

2025-2027 Project Lists

Freight Rail Assistance Program/ Freight Rail Investment Bank

1.0 Introduction - prioritized project lists

The Washington State Legislature authorized the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), under Chapter 310, Laws of 2024 (ESHB 2134), Section 308 to issue a “Call for Projects” for the Freight Rail Assistance Program (FRAP) and to provide “low-interest loans” through the Freight Rail Investment Bank (FRIB). The grant program is available to those in the public and private sectors. The loan program is available for publicly owned railroads, port districts, rail districts and local governments.

For the 2025-2027 biennium, the Legislature has identified a total of \$7.04 million for FRAP grants and a total of \$6.08 million for FRIB loans. WSDOT issued a “Call for Projects” on June 25, 2024, based on legislative priorities defined in RCW 47.76.240. Proposal submittals were due to WSDOT by September 25, 2024.

WSDOT received 12 FRAP grant applications requesting \$15.1 million in total funding and two applications for the FRIB loans requesting \$1.5 million in total funding. Four of the 12 FRAP applications were from the public sector. The applications to WSDOT fall into three broad categories:

- Critical rail infrastructure improvements including ties, rail, and bridges
- Construction of rail terminal infrastructure, rail yards, and sidings
- New rail equipment

It was important to identify the projects most beneficial to Washington state and those that showed the greatest potential for success. Projects directly enhancing existing rail transportation were given priority.

WSDOT is required to submit a prioritized list of recommended projects to the Office of Financial Management and the transportation committees of the Legislature by November 15, 2024. A review team composed of representatives from the Washington State Department of Agriculture, Washington State Department of Commerce, Washington Public Ports Association, and WSDOT Rail, Freight, and Ports Division scored and ranked the proposed projects.

The review panel evaluated each proposal based on the following elements:

- The scoring criteria outlined in the “2025-2027 FRAP/FRIB Call for Projects” application instructions.
- Best past practices as specified in section 309, chapter 367, Laws of 2011.
- Verified scores based on the self-evaluation matrix required as part of each submission, as outlined in the application criteria.

WSDOT’s Rail, Freight and Ports Division verified the benefit/cost analysis supplied by the applicants and then tabulated the total scores for each of the application packages. The members of the review panel used their experience and professional judgment to assist in ranking each project.

The priority ranking of the projects led the review team to recommend funding five of the FRAP proposals. The review team also recommends funding the two FRIB proposals. These determinations were based on the amount of funding available, as well as the ranking and quality of the projects proposed.

The WSDOT cost to administer the projects from the selected proposals was developed through consultation with other divisions within WSDOT for consistency purposes. This administrative cost, two percent, is taken from the overall program. The prioritized list of recommended projects took this administrative cost into consideration.

2.0 Projects Selected

2.1 FRAP Projects

Applicant	Rank	Total Project Cost	WSDOT Grant	Applicant Match
Cascade & Columbia River Railroad	1	\$2,935,720	\$1,467,860	\$1,467,860
Highline Grain Growers	2	\$4,346,485	\$1,241,600	\$3,104,885
Rainier Rail	3	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Columbia Basin Railroad	4	\$1,641,946	\$800,000	\$841,946
Pacific Northwest Farmers' Cooperative	5	\$12,483,537	\$2,889,740	\$9,593,797
Subtotal		\$22,407,688	\$6,899,200	\$15,508,488
WSDOT administration (2%)		\$140,800	\$140,800	
TOTAL		\$22,548,488	\$7,040,000	\$15,508,488

2.1.1 Cascade & Columbia River Railroad – CSCD 286K Rail & Bridge Upgrade Project

FRAP Ranking: 1

Project Description

Removal and replacement of old 68lb rail with heavier rail and strengthening of 14 bridges between Wenatchee and Oroville to allow for modern 286K weight train car capacity on the railroad.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$1,467,860	50%
CSCD	Private	In-kind	\$1,467,860	50%
Total			\$2,935,720	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- Replace existing 68lb rail with 115RE rail from MP 129.0 to 130.0 and MP 131.2 to 132.8.
- Upgrade 14 bridges by either adding an additional ply to strengthen the stringer chords (longitudinal members spanning from one bent to another), recentering the chords (horizontal members), or strengthening truss elements for bridges that have steel trusses.
- These improvements will allow these sections to be 286k compliant, increasing safety, reducing service interruptions, and reducing operating costs.



2.1.2 High Line Grain Growers – Hartline Station Restoration

FRAP Ranking: 2

Project Description

Restore an aging, poorly configured, and insufficient Hartline Station in Grant County on the CW Line to a more state-of-the-art wheat transload facility. The Project will also purchase a pre-owned track mobile (on-track equipment for moving rail cars).

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$1,241,600	26%
High Line Grain Growers	Private	Cash	\$3,104,885	74%
Total			\$4,346,485	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- Replace five aging grain elevators with a new 112,000-bushel grain elevator at the Harline Station.
- Install a new receiving pit and a 20,000 bushel per hour rail loadout conveyor assembly capable of loading 30 rail cars per day.
- These improvements and the purchase of the track mobile will improve operational efficiency, reduce wear and tear on the rail, and increase public safety.

2.1.3 Rainier Rail – Blakeslee Junction Siding Expansion – Phase 1

FRAP Ranking: 3

Project Description

Build new siding track at Blakeslee Junction in Chehalis to connect to Lakeside siding which will create more capacity to interchange between the UPRR, BNSF, and PSAP railroads.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$500,000	50%
Rainier Rail	Private	In-kind	\$500,000	50%
Total			\$1,000,000	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- Build 2,400 additional feet of new track onto an existing 2,000 feet of the Centralia railyard to hold approximately 60 rail cars.
- This railyard takes pressure off of the railyard in Centralia by adding another location to sort train cars and assemble them into trains.
- The project will increase interchange volume and efficiency at this rail hub, raising regional system capacity.



2.1.4 Columbia Basin Railroad – Warden to Wheeler Tie Replacement

FRAP Ranking: 4

Project description

Install 7,500 ties from approximately MP 166 near Warden to approximately MP 146.6 at Wheeler.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$800,000	49%
Columbia Basin Railroad	Private	In-kind	\$841,946	51%
Total			\$1,641,946	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- Replace approximately 500-600 ties per mile to improve the tie conditions over 12.5 to 15 miles.
- This would stabilize the track to continue to safely serve customers by allowing for the movement of heavier 286K rail cars.



2.1.5 Pacific Northwest Farmers’ Cooperative – McCoy Grain Terminal Expansion

FRAP Ranking: 5

Project description

Construct a grain storage facility to increase the long-term storage capacity of the McCoy Grain Terminal in Whitman County between Rosalia and Oaksdale.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$2,889,740	23%
PNW Farmers’ Cooperative	Private	Cash	\$9,593,797	77%
Total			\$12,483,537	100%

The applicant requested \$4,071,792 of funds, but due to funding constraints, the maximum amount available is \$2,889,740. The applicant agreed to receive partial funding and confirmed the project could be completed by increasing its match contribution.

Summary of details and recommendations

- The McCoy Grain Terminal serves over 1,400 members across eastern Washington, northern Idaho, western Montana, and northeast Oregon.
- The project will complete site permitting and preparation, install electrical and automation systems and the necessary truss infrastructure, and purchase and install the equipment to facilitate efficient grain movement between the hoop house and the rail receiving and shipping bay.
- The project will also reduce the reliance on trucks and public roadways by eliminating truck trips caused by the lack of storage.

2.2 FRIB (Loan) Projects

Applicant	Rank	Total Project Cost	WSDOT Loan	Applicant Match
Tacoma Rail – Boom Truck Crane	1	\$600,000	\$400,000	\$200,000
Tacoma Rail – McPip Yard Upgrades	2	\$1,569,250	\$1,100,000	\$469,250
Subtotal		\$2,169,250	\$1,500,000	\$699,250
Interest (2%)		\$30,000	\$30,000	
TOTAL		\$2,199,250	\$1,530,000	\$669,250

Since these were the only two loan applications received during this call for projects, WSDOT recommends the remaining \$4,550,000 be used for a supplemental call for projects in 2025.

2.2.1 Tacoma Rail – Boom Truck Crane

FRIB Ranking: 1

Project description

Purchase a new 30-ton capacity boom truck for heavy locomotive component maintenance and repair.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Loan	Public	Cash	\$400,000	33%
Tacoma Rail	Public	In-kind	\$200,000	67%
Total			\$600,000	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- Tacoma Rail previously contracted with Progress Rail for locomotive repair work. Since Progress Rail shut down its local facility in 2013, Tacoma Rail has been performing the heavy repairs itself. This has involved boom trucks rental companies that no longer have this equipment due to liability and state training requirements.
- The project will better enable heavy locomotive repair, including removing and installing power assemblies, car bodies, main generators, turbos, and traction motors.

2.2.2 Tacoma Rail – McPip Yard Upgrades

FRIB Ranking: 2

Project description

Removing and replacing old worn rail, deteriorated track switches, select crossties, and rebuilding two existing private passive railroad crossings in the Port of Tacoma area.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Loan	Public	Cash	\$1,100,000	70%
Tacoma Rail	Public	In-kind	\$469,250	30%
Total			\$1,569,250	100%

Summary of analysis and recommendations

- The project covers approximately 3,200 feet of track and includes replacement of three switches, two private crossings, 2,000 feet of new track, and 470 crossties.
- The yard tracks support switching services for several customers in the area.
- The project will improve freight rail access to industries located in the Port of Tacoma area.

3.0 Projects Not Selected

The following projects fell below the priority ranking and are not recommended for funding. These lower rankings are based on scoring criteria provided in the publicly available call-for-projects document. Lower scores were primarily related to the following elements:

- The low amount of match funding the applicant provided
- The project was not in an economically distressed county
- The applicant’s business, marketing, operations, and financial plans were not very strong
- The project did not facilitate the transfer of truck-based transportation to rail-based transportation as much as other projects

3.1 FRAP projects not selected for funding

Applicant	Rank	Total Project Cost	WSDOT Grant	Applicant Match
Central Washington Railroad	6	\$1,641,946	\$800,000	\$841,946
Port of Tacoma	7	\$847,010	\$465,854	\$381,156
Port of Benton	8	\$1,687,500	\$1,250,000	\$437,500
Columbia Rail	9	\$900,935	\$672,235	\$228,700
Port of Royal Slope	10	\$1,090,000	\$1,040,000	\$50,000
Spokane International Airport	11	\$2,460,000	\$2,000,000	\$460,000
Spokane County	12	\$1,447,000	\$1,447,000	\$0
TOTAL		\$10,074,391	\$7,675,089	\$2,399,302



3.1.1 Central Washington Railroad – Gibbon to Sunnyside Tie Replacement

FRAP Ranking: 6

Project description

Install 7,500 ties over approximately 12.5 miles at an approximate rate of 600 ties per mile.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$800,000	51%
Central Washington Railroad	Private	In-kind	\$841,946	49%
Total			\$1,641,946	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- To stabilize the track to continue to safely operate and continue 286K rail car capabilities for customers.
- Ties are needed to allow and prepare for a future rail and ballast projects requiring better tie conditions to facilitate those projects.

3.1.2 Port of Tacoma – Maritime Center Rail Crossing

FRAP Ranking: 7

Project description

Improve an at-grade crossing to connect a future port office and school district building with their parking lot while making sure existing rail operations are not disrupted.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$465,854	55%
Port of Tacoma	Public	Cash	\$381,156	45%
Total			\$847,010	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- This property has not been utilized for industrial and commercial purposes for several years.
- A future port office, the Maritime Center, would house a new business center for port employees, space for public meetings, and a career and technical education center.
- The Maritime Center would include crossing improvements involving pedestrian/vehicle gates, alarms, signage, and other necessary safety infrastructure.

3.1.3 Port of Benton – Richland Crosstie Replacement

FRAP Ranking: 8

Project description

Replace crossties from Richland Junction (MP 18.84) to Battelle Boulevard (MP 29.22).

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$1,250,000	74%
Port of Benton	Public	Cash	\$437,500	26%
Total			\$1,687,500	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- The previous lease holder for maintaining the rail line defaulted on its obligations. Funding would be used to make these needed repairs.
- The project would improve track conditions to safely run trains at 10 mph so train traffic doesn't impact roadway traffic.
- The project improvements would help prevent the line from being taken out of service.



3.1.4 Columbia Rail – Interchange Support Track

FRAP Ranking: 9

Project description

Construct a 2,000-foot interchange support track along the Wallula Industrial Lead.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$672,235	75%
Columbia Rail	Private	In-kind	\$228,700	25%
Total			\$900,935	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- UPRR and BNSF face significant congestion at the existing interchange.
- Lack of designated tracks limits the ability to assemble trains which lengthens delays and adds to more crew hours.
- Delays increase idle times for locomotives which increases fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

3.1.5 Port of Royal Slope

FRAP Ranking: 10

Project description

Replace 5,200 ties over approximately 8.7 miles at about 600 ties per mile near the town of Royal City.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$1,040,000	95%
Port of Royal Slope through Columbia Rail	Private	In-kind	\$50,000	5%
Total			\$1,090,000	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- Historically the rail line failed to generate enough revenue to fund its required maintenance.
- The current lease holder has put the line back in service and made the line more viable for service.
- Funding would support a plan to upgrade the line for 10 mph speeds.

3.1.6 Spokane International Airport – Transload Track Extension

FRAP Ranking: 11

Project description

Construct an additional 3,200 feet of industrial track for the next phase of the rail-truck transload facility.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$2,000,000	61%
Spokane International Airport	Public	Cash	\$460,000	39%
Total			\$2,460,000	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- The transload facility supports national and regional movement of goods to employment centers and stimulates economic development for the region.
- The extended tracks will lower transportation costs for existing and future area businesses.
- The project compliments an effort by the public and private sector to provide commerce connectivity between regional businesses and multimodal corridors converging in the Spokane area.



3.1.7 Spokane County – Geiger Spur Upper End Tie Replacement

FRAP Ranking: 12

Project description

Remove and replace ties, place tie plates where none exist, surface and dress the ballast, and reconstruct a crossing at SR 902.

Funding

Funding Source	Public or Private	Match	Amount	%
WSDOT Grant	Public	Cash	\$1,447,000	100%
Spokane County	Public	Cash	\$0	0%
Total			\$1,447,000	100%

Summary of details and recommendations

- This project would support the maintenance of the Geiger Spur.
- Businesses along the Geiger Spur are solely dependent on the rail line and would be forced to relocate if the line was not in service.
- The project prevents the diversion of rail freight to trucks.