- Streetcars typically operate in general purpose traffic lanes while light rail typically operates in exclusive trackway, although this is not always the case.
- Streetcars usually have less passenger capacity than light rail vehicles. In Portland, each streetcar carries a maximum load (including standees) of 140 passengers, compared to 166 for a loaded LRT vehicle. LRT service is usually provided by two-vehicle trains, whereas streetcars usually operate as single trains to complete tight turns in urban areas and to minimize parking reductions.

Figure 4-6 shows a typical single-car streetcar.

Figure 4-6. Streetcar

Streetcars pass the Step A questions because they could:

1. Decrease vehicle demand within the Bridge Influence Area by increasing transit capacity and providing an exclusive guideway that would not be used by private automobiles.

2. Improve transit travel time and reliability by completely separating streetcars from other traffic. This critically assumes that it is possible to interline streetcar and LRT service on the same trackage (i.e. in the Interstate MAX corridor).

4.2 Components that Fail Step A

This section describes the transit components that do not pass the Step A screening. Each of these transit components has its optimal niche and in some cases has been implemented successfully in specific locations around the world. In the context of the CRC study area and the Portland-Vancouver region, however, they are not promising transit components. In general, these components would not interface well with the existing transit systems that are in place (i.e., they fail Question #2), and for them to be viable, the region would have to implement them on a scale far in excess of what the CRC project could adopt. Conversely, the segments of these transit modes that *could* be implemented as part of this project would not have sufficient "independent utility" to make the investment worthwhile.

More details regarding these modes and their respective features, strengths, and weaknesses follow. The cost information included in this section is for informational purposes only; capital and operating costs are not criteria used in the Step A screening.

4.2.1 TR-7 High Speed Rail

Description:

High speed rail is an inter-city transit service that operates primarily on a dedicated guideway or track not used by freight trains with typical train speeds over 150 miles per hour. Examples of

high speed rail systems are found in Europe and Asia where trains routinely travel in excess of 170 mph. High speed rail systems are typically used to connect metropolitan areas ranging from 3 million to over 15 million people. Amtrak operates a form of inter-city high speed rail in the Northeast Corridor (Washington D.C. to New York and Boston), but its Acela service in the corridor typically has travel speeds below 125 miles per hour. A more local example is the Amtrak Cascades route in the Pacific Northwest connecting Eugene, Oregon and Vancouver, BC, although this service only travels at 79 mph - not fast enough to officially qualify as high speed rail. High speed rail requires special grade crossing restrictions. The capital costs of constructing a new high speed rail system can range from $50 million to more than $200 million per mile, depending on the location and specific engineering required by the site. **Figure 4-7** shows a high speed rail train.

Figure 4-7. High Speed Rail

Rationale for Not Advancing:

High speed rail fails Step A Questions #1 and #2. High speed rail is a proven technology but is designed primarily for long, inter-city or inter-state trips with few stops. High speed rail lines often compete with airlines for passengers traveling 200 miles to 300 miles and where travel times between airplanes and high speed rail are roughly equal. In a hypothetical application in the Pacific Northwest, such a system would likely only have one stop in Salem, one stop in Portland/Vancouver, and one stop in Seattle, for instance.

Given that the average bi-state trip within the region is about 15 miles, high speed rail could not advantageously serve many of the identified regional travel markets (e.g., downtown Vancouver, Hayden Island) because it could not achieve high travel speeds between stations that may be located only a few miles apart. A local high speed rail service would likely have very few stops or stations, and perhaps no stops within the Bridge Influence Area, and thus would not actually carry many passengers for local trips. Finally, in order to improve existing transit service in the Bridge Influence Area, it would have to be integrated with the existing bus and rail network, which is infeasible; the technology would require a completely grade separated right-of-way within the Bridge Influence Area and beyond. For these reasons, high speed rail is not an appropriate public transportation component for the Bridge Influence Area.

4.2.2 TR-8 Ferry Service

Description:

A ferry is a passenger-carrying marine vessel providing passage over a river, lake, or other body of water for passengers, vehicles, and/or freight. Ferries were especially important in the days before permanent bridges and tunnels were constructed across bodies of water. At first, most ferries were small boats or rafts, propelled by oars or poles and sometimes assisted by sails. A modern ferry system currently serves various points in the Puget Sound area in Washington, but provides service to only those points where a bridge or tunnel system does not exist. The average