



**AAWA**  
ALL ABOARD WASHINGTON

# Welcome!



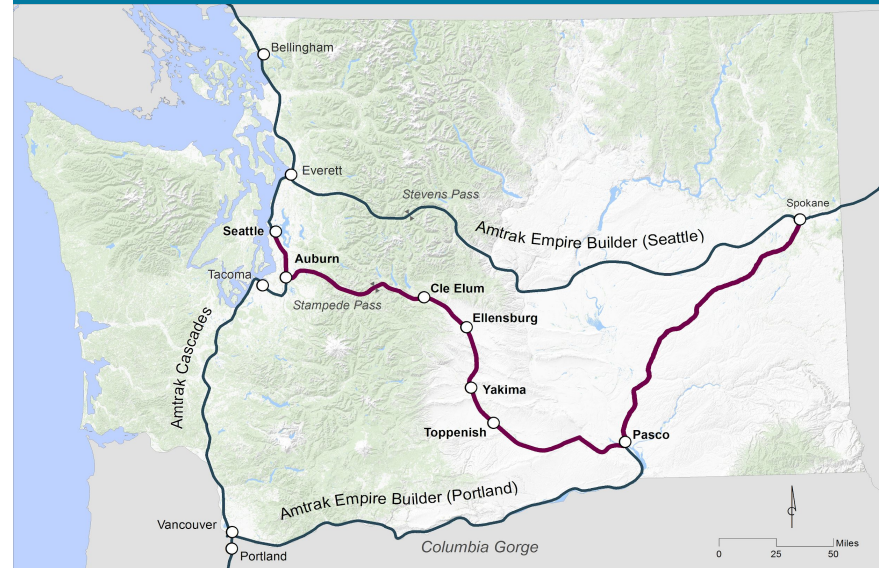
**AAWA**  
ALL ABOARD WASHINGTON



**GREATER YAKIMA**  
*Chamber of Commerce*

## The 2020 Central Washington Passenger Rail Summit

Saturday, July 11, 2020



# Welcome, Background, Introductions

- *Kathy Davis, AAWA*
- *Gary Wirt, AAWA*
- *Verlynn Best, Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce*
- *Alan Adolf, Yakima Valley Conference of Governments*

# Background on State Support

## The Joint Transportation Committee's East-West Passenger Rail Feasibility Study

- *Luis Moscoso,  
AAWA*
- *Sen. Judy Warnick,  
Legislative Rail  
Caucus Co-Chair*





# Introduction to JTC Study

- *Dave Catterson, JTC*



Joint Transportation  
Committee

Washington State Legislature • [www.leg.wa.gov/JTC](http://www.leg.wa.gov/JTC)



## Findings from East-West Passenger Rail Feasibility Study

- *Michael Colella, STEER*

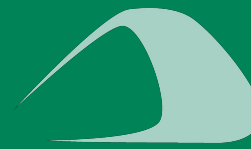


# Comments and Questions

Post comments and questions on chat

- *Patrick Carnahan, AAWA*





# Break

**5 minutes**

Become a member, or donate:

**All Aboard Washington**

*[aawa.us](http://aawa.us) - (509) 213-0070*

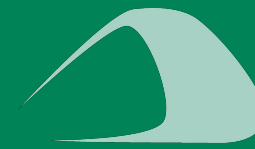
**Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce**

*[yakima.org](http://yakima.org) - (509) 248-2021*

# Need for Economic Analysis

- *Abe Zumwalt, AAWA*





# Basic Economic Analysis

**For \$15m - \$30m in annual operations costs, we get:**

**\$33.5m - \$36m in state savings from Car Trips Diverted**

**+**

**\$7m+ in Visitor Spending**

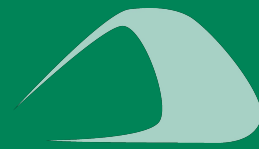
# Challenges Presented by STEER's Work

- Ridership profile does not match Amtrak data
- Estimating regional impacts given only gross ridership estimates
- A proper corridor to the Tri-Cities not contemplated

# Avoiding Car Trips Saves Money

- Initial STEER estimates of East-West ridership only consider diverted automotive trips
- Cost savings of avoided Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) by cars is vastly underappreciated





# Savings per VMT Avoided

**\$2.00 on road wear & tear**

**12¢ on accidents & deaths**

Victoria Transport Policy Institute general averages for the US

# Regional Ridership from STEER Report

Table 6.2: Origin and Destination Pairs for All Survey Participants

Origin	Destination								
	Auburn	Cle Elum	Ellensburg	Seattle	Spokane	Toppenish	Tri-Cities	Yakima	Total
Auburn		0.6%	1.0%	8.6%	1.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	12.3%
Cle Elum	0.4%		0.7%	2.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.4%	4.6%
Ellensburg	0.4%	0.3%		3.6%	0.6%	0.1%	0.3%	1.0%	6.2%
Seattle	9.0%	2.2%	3.7%		10.2%	0.8%	3.7%	6.1%	35.9%
Spokane	1.1%	0.1%	1.1%	6.9%		0.1%	2.5%	1.9%	13.9%
Toppenish	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.8%	0.1%		0.7%	0.8%	3.0%
Tri-Cities	0.4%	0.1%	0.7%	3.6%	2.2%	0.4%		1.9%	9.4%
Yakima	1.0%	0.3%	2.2%	5.3%	2.2%	1.0%	2.8%		14.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Steer (2020) analysis.



# Car Trips Avoided

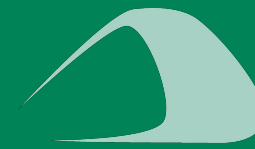
Using STEER's Seattle - Spokane ridership numbers + Survey Results in the study, a sketch was made of potential Origin-Destination Pair Ridership

1 Daily Trip									
	Auburn	Cle Elum	Ellensburg	Seattle	Spokane	Toppenish	Tri-Cities	Yakima	Total
Auburn	0	1,152	1,920	16,512	2,304	576	576	768	23,808
Cle Elum	768	0	1,344	4,608	576	576	192	768	8,832
Ellensburg	768	576	0	6,912	1,152	192	576	1,920	12,096
Seattle	17,280	4,224	7,104	0	19,584	1,536	7,104	11,712	68,544
Spokane	2,112	192	2,112	13,248	0	192	4,800	3,648	26,304
Toppenish	0	0	1,152	1,536	192	0	1,344	1,536	5,760
Tri-Cities	768	192	1,344	6,912	4,224	768	0	3,648	17,856
Yakima	1,920	576	4,224	10,176	4,224	1,920	5,376	0	28,416
Total	23,616	6,912	19,200	59,904	32,256	5,760	19,968	24,000	191,616

# Car Trips Avoided

- (Ridership Pair / Average National Vehicle Occupancy (1.67))  
 × Trip Miles (Fastest Google Maps Mileage)  
 × Saved VMT Maintenance and Safety Costs (\$2.12) =

Savings from Avoided VMT									
	Aubum	Cle Elum	Ellensburg	Seattle	Spokane	Toppenist	Tri-Cities	Yakima	
Aubum	\$0	\$123,601	\$265,569	\$597,654	\$830,957	\$120,623	\$154,874	\$140,975	<b>\$2,234,252</b>
Cle Elum	\$82,401	\$0	\$41,697	\$494,405	\$146,683	\$59,567	\$31,273	\$59,567	<b>\$915,592</b>
Ellensburg	\$106,228	\$17,870	\$0	\$956,048	\$257,627	\$13,899	\$75,948	\$89,350	<b>\$1,516,969</b>
Seattle	\$625,452	\$453,204	\$982,604	\$0	\$7,063,137	\$321,661	\$1,910,110	\$2,149,866	<b>\$13,506,034</b>
Spokane	\$761,711	\$48,894	\$472,315	\$4,778,004	\$0	\$49,887	\$881,093	\$905,416	<b>\$7,897,321</b>
Toppenist	\$0	\$0	\$83,394	\$321,661	\$49,887	\$0	\$105,979	\$41,697	<b>\$602,618</b>
Tri-Cities	\$206,498	\$31,273	\$177,211	\$1,858,485	\$775,362	\$60,560	\$0	\$99,030	<b>\$3,208,418</b>
Yakima	\$352,437	\$44,675	\$196,571	\$1,867,916	\$1,048,376	\$52,121	\$145,939	\$0	<b>\$3,708,035</b>
								<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$33,589,239</b>

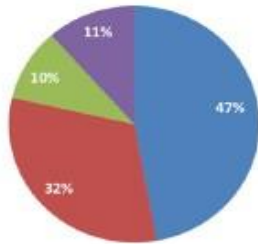


# Just Car Trips Avoided?

## WASHINGTON STATE

### Profile of Amtrak Customers

Travel Mode Preference if Amtrak Unavailable



- Would drive if Amtrak unavailable
- Would fly if Amtrak unavailable
- Would use the bus if Amtrak unavailable
- Would not travel if Amtrak Unavailable

Percent of population within 30 miles of a rail station served by Amtrak

**88%**

Percent of Riders who Would Not Travel if Amtrak was Unavailable



Income Distribution of Amtrak Travelers in Washington

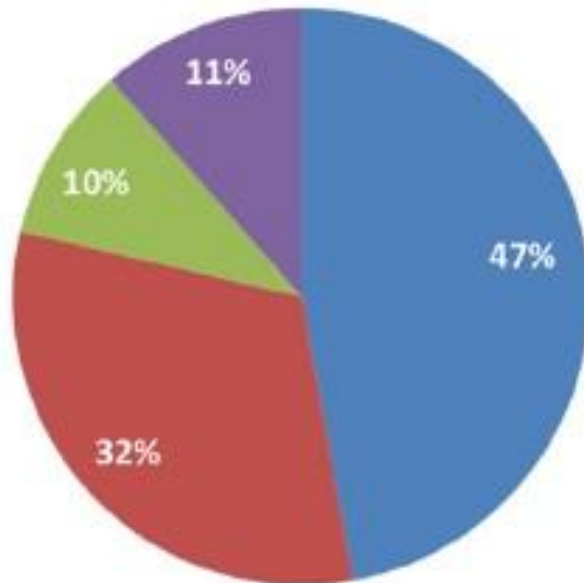


- STEER's ridership estimates were derived solely from car trips avoided.
- This does not reflect Amtrak's own data regarding ridership in Washington state.



# Not Every Passenger Drives

Travel Mode Preference if Amtrak  
Unavailable



- Amtrak data says **less than half** of potential riders in Washington drive
- This data implies that the STEER report therefore underestimated ridership **by half**

- Would drive if Amtrak unavailable
- Would fly if Amtrak unavailable
- Would use the bus if Amtrak unavailable
- Would not travel if Amtrak Unavailable

# Some Passengers Wouldn't Travel

Percent of Riders who Would Not Travel if Amtrak was Unavailable



- The report contemplates 'little induced ridership,' which is to say, riders who wouldn't otherwise travel.
- **Amtrak's own data shows above-average induced ridership for passenger rail in Washington.**



# Induced Travel is Valuable

**\$84 per day-trip visitor**

**\$366 per overnight visitor**

Average spending generated, according to Experience Washington





# Well-Needed Perspective

**\$280m - \$380m (397 Miles)**

Contemplated Capital Costs for East-West Passenger Rail Service

**\$220m (~2 Miles)**

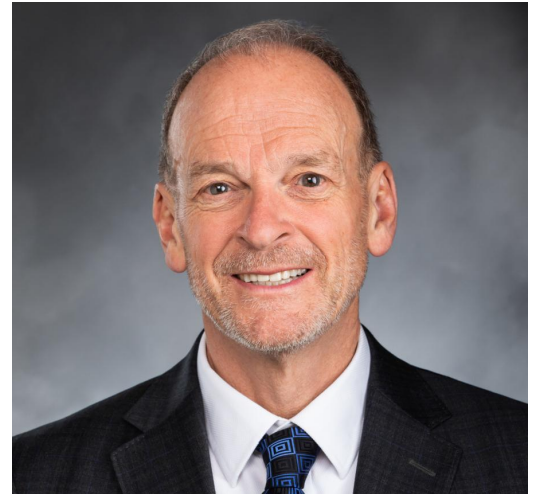
One Southbound HOV lane, Portland Avenue - Port of Tacoma Road

**\$283.5m (~6 Miles)**

Snoqualmie Pass Lanes

# Budget Constraints

- *Rep. Jake Fey, Chair, House Transportation Committee*



# Demographics of the Yakima Valley

- Long Range Plan Study (completed in February)
- General view of passenger rail in the region

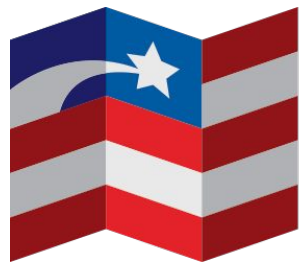


*Alan Adolf, Yakima Valley Conference of Governments*

# Funding with Regional Rail Commissions

- *John Robert Smith,  
Transportation for America*





# Transportation for America

## Supporting Interstate Passenger Rail Funding and Commissions

T4America.org  
@T4America



# Background About the Presenter



The Hon. John Robert Smith

**The Hon. John Robert Smith**  
Chairman, Transportation for America

- Served 16 years as the Mayor of Meridian, MS
- Served on Amtrak's Board of Directors from 1998 - 2003; Chairman of the board the last two years.
- Transportation for America is the federal affairs advisor to the Southern Rail Commission

# Transportation for America

An advocacy organization made up of local, regional and state leaders who envision a transportation system that safely, affordably and conveniently connects people of all means and ability to jobs, services, and opportunity through multiple modes of travel.



# Transportation for America

A history of working on both sides of the aisle to support passenger rail.

## **FAST Act**

- Passenger Rail included in surface re-authorization for the first time
- Establish CRISI Grant program for capital funding
- Establish R&E Grant program for initial operating support

# Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI)

Established in the FAST Act in 2015.

Can fund capital improvements identified by the Gulf Coast Working Group and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to achieve the preferred level of passenger rail service.

To submit a competitive application, states have to match the level of funding requested.

## **Prior Appropriations**

- FY17: \$67m
- FY18: \$320m
- FY19: \$255m
- FY20: \$325m

# Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Program

Established in the FAST Act in 2015.

Can fund significant portion of the first three of years of operating costs for a new or expanded passenger rail service.

Key will be demonstrating that there is a concrete commitment for operating support to run the train for the first three years and a plan to fund the train long term.

## **Prior appropriations**

- FY17: \$5m
- FY18-20: \$27m

# Current Environment for Passenger Rail

- COVID Pandemic and Economic Recession
- Amtrak ridership down over 90% nationally (May 2020)
  - NEC Down 97%
  - State Supported Down 89%
  - Long Distance Down 71%
- LD trains currently provide more gross revenue than NEC and State Supported trains combined (May 2020)
- Ridership returning fastest on LD trains.

## Amtrak Supplemental and Layoffs

(Amtrak received an extra \$1.02b for FY20 in the CARES Act)

- FY21 Amtrak supplemental request for \$1.45b
  - Amtrak recently offered buyouts to senior staff, and furloughs will follow 20% across the board (4,000 technically trained employees).
  - Amtrak will cut route frequencies. State Supported will be hard hit, and all LD trains will run three or four-days a week. (except the Auto Train)



# Current and Future Opportunities for Passenger Rail

## Recently passed funding opportunities

- House Surface Re-Authorization TRAIN Act
  - \$60b for rail
  - PRIME Grant Program \$19b over 5 years
  - \$5.8b Authorized for CRISI, over 5 years
    - \$500m Appropriated for FY21
  - \$100m for R&E Grants
  - \$130m to pay RRIF premiums

# Current and Future Opportunities for Passenger Rail

## Recently passed funding opportunities

- House Surface Re-Authorization (Amtrak Specific)
  - \$16.2b Authorized for Amtrak National Network
    - Appropriated \$1.3b for FY21
  - \$13.1b Authorized for the NEC
    - Appropriated \$750m for FY21
  - \$8b appropriated for Amtrak emergency funding (\$5b for NEC, \$3b for National Network.)
  - Improved enforcement of on-time performance (Courts and STB)

# Current and Future Opportunities for Passenger Rail

## Recently passed funding opportunities

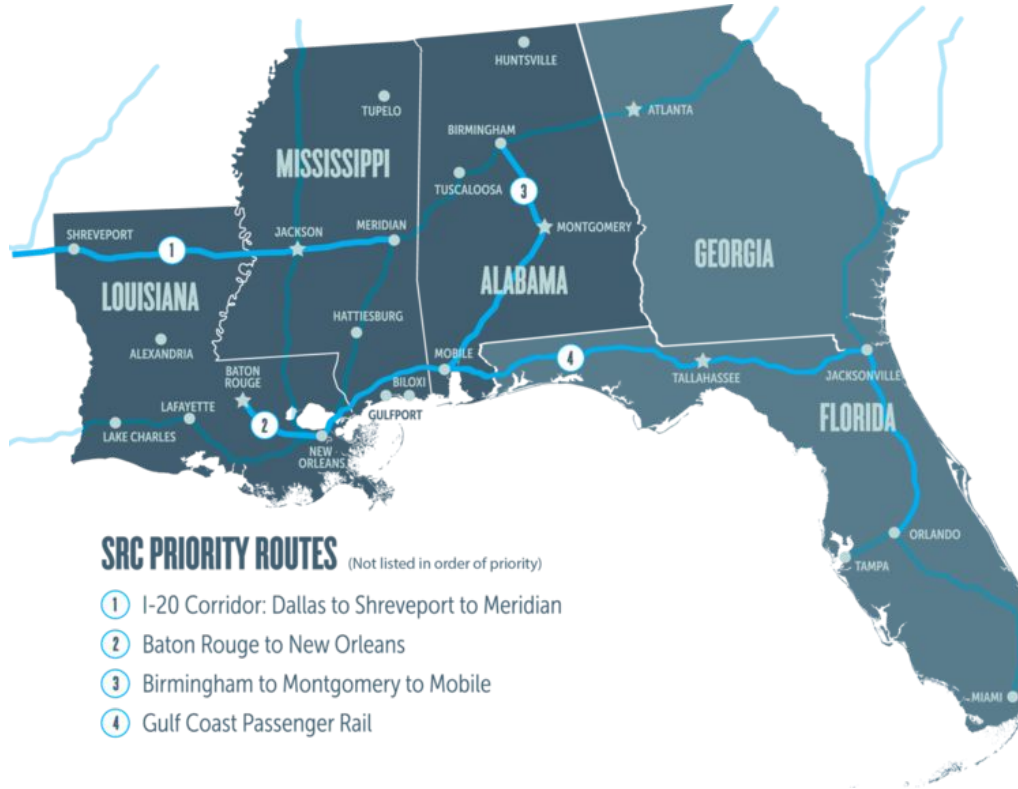
- House THUD Emergency Appropriations
  - \$8b appropriated for Amtrak (\$5b for NEC, \$3b for National Network) Contingent on maintaining service and staffing levels.
  - \$5b for CRISI, restricted to larger projects.

# Current and Future Opportunities for Passenger Rail

## Senate rail funding opportunities

- \$5b annually for passenger rail
- Allows discounted or donated property to count as non-federal match
- RRIF loan funds can count as non-federal match
- Focuses on connectivity between airports, transit, and other passenger rail.
- Creation of additional interstate commissions and federal matching funds.

# SRC Member States and Objectives



# SRC Strategic Projects

Capital: \$66m Secured

- 50% Non-Federal
- 50% CRISI Grant

Operating: \$18.95m

- \$4.36m Secured FY17
- \$5.45m Secured FY18-FY20
- Local support \$9.14m
- Overall operating:
  - 46% Non-Federal
  - 54% R&E Grant



# Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority



- Several counties in Montana establish Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority. Leaders working to include North Dakota and Idaho.
- Primary service option would run from Fargo, SD, to Spokane, WA via southern Montana, including that state's largest cities.
- Authority established over several weeks following meeting with T4A and the SRC.

# WV, OH, IN Authority



- Local leaders from communities in WV, OH, and IN came together to pursue opportunities for an interstate rail authority.
- There is broad recognition that the region is under-served by passenger rail, and that new services would benefit communities and the traveling public alike.



# All Aboard Washington Map



# Questions?



# Financing with County Rail Districts

- County Rail Districts are already authorized in law
- A funding bill would allow State assistance similar to Public Facilities Districts
- A percentage of the State's share of Sales and Use Tax raised in the jurisdiction could be matched
- Funding could be used for freight or passenger improvements, such as stations



*Louis Musso,  
AAWA*



# Next Steps and How You Can Help

- *Luis Moscoso, AAWA*



# History of Rail in Washington

- **1981:** Amtrak passenger rail service was discontinued over Stampede Pass, moved to Stevens Pass; service between Spokane and Portland was added
- **1991-92:** The Legislature directed a study of high speed rail; WSDOT confirmed its feasibility; the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) designated the Pacific Northwest as a high-speed rail corridor
- **1993:** WSDOT was directed (RCW 47.79) to develop “high-quality intercity passenger rail service ... through incremental upgrading of the existing [Amtrak] service,” including high-speed ground transportation service with top speeds over 150 m.p.h. between Seattle and Spokane by 2030
- **1994-99:** State funded new intercity Amtrak service between Portland, Seattle, and Vancouver, BC; successful tilt train tests lead to Amtrak *Cascades* rollout

# History of Rail in Washington

- **2001:** The E-W Preliminary Analysis recommended the state, *“undertakes a detailed study of the feasibility of east-west passenger rail service...”*
- **2008:** The Great Recession reduced state transportation revenue for years
- **2017:** AAWA-sponsored Central Washington University research showed growing interest in passenger rail along the Stampede Pass corridor
- **2019-20:** Next-level feasibility analysis of an East-West intercity passenger rail system was conducted with state funding
- **2020:** Ridership declined due to COVID-19; Seattle-Portland services cut to two round-trips daily; service suspended north of Seattle due to border closure

# We Need an Economic Impact Analysis

- **Direct** quantifiable benefits from passenger trains:
  - Railway Operations and Maintenance Spending on local economies
  - New Visitor Spending, including travel that would not have happened
  - Community development and business activity adjacent to train stations
- **Indirect** quantifiable benefits:
  - Highway fatalities and maintenance avoided
  - Saved travel costs and less wasted time driving for area residents

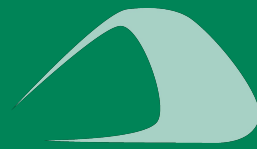
# Give Every Washingtonian Their Fair Share

- Passenger rail should be an important component of an integrated transportation system that:
  - Furthers economic recovery and development
  - Serves rural and urban communities alike
  - Helps create a fiscally and environmentally-sustainable future



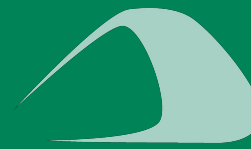
# The Time for East-West Service is Now

- Our state's 30-year mandate to develop “high-quality intercity passenger rail service through incremental upgrading of the existing [Amtrak] service” is long-overdue.
- A new train culture has emerged in Washington that is interested in creating a modern, expansive intercity passenger rail network serving communities of all sizes.
- It is time for us to press the Legislature to follow through on its promise for cross-state rail service connecting the Yakima Valley.



## What Do We Need To Do?

1. Fund an economic impact analysis of East-West service
2. Get state-level approval for a Northwest Rail Commission
3. Set up county rail districts to fund improvements
4. Ask for resolutions of support from local governments



# How Can You Help?

1. Contact your legislators and ask them to support:
  - a. An East-West economic impact analysis
  - b. State approval of a Northwest Rail Commission
2. Ask for resolutions of support for East-West service from your local governments
3. Talk with your county officials about using county rail districts to fund improvements
4. Donate to AAWA or join us as a member, volunteer, or director
5. Create or work with a local chapter of AAWA
6. Participate in our upcoming events

# Announcing AAWA's 2020 Train Trek

- Dates and focus locations will be updated at [aawa.us/events](https://aawa.us/events)
- Virtual meetings until further notice



# Spokane - Thursday, August 27



# Ellensburg - Saturday, September 19





# Tri-Cities - Saturday, October 17



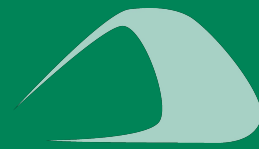
# Cle Elum - Saturday, November 21





# Auburn - Saturday, December 5





# Toppenish



Visit [aawa.us/east-west](https://aawa.us/east-west) to Get Involved

Contact us, become a member, or donate:

**All Aboard Washington**

[aawa.us](https://aawa.us) - (509) 213-0070

**Greater Yakima**

**Chamber of Commerce**

[yakima.org](https://yakima.org) - (509) 248-2021

