting urban areas.

Rail - Freight - The corridor provides the most direct link from Central Olympia and Lacey to Tacoma and Seattle. Use now is moderate, with 12 to 15 cars per week transporting paper products to Weyerhaeuser and Georgia Pacific. This line has the best track conditions in the County except for the Main Line. Its seven crossing signals were upgraded to the highest standards in the early 1980's. It connects to the Main Line at St. Clair.

Rail - Passenger - The most direct link for future passenger rail from Tacoma and Seattle, and a probable link between Lacey and Olympia. Use of the existing heavy rail for commuters, or future passenger trolley or light rail could serve as the connector between Lacey and Olympia.

Threat - The line has moderate use now, has no immediate threat but has only two users, Georgia Pacific and Weyerhaeuser, who both bring in paper for cardboard boxes. Since Weyerhaeuser is the only regular user of this line, BN may eventually consider cutting back the line to Union Mills to avoid maintaining the line through Lacey to Fones Road.

Policy - Continued use for transporting freight is the highest priority. Potential as a tourist and commute line in the future, or shared freight/passenger line or shared use with a future urban trail. Since this corridor lies mostly within Lacey, they should take the lead. However, Olympia and the Port should be partners since each of them has an interest in the corridor. Because of the number of crossings, Lacey would want any increase in use or change of use to be coordinated with their traffic and transportation plans.

Strategy - Identify jurisdiction interest in preserving the link to the west that has been abandoned. If Olympia, Lacey and the Port determine that the entire corridor could be important in the future, they should pursue investigation of legal acquisition and costs. Since this corridor links the two fastest growing areas in the County with the State Capitol, plans for this corridor should be examined in more depth. Jurisdiction interest in ownership of this corridor in the short- or long-term should be examined.

Action - Because of the potential that this corridor has for future passenger use, Lacey should be a partner with Olympia and the Port to investigate the value and method to acquire the abandoned, connecting corridor to the west. In addition, the value and use of this line should be examined for its potential to relieve congestion or avoid road widening on other east/west corridors between Lacey and Olympia. If near term interest warrants use of the corridor, negotiations with Burlington Northern may be warranted.

Interest Groups

* City of Lacey
* City of Olympia
* Port of Olympia
* Economic Development Council
* Rail Users (Georgia Pacific and Weyerhaeuser)
* Southeast Neighborhood Association
* Lacey Chamber of Commerce
* Olympia/Thurston County Chamber of Commerce
* Intercity Transit
* State of Washington/General Administration
* St. Martins College
* Olympia Master Builders

THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LINE: FONES ROAD TO ST. CLAIR

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

1. Map Location Key: D

Length: 5 miles

2. Location:

From Fones Road at Georgia Pacific Corp, east and southeast toward Long Lake, intersecting the Main Line (G) near the Lake St. Clair Cut-off Road.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

80% Right-of-Way deeds - unsure title (more difficult to acquire).
20% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easier to acquire).

4. Status:

Operating

5. Track Classification:

2 - classification ranges from 1 (10 mph max) to 2 (25 mph max). Seven crossing signals were upgraded to the highest standards in the early 1980's.

6. Usage:

Moderate, 12-15 cars per week transport paper products to Georgia Pacific and Weyerhaeuser.

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

Line runs through a mixed industrial and commercial land area in Lacey and a small area of designated industrial land east of Lacey. Existing land uses include a door, cabinet and lumber company as well as residential and commercial. Also includes paper packaging manufacturing and plumbing supply.

LINE: FONES ROAD TO ST. CLAIR

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

Two existing and three future designated bikeways cross the line. The DNR rail trail that runs north to Woodard Bay ends at the North side of the freeway. The connection through South Sound Center is owned by Capitol Development Corporation and the remaining corridor as far as the Deschutes River near Offut Lake is owned by Thurston County Parks and is intended for a future trail.

9. Rail Strategy Ideas/Suggested Action:

This line is not in immediate danger of being abandoned; however, effort should be made to increase freight traffic on the line. The EDC could continue to take lead responsibility for marketing. If this line were to be threatened with abandonment, there is strong support for keeping the corridor intact. There is strong interest in future transportation use and some interest in maintenance for use on a trail.

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **D. Fones Road to St. Clair**<br><br>Consider possible future uses of entire corridor from downtown Olympia to St. Clair (freight, passenger, utility, trail). | Continue use for freight. Possible future shared use freight/passenger or urban trail. | Lacey, Olympia, Port, Thurston County. | |

Map Location E

## EAST OLYMPIA TO THE PORT

Ease of Acquisition - Operating - no action necessary.

Recreation Potential - Line runs adjacent to Tumwater's Pioneer Park.

Connections

Trail - Not possible unless abandoned. Tunnel a possible hazard.

Road - Use as a right of way for moving freight to the Port.

Utility - Future joint use possible for a utility such as fiber optics that does not require very much clearance. The tunnel is the limiting factor for other uses requiring clearance.

Rail - Freight - Valuable now as the main connection to downtown Olympia, the Port, Mottman Industrial Park and West Bay from the Main Line. Any transport of oversized or stacked containers is limited by the tunnels.

Rail - Passenger - Possible future commuter link to downtown Olympia, East Olympia, the mainline, Portland and Seattle.

Threat - None, however, the brewery is the only Union Pacific customer so the viability of this link to the mainline depends on the continued operation and use by the brewery. A threat to this line threatens the access to the Mottman Industrial Park, West Bay and the Port.

Policy - Continue to use as rail and maintain the viability of the line. If the line is ever threatened, look for joint uses. Tunnels are a limiting factor.

Strategy - Economic Development Council takes the lead to monitor the viability of the line. The Port takes the lead if threatened.

Action - None at this time.

Interest Groups

* Port of Olympia
* Economic Development Council
* City of Tumwater
* Tumwater Parks
* Tumwater Historical Society
* Olympia/Thurston County Chamber of Commerce
* Tumwater Chamber of Commerce
* Brewery
* Mottman Industrial Park users
* West Bay users
* City of Olympia
* Olympia Parks
* Olympia Downtown Association
* Downtown Neighborhood Association

LINE: EAST OLYMPIA TO PORT

COMPANY: UNION PACIFIC/TENANT BN

1. Map Location Key: E

Length: 6.5 miles

2. Location:

Intersects with Burlington Northern mainline (G) at Section 17, Range 1 West, Township 17 North, (East Olympia) runs northwest to the Pabst Brewery then north through downtown Olympia to the Port.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

90% Warranty deed and other sure titles (easier to acquire)
5% Right-of-Way deeds - unsure title (more difficult to acquire)
5% City Franchise (track runs through City streets)

4. Status:

Operating

5. Track Classification:

3 (40 mph max) classification ranges from 1 (10 mph max) to 4 (speed limited to 25 mph).

6. Usage:

Heavy, daily usage. Both BN and UP use this line. It is currently the only rail access to Olympia. The Pabst Brewery is UP's biggest customer in Olympia.

| | |
|---|---|
| To Port: | 3 cars per month. |
| To BN main line: | daily usage. (6 cars/week - Hardel finished plywood/sent out) |
| To Brewery: | 20 cars per week bringing brewing material in; 7-8 cars per week send product out. |

| LINE: | COMPANY: |
|---|---|
| EAST OLYMPIA TO PORT | UNION PACIFIC/TENANT BN |

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

Line runs through mixed industrial and commercial lands in Tumwater. Also runs through designated commercial areas of downtown Olympia to the Port where existing uses include log storage, dry storage facility, port dock and loading facilities, sewage treatment plant, marina, radio station, restaurant, cafe, roofing contractor, Port of Olympia Office, warehouse).

Although this line now sees daily usage, it has several tunnels of restrictive height, a stiff grade from downtown to the brewery, and does not travel through any particularly desirable industrial land. Should the Olympia Brewery ever close, its only purpose would be to serve as a connection from the Port to the main line at East Olympia.

It should also be noted that, as long as this line remains the only rail way out of the Port of Olympia, the Port's ability to expand in the future to handle any significant rail shipping is limited, particularly if that potential traffic calls for the movement of "Stak-Pak" container cars, auto racks, or other excess height traffic.

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

Line runs by Deschutes River Park access, which is also near Munn Lake public access. Tumwater Falls Park, near the Brewery is also close to this line.

That portion from downtown to the brewery could easily be included in a tourist trolley operation. Additionally, the old roadbed that descended via switchbacks to the old brewery next to Tumwater falls is still in excellent condition and could easily be relaid with track. This would offer a no-autos alternative for access to the old brewery should it be developed as a historic attraction.

9. Funding Sources:

Port, DOT freight rail loan funds.

LINE: EAST OLYMPIA TO PORT

COMPANY: UNION PACIFIC/TENANT BN

10. Rail Strategy/Suggested Action:

This line is not in danger of being abandoned due to heavy use. Potential for trail use is restricted by tunnels. There is interest in using the line as an alternative to truck transport of logs to the port and use as a future transportation corridor. A joint City, County, Port investigation could examine additional uses of this line.

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **E. East Olympia to Port**<br><br>Port and EDC monitor viability of line. | Freight rail - if ever threatened, look for joint uses.<br><br>Future Olympia, Tumwater rail use. | Port, Tumwater, Olympia, Thurston County, State (DOT) loan. | Line use restricted by two narrow tunnels. |

Map Location F

## LACEY TO DESCHUTES RIVER NEAR OFFUT LAKE

Ease of Acquisition - This eight-mile corridor was purchased from Chehalis Western (Weyerhaeuser) in 1991 by the Thurston County Parks Department for eventual use as a trail.

Recreation Potential - Eventual use as a trail that has the potential to connect with the southern portion of the line (11 miles to Vail) and if the South Sound Center and I-5 corridor can be crossed, with the DNR portion of line that extends to Woodard Bay.

Connections

Trail - As a North County to South County recreation corridor. Possible connections with the DNR trail to Woodard Bay, and the WSDOT bicycle path between Olympia and Lacey along I-5.

Road - None recommended at this time, north/south routes in this area are not warranted.

Utility - Possible shared use with trail

Rail - Freight - Tracks are pulled up, no industrial connection is needed at this time.

Rail - Passenger - Although the use by County Parks and DNR is for bike and pedestrian trail with some accommodation for equestrian use, others have suggested future tourist trolley operations and a connection between Lacey and the corporate center to the south. Future use of this corridor for rail would require market value purchase of the right-of-way, and replacement miles of trail located somewhere else in order to comply with the agreement reached for use of Interagency for Outdoor Recreation funds.

Threat - The line has been purchased by Thurston County.

Policy - Thurston County takes the lead in developing the corridor into a trail use.

Strategy - Thurston County should continue to work on completing the connection with the Woodard Bay trail and the crossing of the Main Line at Rainier Road.

## THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

Action - Thurston County is communicating with the Capitol Development Corporation (owners of South Sound Center) about connections through the shopping center. The BN trestle that crossed over the line was burned in 1991 and was repaired by filling over the tracks, blocking continuous connection. Burlington Northern and Thurston County should find a solution to the connection problem.

Interest Groups

* Thurston County
* Thurston County Parks
* Visitor and Convention Bureau
* Lacey Parks
* City of Lacey
* Capitol Development Corporation
* Lacey Chamber of Commerce
* Olympia/Thurston County Chamber of Commerce
* Department of Natural Resources
* State Parks
* City of Olympia

LINE: LACEY TO DESCHUTES RIVER NEAR OFFUT LAKE

COMPANY: CHEHALIS WESTERN

1. Map Location Key: F

Length: 8 miles

2. Location:

At intersection with BN Line (D) in Lacey, South across the Yelm Highway and Southeast to the Deschutes River near Offut Lake.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

100% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easier to acquire)

4. Status:

Non-operating - north of the Yelm Highway

5. Track Classification:

(Not subject to F.R.A. track inspection)

6. Usage:

None, tracks have been removed and County Parks purchase completed.

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

One end terminates at BN line in Lacey (D), in a mixed commercial and industrial land area. Bridge at Yelm Highway now gone.

LINE: LACEY TO DESCHUTES RIVER NEAR OFFUT LAKE

COMPANY: CHEHALIS WESTERN

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

The north end would join with rail trail to Woodard Bay acquired by the Department of Natural Resources if I-5 and the piece owned by South Sound could be crossed. Possible connection with the WSDOT pedestrian, bicycle path between Olympia and Lacey on I-5. Also, the line runs by Chambers Lake Public access and runs almost a mile from Wonderwood Park in Lacey. The corridor crosses the Yelm Highway bike path. A future designated bikeway runs parallel to the right-of-way along College and Rainier and continues south into Rainier. Possible future connection to the Burlington Northern Tenino to Yelm line several miles to the south that also has potential for future trail use.

9. Funding Sources:

State (Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation) and Thurston County.

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **F. Lacey to Deschutes River Near Offut Lake**<br><br>Thurston County Parks works to solve Main Line/Rainier Road crossing and the connections to the Woodard Bay trail. | County trail. | County, (real estate excise tax or other parks or open space funds), State. | |

Map Location G

**MAIN LINE**

Ease of Acquisition - No need to acquire, this is an active line. Seventy percent of the line is owned outright by the railroad.

Recreation Potential - None

Connections

Trail - None

Utility - AT&T and natural gas lines use the corridor under contract with BN.

Rail - Freight - Continued heavy use as the main line through the County.

Rail - Passenger - Continued use with probable increase in service in the future. Continue to work with IT to continue and improve connections in the future.

Threat - None

Policy - The corridor should remain in use for freight and passenger use.

Strategy - Continue to monitor and support increased passenger and freight use.
The Port of Olympia and Thurston County should take the lead with TRPC in the role as Regional Transportation Policy Organization, monitoring and encouraging increased Amtrak service.

Action - Monitor and work with DOT as they increase commuter service and work with Intercity Transit and the Amtrak Depot Committee to provide good connecting service to the City centers.

Interest Groups

* Port of Olympia
* Thurston County
* Thurston Regional Planning Council
* All cities and towns in Thurston County
* Intercity Transit
* All Chambers of Commerce
* Amtrak Depot Committee
* WA State Department of Transportation
* Burlington Northern and Union Pacific
* Visitor and Convention Bureau

| LINE: | COMPANY: |
|---|---|
| MAIN LINE | BURLINGTON NORTHERN/ TENANT UP, AMTRAK |

1. Map Location Key: G — Length: 21 miles

2. Location:

   From Section 22, Range 2 West, Township 15 North (south county) through Bucoda, north through Tenino and East Olympia, northeast to McAllister Springs, exiting the northeast area of the County near Old Nisqually. This is the Burlington Northern main line. Also used by Union Pacific and Amtrak trains.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

   12% Mixed deed types - unsure title (more difficult to acquire)
   15% Right-of-Way deeds - unsure title (more difficult to acquire)
   70% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easier to acquire)
   3% Congressional land grants - sure title (easier to acquire)

4. Status:

   Operating

5. Track Classification:

   4 (60 mph freight and 80 mph passenger max)

6. Usage:

   Heavy, daily usage, 45-50 north and south trains/day - (6 of these are passenger trains).

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

   Some designated industrial land in Tenino. Existing uses include welding, storage, and glass sales office. Some designated industrial near the intersection with the Chehalis Western line south of Lacey (F).

| LINE: | COMPANY: |
|---|---|
| MAIN LINE | BURLINGTON NORTHERN/ TENANT UP, AMTRAK |

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

Designated future bikeway along southern portion-south county line to Tenino. Designated future bikeways intersect at several places on northeast portion. Three existing bike routes also cross the northeast portion.

9. Rail Strategy/Suggested Action:

Monitor and work with DOT as they increase commuter service and work with Intercity Transit and the Amtrak Depot Committee to provide good connecting service to the city centers.

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **G. Main Line**<br><br>Support expanded passenger use (Thurston County, Intercity Transit, AMTRAK Depot Committee, WSDOT joint effort). | Continued passenger/freight. | | |

Map Location H

## GATE TO GRAND MOUND

Ease of Acquisition - This is an operating line and there is no recommendation to acquire. If acquisition was desirable in the future, using the National Trail System Act, 85 percent of the line owned outright by the Burlington Northern Railroad would need to be purchased.

Recreation Potential - The eight-mile line crosses the Black River and runs close to the Black River Habitat Management Area.

Connections

Trail - None

Road - None

Utility - Possible value for connections to Grays Harbor County.

Rail - Freight - The line runs through large areas of commercially and industrially zoned land in the Rochester area but there is no industrial use of this line in Thurston County. This is a heavily used line that connects the BN mainline to Grays Harbors Pacific Coast shipping ports. Grays Harbor has begun plans to develop into an intermodel facility to balance the falling revenues from the timber industry. This line is also the southern link from the Main Line to the Gate to Belmore corridor. It is therefore a vital link and has no tunnel restriction to Olympia as does the alternate link over the UP line through Tumwater.

Rail - Passenger - Could serve as a valuable Lewis, Grays Harbor, Thurston County link.

Threat - None at this time, however this line depends on the viability of the Grays Harbor Port and other industries.

Policy - The line should remain active as the connection from the Main Line to Grays Harbor County and as the integral freight link to the Gate to Belmore corridor. The Port should take the lead if the line is ever threatened with the County as a partner.

## THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

Strategy - The EDC should work with the Rochester Area to identify areas where future commercial or industrial users might take advantage of the line. Any action related to the line should be coordinated with Grays Harbor County as a partner.

Action - None at this time.

Interest Groups

* Port of Olympia
* South Thurston County Chamber of Commerce
* EDC
* Thurston County
* Grays Harbor County
* Port of Grays Harbor
* Lewis County
* Aberdeen
* Hoquiam

LINE:
GATE TO GRAND MOUND

COMPANY:
BURLINGTON NORTHERN/
TENANT UP

1. Map Location Key: H

Length: 8 miles

2. Location:

Southwest County, (Township 16 North, Range 4 West, Section 26); East through Gate then Southeast towards Rochester and Grand Mound, exiting the County at Township 15 North, Range 3 West, Section 24.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

15% Right-of-Way deeds - unsure title (more difficult to acquire)
85% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easier to acquire)

4. Status:

Operating

5. Track Classification:

3 (40 mph max) - classification ranges from 1 (10 mph max) to 6 (110 mph max).

6. Usage:

Daily usage, 4 trains per day - used by both BN and UP.
Main connection to the Pacific Coast shipping ports at Grays Harbor.

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

Runs through large area of mixed industrial and commercial land, from Rochester eastward. Existing land uses include residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural.

LINE:
GATE TO GRAND MOUND

COMPANY:
BURLINGTON NORTHERN/
TENANT UP

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

Lines run close to the Black River Habitat Management Area. A future designated bikeway crosses the line in two places.

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **H. Gate to Grand Mound**<br><br>Encourage freight use in the Grand Mound area (EDC). Coordinate action with Grays Harbor County. | County freight. | | |

Map Location I

## GRAND MOUND TO YELM

Ease of Acquisition - Since this is an operating line, there is no recommendation for acquisition. If purchased, the entire 28-mile corridor would need to be purchased since it is owned outright by Chehalis Western.

Recreation Potential - The line runs along the eastern edge of the Scatter Creek Habitat Management Area and close to the Offut Lake Resort.

Connections

Trail - Future value as an east/west trail. The western segment that runs along I-5 could be a valuable bike/pedestrian trail. Use of this corridor for a trail would enable a link with the Lacey to Deschutes River County trail and a future extension along the Deschutes to Vail corridor.

Road - None

Utility - Possibility for a joint utility/transportation use.

Rail - Freight - Current light to moderate use connects the Weyerhaeuser operations in Tacoma and Chehalis. The portion between Vail and Centralia is the most active for freight.

Rail - Passenger - Potential for tourism is demonstrated by the current seasonal use by the Chehalis Central RR Steam Train to bring tourists to the Offut Lake Resort.

Threat - The line is operating and is not in immediate danger of abandonment.

Policy - Continued use of the line for freight and tourism. If ever threatened with abandonment, Thurston County should take the lead and coordinate with Lewis County. Joint use with recreation should be considered wherever possible.

Strategy - None at this time although support of the steam train operation into Thurston County should be encouraged. Support the Chehalis/Centralia Steam Train efforts to purchase the Offut Lake to Chehalis/Centralia line.

## THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

Action - None at this time.

Interest Groups

* Thurston County
* Thurston County Parks
* So. Thurston County Chamber of Commerce
* Visitor and Convention Bureau
* Chehalis Centralia RR
* Port of Olympia
* Lewis County
* WA State Parks
* Offut Lake Resort
* Chehalis Western
* Maytown
* Centralia
* Chehalis

LINE: GRAND MOUND TO YELM

COMPANY: CHEHALIS WESTERN

1. Map Location Key: I

Length: 28 miles

2. Location:

From the southwest county, Section 24, Township 15 North, Range 3 West, northwest to Grand Mound, northeast to Maytown, east by Offut Lake, southeast, parallel to Deschutes River (near BN line [G]) then northeast to Rainier and Four Corners, exiting the County at Section 28, Township 17 North, Range 2 East.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

100% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easier to acquire).

4. Status:

Operating, light to moderate use.

5. Track Classification:

Information not available (Not subject to F.R.A. track inspection).

6. Usage:

Some usage hauling logs for Weyerhaeuser. Connects with Weyerhaeuser operations in Tacoma and Chehalis.

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

Runs through a large commercial and industrial lands area around Grand Mound (existing uses include residential, commercial, industrial and agriculture), a smaller area is designated industrial at Maytown, (existing uses include Weyerhaeuser surplus sales, motor rebuilding, warehouse and restaurant), also a small commercial land area designated in Rainier.

THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LINE: GRAND MOUND TO YELM

COMPANY: CHEHALIS WESTERN

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

Line runs by Scatter Creek Habitat Management Area and near Millersylvania State Park. A designated future bikeway runs along the line for a short distance at Grand Mound and for several miles from Rainier to Four Corners. Four other designated future bikeways cross the line.

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **I. Grand Mound to Yelm**<br><br>None due to continued operation by Weyerhaeuser.<br><br>Support continued use by Centralia/Chehalis Steam Train. | Freight - tourist train. | | |

Map Location J

**DESCHUTES RIVER TO VAIL**

Ease of Acquisition - The line is operating Western Junction at the Steadman Road, and is owned by Chehalis Western (Weyerhaeuser). Purchase of the entire corridor would be necessary since it is owned outright by the railroad.

Recreation Potential - If rail use was ever abandoned or the possibility of joint use were considered, a recreation trail for mountain biking, hiking, and/or equestrian use, would connect with the County trail to the north adding another 11 miles to the south. Part of this southern portion of trail would run adjacent to the Deschutes River.

Connections

Trail - Noted above

Road - No additional road is needed in this rural area.

Utility - Minimal value since this is a low density, rural area.

Rail - Freight - Still used by Weyerhaeuser to service their Vail logging operation. This benefits the County by keeping trucks off of roads.

Rail - Passenger - None unless used as a tourist line into south County connecting to the County Parks property to the north.

Threat - None at this time.

Policy - If ever abandoned, Thurston County should take the lead.

Strategy - Encourage continued use of rail for their logging operation rather than the use of trucks.

Action - None at this time.

## THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS

### Interest Groups

* Thurston County
* Thurston County Parks
* Yelm
* Tenino
* Bucoda
* Rainier
* South County Chamber of Commerce

LINE: DESCHUTES RIVER TO VAIL

COMPANY: CHEHALIS WESTERN

1. Map Location Key: J

Length: 11 miles

2. Location:

From intersection with the Deschutes River (Section 28, Township 17 North, Range 1 West) running southeast toward Rainier to Vail. South of Vail the Weyerhaeuser working line is surrounded by Weyerhaeuser property.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

100% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easier to acquire)

4. Status-Op/Non-Op/Abandoned:

Operating

5. Track Classification:

(Not subject to F.R.A. tracking inspection).

6. Usage:

Fully operating.

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

None in proximity to this line.

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

Intersects with a designated future bikeway near Rainier.

THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

LINE: DESCHUTES RIVER TO VAIL

COMPANY: CHEHALIS WESTERN

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **J. Deschutes River to Vail**<br><br>Encourage continued use by Weyerhaeuser for logging operations. | Freight rail - if ever abandoned, Thurston County should purchase this potential extension of the trail corridor to the north (Lacey to Deschutes River). | | |

Map Location K

## YELM TO TENINO

Ease of Acquisition - Use of the National Trails System Act would hold the line in public ownership for use now for a utility and recreation corridor and possible reuse in the future for transportation. Only the 15 percent of the corridor owned by Burlington Northern would need to be purchased (an estimated $2,000 per acre in this area for 15 percent of the 14 mile corridor would be $50,900). This represents purchase of 12.12 acres per mile = 25.45 acres x $2,000 = $50,900. The Yelm Telephone Company and possibly the State Department of Wildlife are possible funding sources.

Recreation Potential - Joint use for recreation and utility corridor was seen as the priority for this corridor. Recreation uses include: 1) trail linking the small towns to the Chehalis Western corridor trail, 2) equestrian trail, 3) access to MacIntosh Lake for bank fishing accommodating to the interest of the Department of Wildlife, and 4) alternative to SR507 bike route.

Connections

Trail - As a trail between counties this corridor would serve as part of the State trail system. Within Thurston County it is an alternate connection between south county towns and a connector to the proposed county trail that goes north to Woodard Bay.

Road - As a road it has future upgrade potential only as an Olympia bypass. DOT has no plans to pursue this and noted that only 1/2 of the necessary right of way could be provided by this corridor.

Utility - As a utility corridor there is immediate potential for the Yelm Telephone Company's fiber optic cable, and as a potential future sewer corridor.

Rail-Freight - As a rail corridor for freight it has the potential to serve as 1) an alternate route to the mainline due to flooding or some other problem, 2) an alternate line that can bypass the Tacoma Waterfront, and 3) rail connection to South County industrial areas.

Rail-Passenger - As a rail corridor for passenger it has the potential to serve as 1) a future high speed rail corridor, and 2) a historic tourist line.

Threat - Burlington Northern will move to abandon the corridor at any time.

Policy

The priority use for this corridor now is recreation and utility corridor.

The priority use for this corridor in the future is high speed rail corridor, bypass rail line, and service to industrial spurs.

Strategy - The Port of Olympia should take the lead to file the interim trail use application and work with the county as a partner for any recreation use of the corridor.

Action - When TRPC approves the Rail Strategy Plan, Burlington Northern should be contacted immediately. To accommodate the Yelm Telephone Company's timeline for laying of their fiber optic cable, the Port should ask for consideration in as streamlined a process as possible. The Committee suggests putting together a proposal that would include both the Gate to Belmore and the Yelm to Tenino corridors and approach Burlington Northern before they actually move to abandon. (See A. Gate to Belmore for additional information on this joint acquisition proposal or refer to Immediate Actions on page 7.

Interest Groups

- Small Towns - Yelm
  - Rainier
  - Tenino
- Thurston County Parks
- Port of Olympia
- Adjacent Property Owners
- Yelm Telephone Company
- Recreation Groups
- Department of Wildlife
- State Parks
- Puget Power/Other Utilities
- Local Media

LINE: TENINO TO YELM

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

1. Map Location Key: K

Length: 14 miles

2. Location:

From Tenino in the south central area of the County, (Range 1 West, Township 16 North, Section 30), east and northeast through Rainier and Yelm.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

50% Congressional Land Grants - sure title (easily acquired)
45% Right-of-Way deeds (unsure title - more difficult to procure).
5% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easily acquired).

4. Status-Op/Non-Op/Abandoned:

Non-operating between Tenino and Yelm, operating from Yelm eastward.

5. Track Classification:

1 (10 mph max - non-operating portion)
2 (25 mph max - operating portion)

6. Usage:

None - west of Yelm (hasn't been used for several years). Occasional use to Yelm, from the east. (Wilcox Farms brings feed to Roy and plastics come to Hytec and Rainier Processing)

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

Small area of commercial and industrial land around Tenino (existing uses include welding storage and glass sales office). Small area of commercial land around Rainier. Small area of commercial and industrial land around Yelm (existing uses include processing, fiberglass manufacturing, concrete plant and agriculture storage).

LINE: TENINO TO YELM

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation Uses:

A designated future bikeway runs along about half the length of this line (western portion). Two other future designated bikeway cross the line, one in Rainier, one in Yelm. The Department of Wildlife is interested in providing bank fishing public access to MacIntosh Lake and may provide a small amount of support from their land bank account and operation and maintenance along the lake area. State Parks has a long term interest as part of their future cross state trail and will support local action (no monetary support identified). State's premier bicycle event (Seattle to Portland) ride follows this route (10,000 people entered this race in 1990).

9. Funding Sources:

Yelm Telephone company has expressed an interest in contributing in the range of $10,000 for use of the corridor for its fiber optic cable. The Department of Wildlife may be interested in contributing a small amount of money for acquisition if needed and would maintain the corridor in the MacIntosh Lake area.

Cost Estimate Using Interim Trail Use Application Process

The rough estimate of acquisition cost is 5% (owned outright by Burlington Northern) of 14 miles which equals 25.45 acres (12.12 acres per mile). 25.45 acres times $2000 per acre equals $50,904. The value would be determined by "across the fence" value of property, minus environmental constraints. The value of the track is based on scrap value of steel. At $20,000 per mile, the rail would cost $280,000. However, condition of the rails is poor.

LINE: TENINO TO YELM

COMPANY: BURLINGTON NORTHERN

10. Rail Strategy/Suggested Action:

There is strong support for maintaining this corridor for future transportation or recreation use. Use of the National Trails System Act would allow purchase of the right-of-way at minimal cost ($50,000 or less). Only 15 percent of this line is held in sure title and would need to be purchased. The 50 percent of the line under Congressional Land Grant title would be "rail banked" if the interim trail use process was used. Use of the 35 percent held in unsure title could be challenged in U.S. Claims Court and could result in the need of the Federal Government to compensate a successful claimant for their section of the right-of-way. However, they must show clear title and prove a "taking". See the section on Interim Trail Use.

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Cost to Purchase | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **K. Tenino to Yelm**<br><br>Port (with County and Yelm Telephone Company)<br><br>File Interim Trail Use Application (using National Trail System Act) before abandonment occurs - get 180 days to negotiate purchase of Burlington Northern sure title property. | Recreation trail, bike trail, utility ROW and open space.<br><br>Combined uses such as trail and utility.<br><br>Possible future rail transportation corridor. | Yelm (Telephone Company (interest in laying a fiber optic cable), Port, Thurston County<br><br>• State Parks, IAC, DOT, DNR and/or Wildlife. | • $50,900 (estimate for the 15 percent Burlington Northern owned ROW only). | Successful U.S. Claims Court challenge could result in the need to negotiate purchase of unsure title lands by the Federal Government. Claim must prove ownership and a "taking" in court. |

Map Location L

## INDEPENDENCE TO THE SOUTH COUNTY LINE

Ease of Acquisition - Because this line has already been abandoned, outright purchase would have to be negotiated with each title holder. The difficulty in determining title and the costs are prohibitive. State Parks was not successful in its attempt to acquire this line as part of their cross State trail system plan.

Recreation Potential - This corridor has excellent potential for recreation since it runs along the Chehalis River in Thurston County and goes out to the Coast.

Connections

Trail - Possibilities for use as part of a cross state trail have been abandoned.

Road - None, other road connections to the coast are adequate.

Utility - Utility connections can be made via the active BN line running along the north side of the Chehalis River.

Rail - Freight - None, line abandoned and service via the BN line on the north side of the river is a heavily used line.

Rail - Passenger - None, line is abandoned.

Threat - None. Already abandoned.

Policy - None. State Parks was unsuccessful in acquiring this line.

Strategy - Support any future action to preserve and establish a use in the corridor.

Action - None

Interest Groups

THURSTON COUNTY RAIL LINE ANALYSIS
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

| LINE: | COMPANY: |
|---|---|
| INDEPENDENCE TO SOUTH COUNTY LINE | UNION PACIFIC |

1. Map Location Key: L — Length: 7 miles

2. Location:

   Independence is in the southwest corner of the County (Section 11, Township 15 North, Range 4 West). The line runs northeast about two miles then southeast, following the Chehalis River another 3 miles, cutting south to exit the County at Section 22, Range 3 West, Township 15 North.

3. How Acquired (Rough Estimation of the Proportion of Deed Types):

   15% Right-of-Way deeds - unsure title (more difficult to acquire)
   85% Warranty deeds and other sure titles (easier to acquire)

4. Status-Op/Non-Op/Abandoned:

   Abandoned.

5. Track Classification:

   None - Abandoned.

6. Usage:

   None.

7. Proximity to Designated Industrial or Commercial Land:

   Runs close to larger mixed industrial and commercial land area between Rochester and Grand Mound (existing uses include residential, commercial, industrial and agriculture).

8. Proximity to Identified Recreation uses:

   None.

LINE: INDEPENDENCE TO SOUTH COUNTY LINE

COMPANY: UNION PACIFIC

| Strategy/Action | Uses | Funding Source | Limitation |
|---|---|---|---|
| L. **Independence to South County**<br><br>No action recommended - acquisition abandoned by State Parks in 1991. | Trail-Part of the cross state system that links with the coast. | State Parks. | |

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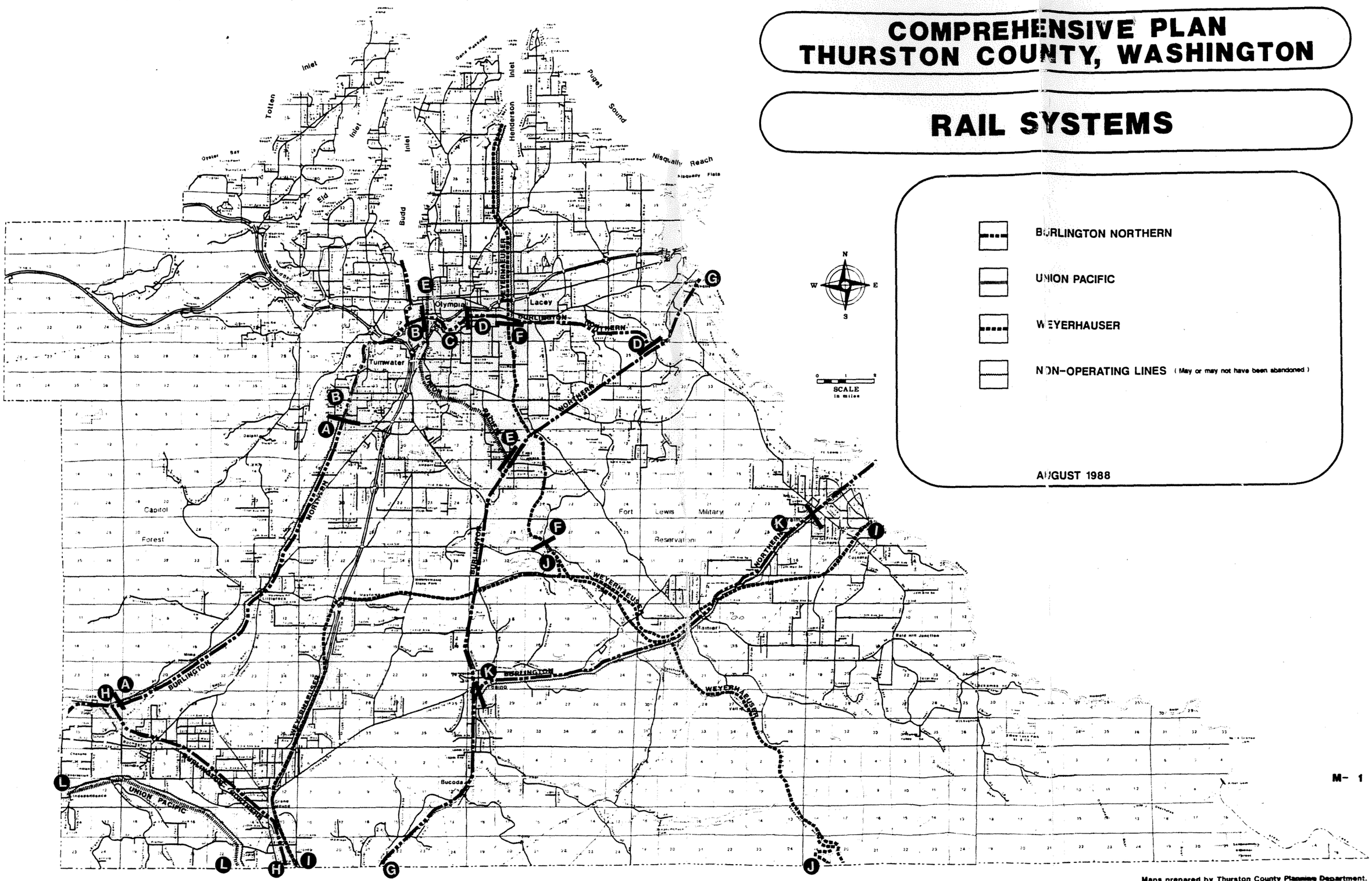
# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
# THURSTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

## RAIL SYSTEMS




AUGUST 1988

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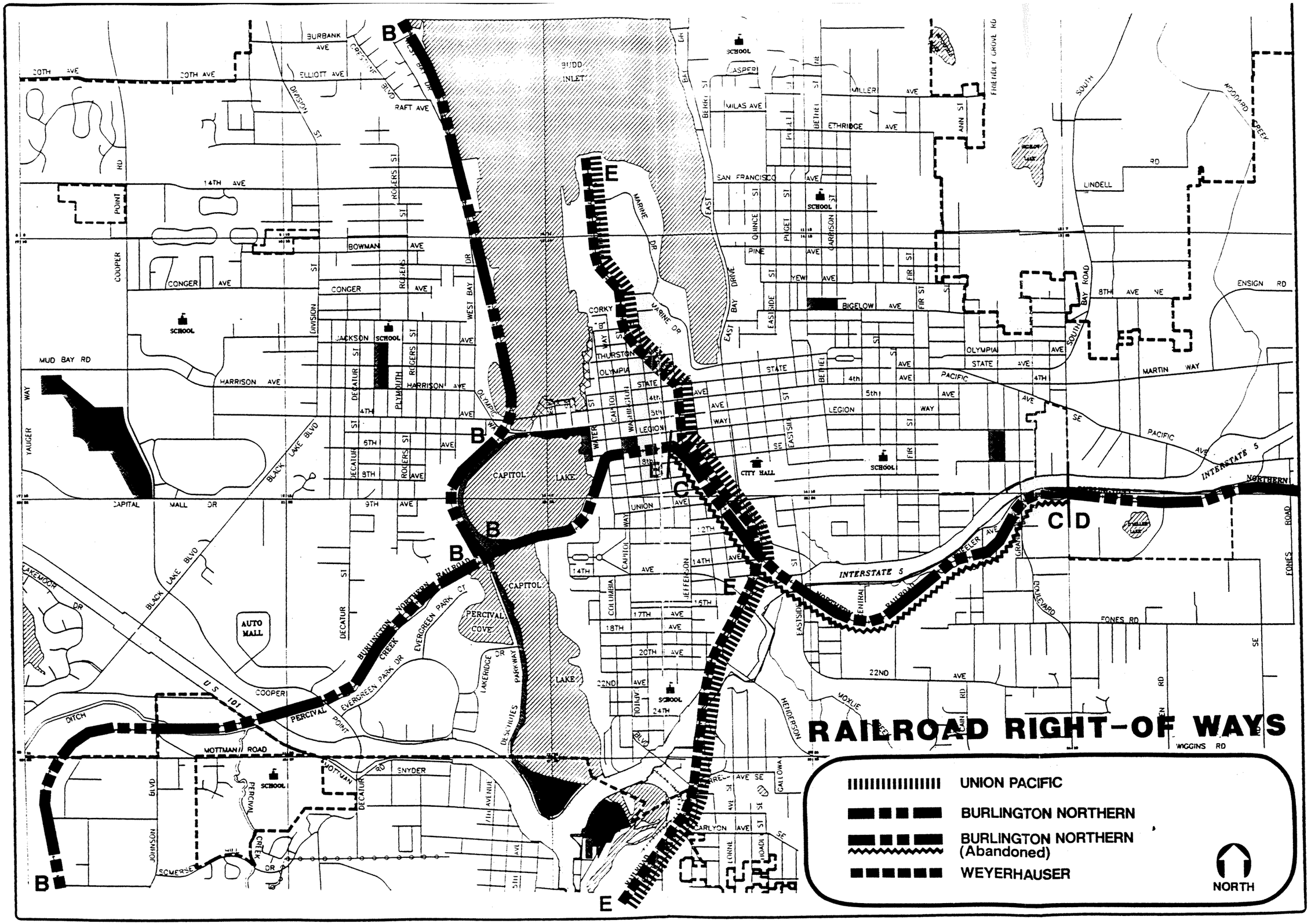
RAILROAD RIGHT-OF WAYS
UNION PACIFIC
BURLINGTON NORTHERN
BURLINGTON NORTHERN (Abandoned)
WEYERHAUSER
NORTH
BUDD INLET
CAPITOL LAKE
PERCIVAL COVE
BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD
INTERSTATE 5
U S 101
BLACK LAKE BLVD
AUTO MALL
CITY HALL
SCHOOL
B
C
D
E