

Better investing \$22 million in Connect Oregon funds — Final

Better investing the remaining \$22 million in Connect Oregon funds in Millersburg, at the proposed [Mid-Willamette Valley Intermodal Center](#), means learning more about five scenarios to make our total \$25 million Connect Oregon investment there more effective and efficient.

First — Why not open Millersburg to all railroads, why spend public funds to strengthen one railroad oligopoly over another, when the other may compete at a lower price, and within the same three-day transit time, or better?

Second — Why not run the Millersburg service right behind a Cascade Service passenger train to complete one roundtrip per day between Millersburg and Tacoma/Seattle? After all, the public has invested in track infrastructure and this will bring the service closer to highway transit time, better attract customers, maximize the productive use of transportation assets, minimize inventory holding cost, and more.

Third — Why not incent the operator + railroads to work together to minimize cost by requiring them to share the revenue pool? Each would be paid variable cost, fixed cost, and profit in turn, as available. After all, to generate Millersburg traffic in the first place, the public is taking on the risk of a major \$25 million investment, the operator, yet to be named, will be taking on its own investment risk. Why shouldn't the railroad take a similar risk?

Fourth — Why not learn more about significantly reducing commercial highway traffic with roll-on/roll-off service? RORO for short. After a business feasibility assessment, Millersburg may be used to operate a demonstration service to prove that any highway legal vehicle may quickly and safely drive on, ride, and drive off RORO equipment, that truckers using RORO may have an advantage in both cost and transit time competing with truckers who do not use RORO.

Fifth — As of September 30th, key Millersburg project [milestone deadlines](#) set by you, the Oregon Transportation Commission, have not been met. Why not learn more about replacing Millersburg with a RORO demonstration service under the principles of the scenarios above? RORO requires virtually no terminal investment, compared to Millersburg as planned. RORO carries international containers, too. Is leverage needed? Leverage the RORO operator and railroads with a commitment

that the Oregon Legislature will invest \$22 million in Connect Oregon funds on Cascade Corridor track infrastructure improvements, as check listed in the [Oregon State Rail Plan](#), Appendix C. That would be instead of building the Millersburg terminal as planned.

How may the Oregon Transportation Commission, and the nonprofit 501(c)(3) RAIL Solution, my organization, doing business as the Steel Interstate Coalition, an iconoclastic group of career transportation industry professionals, work together with you to complete a business feasibility of these five scenarios?

From you, the Oregon Transportation Commission —

At the least, we'd appreciate a letter of authority with which we may fundraise to cover the work.

At the most, we'd appreciate a matching grant or full funding, to give us a budget to work with, similar to what has already been given to the Tioga Group.

I appreciate taking time for questions and answers either now, or as soon as possible.

Robinson Foster, Western Affairs

[Steel Interstate Coalition](#)

2375 Falcon Drive

West Linn, OR 97068

503-781-9339

fosterr@comcast.net

The Steel Interstate Coalition is a project of [RAIL Solution](#), please enjoy our [Facebook](#) page.