

SR 167 Master Plan
Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

Attachment A. SR 167 Master Plan Planning and Environmental Linkages Study Questionnaire

Final Study

JUNE 2023



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Washington State Department of Transportation



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Introduction

A Planning and Environment Linkages (PEL) study is an integrated approach to transportation decision making. The information, analysis, and products developed during a PEL study inform the environmental review processes associated with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), support collaboration between teams, and help meet agency requirements of least cost planning and practical design.

This questionnaire is a summary of the planning process and should support a smooth transition from planning to environmental review and NEPA/State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) phases of a project. The questionnaire can be utilized by NEPA practitioners as a starting point for environmental review processes and will help to avoid duplication of work. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will use this questionnaire to assist it in determining if the study meets the requirements of 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 450.

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) initiated the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study to evaluate a broad range of projects and strategies and ultimately identify the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study's recommended solution that can be carried forward in the design and environmental review process with the completed PEL Questionnaire.

Using a PEL for the SR 167 Master Plan ensures the Plan considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process and that the findings can be carried forward into future reviews including NEPA review.

Questions and Answers

1. Background

- a. What is the name of the PEL document and other identifying project information (e.g., sub-account or STIP numbers)?**

SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study (Project Number: PN6181)

- b. Who is the lead agency for the study? (State DOT, Local Agency, Other)**

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

- c. Provide a brief chronology of the planning activities, including the year(s) the studies were completed.**

In December 2008, WSDOT completed the *SR 167 Corridor Plan Final Report*, which documented two phases of planning efforts and a recommended set of capacity improvements on the SR 167 facility. Refer to the response to Question 1.f., for information related to projects within the vicinity of the SR 167 corridor. Findings from the 2008 *SR 167 Corridor Plan Final Report* were taken into consideration for this study. The following indicates the activity or documentation completed as part of the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study (also refer to Figure 3):

- Study Initiation: July 2021
- FHWA Coordination Point No. 1: October 2021
- Project Purpose and Need development and FHWA Coordination Point No. 2: January/February 2022
- Existing and Future Baseline Conditions Report (*Attachment B*): March/April 2022
- Online Open House No. 1: June/July 2022
- Develop and Evaluate Draft Scenarios and FHWA Coordination Point No. 3: July/August 2022
- Develop and Evaluate Refined Scenarios: October/November 2022
- Online Open House No. 2: March/April 2023
- Final PEL Study, Scenario Development and Evaluation Report (*Attachment C*), and FHWA Coordination Point No. 4: June 2023

Also refer to *Chapter 2* and *Attachment E* for dates of partner and public meetings held during this study.

- d. Provide a description of the existing transportation corridor, including project limits, length of study corridor, modes, functional classification number of lanes, shoulder, access control and type of surrounding environment (urban vs. rural, residential vs. commercial, etc.)**

Figure 1 illustrates the SR 167 and the Master Plan PEL study area. SR 167 is 28 miles long from I-405 in Renton (north) to SR 161 in Puyallup (south), with an extension to the Port of Tacoma anticipated for completion in 2028. SR 167 is part of the greater 50+ mile long I-405/SR 167 corridor. SR 167 travels through a portion of King County and Pierce County and the cities of Renton, Kent, Auburn, Algona, Pacific, Sumner, Edgewood, Puyallup, Fife, and Tacoma. The study area for the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study was created through a data-driven and partner-refined process, which carefully considered the

start and end points of the majority of trips along SR 167 (travelshed), as well as locations of concentrations of potential vulnerable populations and overburdened communities (refer to *Appendix C*). The study area also was refined based on partner input. The area within 1 mile of SR 167 was identified for more detailed analysis, including the environmental baseline analysis (*Attachment B, Chapter 12*).

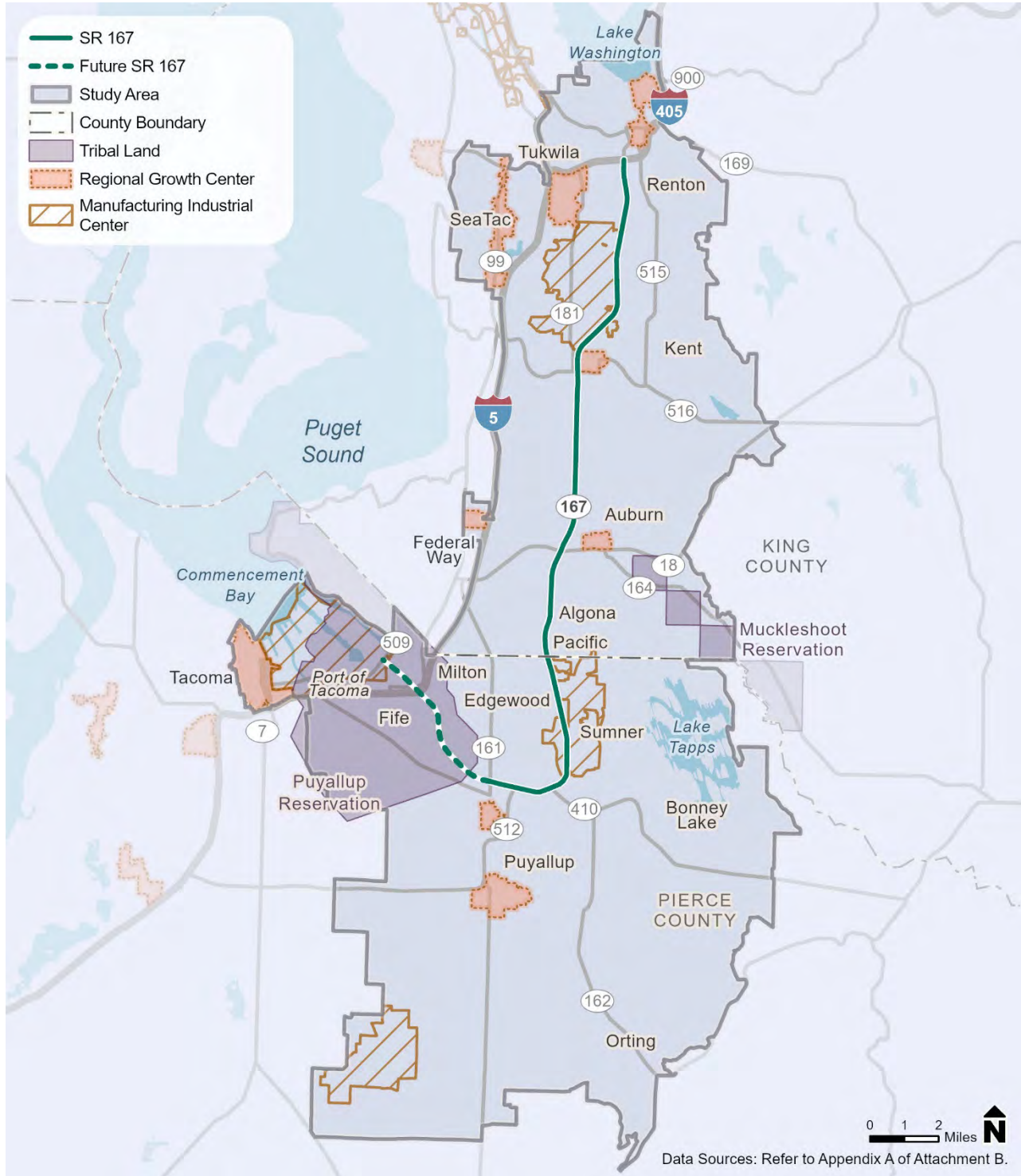


Figure 1. SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study Area

SR 167 includes two access-controlled, general-purpose lanes in each direction, and the northern half of SR 167 includes a single high-occupancy toll (HOT) lane traveling in each direction (northbound and southbound). A very short (less than 1 mile) segment of SR 167 operates as an arterial street in Renton between I-405 and SR 900 and South 3rd Street. The southern extension of SR 167 is being built as a limited access highway as part of WSDOT's Puget Sound Gateway Program.

SR 167 has a federal functional class of 2, which includes "Urban Other Freeways/Expressways," and it is identified by WSDOT as a strategic freight corridor. It has a T-1 functional class, meaning that it carries more than 10 million gross tons of freight annually.

The SR 167 facility's right of way ranges from about 144 feet to 250 feet in width, with the larger right of way areas surrounding interchanges. The SR 167 facility has an average shoulder width of 10 feet, with shoulder widths of on- and off-ramps and some portions of the highway ranging between 4 and 11 feet.

Lands surrounding SR 167 primarily include industrial/warehouses (about 14 percent), residential lands (about 50 percent), and commercial lands (about 7 percent). There are also parks and open spaces surrounding the facility (about 20 percent).

e. Who was included on the study team (Name and title of agency representatives, consultants, etc.)?

The project management team was comprised of representatives from WSDOT, HNTB, Fehr & Peers, HDR, and PRR. Table 1 provides the name and roles of project management team members for the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study. WSDOT and FHWA served as decision makers throughout the PEL process. Consulting staff members and committee members provided technical support and expertise to aid in decision-making.

The project team relied on a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Equity Advisory Committee (EAC), and Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) that represented corridor-wide partners and communities for input on regional priorities. These committee members provided feedback on needs and concerns, reviewed evaluation results, and provided input that informed the selection of the Final Study Recommendations. Committees included members of local jurisdictions, tribes, transit agencies, businesses, community members, and other regional partners. Refer to *Attachment E* for more information on committee members.

Table 1. SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study Project Staff

WSDOT Staff	Consultant Staff
April Delchamps, Corridor Planning Manager	Chris Breiland, Technical Lead
Jeff Storrar, Regional Planning and Policy Manager	Amy Danberg, Partner and Community Engagement Lead
Rob Fellows, Toll Planning and Policy Manager	Loreana Marciante, Planning Oversight
Thomas Noyes, Senior Transportation Planner	Laura Lloyd, Environmental and Equity Analysis Lead
Zachary Howard, Principal Multimodal Planner	Henry Yates, Equity Advisory Committee Facilitator
Lucy Temple, NEPA/SEPA/PEL	Caroline Barnett, Cost Estimating
	Lisa Sakata, NEPA/PEL Oversight
	Karl Westby, Traffic Lead
	Josh Johnson, Traffic Engineer
	Daniel Dye, Senior Transportation Engineer
	Wendy Taylor, Strategic Oversight
	Don Samdahl, Strategic Oversight

f. List the recent, current, or near future planning studies or projects in the vicinity. What is the relationship of this project to those studies/projects?

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) is the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the region. PSRC’s *VISION 2050*, adopted in 2020, informs the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Economic Strategy. *VISION 2050* provides a regional growth strategy for how the area will accommodate the anticipated growth through 2050, and it provides actions and planning policies to help guide regional decision making.

In support of the PSRC Regional Growth Strategy, the variety of travel options available across and along the corridor, including transit and active transportation, will prioritize the needs of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, support the projected growth and land use changes, accommodate freight movement, reduce physical barriers of the current system, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This study utilized data from PSRC, including locations of growth and employment centers, land uses, forecasts for population, housing, and employment, and environmental related datasets, such as PSRC’s open space network. Refer to *Attachment B, Appendix A* for a full list of datasets used. Forecasting travel provides important information for project teams to understand how growth in land use and changes in the transportation network influence travel outcomes. The forecasts provide valuable information needed to model traffic operations and to test different transit routes and services during scenario analysis. For all forecasts, the PSRC regional travel demand model was used. This includes a base year of 2019 and future years of 2030 and 2050. Refer to *Chapter 3* and *Chapter 4* for a summary of how projects and strategies that were evaluated for the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study compared under future conditions.

Table 2 summarizes key WSDOT projects near the SR 167 corridor. A summary of other plans reviewed is included in *Attachment B*. Also refer to *Attachment C* for scenario development and the evaluation report.

Table 2. Key Projects near the SR 167 Corridor

Project Title	Status	Overview and Context
I-405/SR 167 Corridor Program ¹	Ongoing	<p>This program combines the I-405 Master Plan and SR 167 Corridor Plan to provide a framework for the approximate 50-mile-long transportation system. The program recommends a seamless corridor of coordinated multimodal transportation solutions, including new highway lanes, improved interchanges, direct access, expanded transit service including bus rapid transit, and a two-lane express toll lane (ETL) system (SR 167 HOT Lanes and the I-405 ETLs), connecting communities through local multimodal improvements. When completed, the southern end of SR 167 would connect with the Puget Sound Gateway Program. This program would improve the facilities and traveler mobility within and leading in/out of the study area. Two of the major projects within this program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR 167 Corridor Improvements Project.² This project comprises the SR 167 Toll Equipment Upgrade Project and the SR 167, SR 516 to South 277th Street Southbound Auxiliary Lane Project and includes updating the SR 167 toll equipment to be the same as the I-405 toll equipment, resulting in a continuous 50-mile-long I-405/SR 167 ETL system and a consistent customer experience in the ETLs, and it constructs an auxiliary lane on southbound SR 167 between SR 516 and South 277th Street in Kent. • SR 167 HOT Lanes.³ The SR 167 HOT lanes, which opened in 2008, are high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes open to solo drivers who choose to pay a toll. Carpools of two or more, vanpools, and buses use the lanes toll free. Toll rates adjust to ensure traffic in the HOT lane is free flowing, even when the regular lanes are congested. This project is part of the I-405/SR 167 Corridor Program, which would improve the facilities and traveler mobility within and leading in/out of the study area.
Puget Sound Gateway Program ⁴	Construction 2019 – 2028	<p>This program combines the SR 509 Completion Project and the SR 167 Completion Project to complete critical missing links in the highway and freight network with multimodal components, including bike paths and sidewalks. This program would improve the facilities and traveler mobility within and leading in/out of the study area.</p>
SR 167 Completion Project ⁵	Construction 2019 – 2028	<p>This project is part of the Puget Sound Gateway Program and builds the remaining 4 miles of SR 167 between Meridian Avenue and I-5, completing a long-planned connection to I-5. The project also includes a 2-mile connection from I-5 to the Port of Tacoma. Construction is happening in three stages and is anticipated to be completed in 2028. This program would improve the facilities and traveler mobility within and leading in/out of the study area.</p>
SR 167 – SR 410 to SR 18 NB Congestion Management ⁶	Construction 2021 – 2023	<p>WSDOT is adding an additional northbound HOV lane within the existing pavement width that will begin near SR 410 and continue north, tying into the existing SR 167 HOT Lane near Auburn in King County. Once construction is complete, the additional lane will open as an HOV lane and transition to an ETL at a future date. This program would improve the facilities and traveler mobility within and leading in/out of the study area.</p>
Tacoma/Pierce County HOV Program ⁷	2000 to 2022	<p>The Tacoma/Pierce County HOV Program is a series of projects spanning more than 20 years that built HOV lanes on I-5, SR 16, and SR 167 in Pierce County. Construction was largely completed in 2022. This program improves the facilities and traveler mobility within and leading in/out of the study area.</p>

Project Title	Status	Overview and Context
SR 512 Corridor Study ⁸	2022 to 2023	WSDOT is conducting a study of SR 512 between Lakewood and Puyallup in Pierce County. The study would develop near-, mid- and long-term alternatives to improve operations, safety, and mobility for all users. The study would identify potential roadway improvements and focus on safety, access, and improving travel times using the Practical Solutions approach. Recommendations published in the study report would be used to pursue future funding for highway design and construction improvements.

Project Websites:

1. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/i-405sr-167-corridor-program>
2. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-projects/sr-167toll-upgrade-project>
3. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/travel/roads-bridges/toll-roads-bridges-tunnels/sr-167-high-occupancy-toll-hot-lanes>
4. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/puget-sound-gateway-program>
5. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-projects/sr-167-completion-project>
6. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-projects/sr-167-sr-410-sr-18-nb-congestion-management>
7. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/major-projects/i-5-sr-16-tacomapierce-county-hov-program>
8. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-512-corridor-study>

g. Final PEL Report:

The SR 167 Master Plan Final PEL Study was completed in June 2023.

2. Methodology Used

a. Did the Study follow the FHWA PEL Process? If the Study was conducted by another USDOT Agency, provide a crosswalk table to demonstrate how the FHWA Process was utilized.

The PEL process followed FHWA PEL guidance regarding the integration of transportation planning and the NEPA process, which encourages the use of planning studies to provide information for incorporation into future NEPA documents (23 CFR 450). The goal of these early integrated planning efforts is to streamline subsequent alternatives analysis during NEPA processes and to incorporate early and continuous engagement with partners, agencies, and the public. The SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study meets the requirements under 23 CFR 450, which are illustrated in Figure 2.

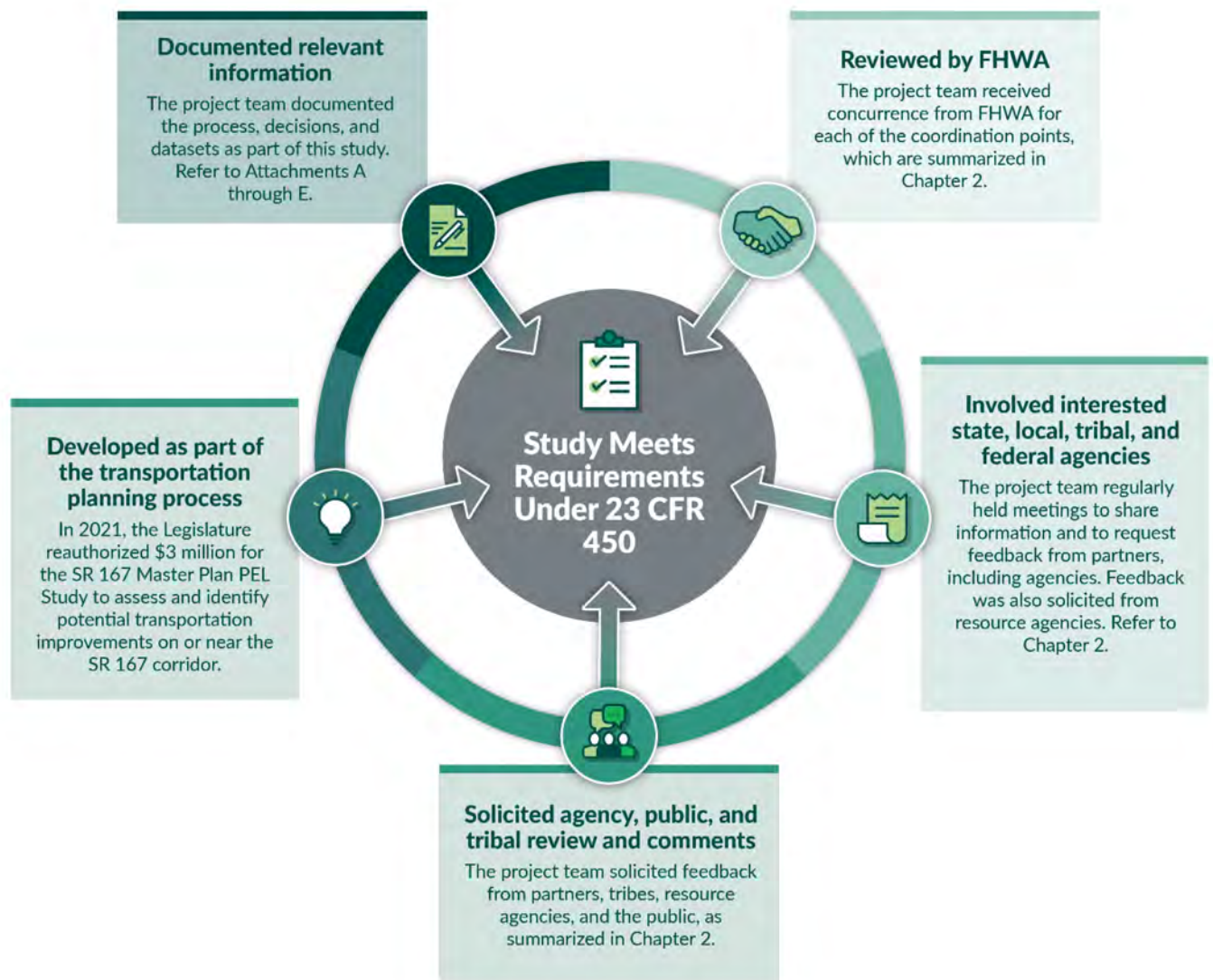


Figure 2. SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study Requirements

b. How did the Study meet each of the PEL coordination points identified in 23 USC 168?

The PEL process followed FHWA PEL guidance regarding the integration of transportation planning and the NEPA process, which encourages the use of planning studies to provide information for incorporation into future NEPA documents (23 CFR 450). The study meets the requirements under 23 CFR 450, including the FHWA coordination points summarized in Table 3. Refer to *Attachment E, Appendix A* for a full summary of FHWA coordination points.

Table 3. FHWA Coordination Points Summary

Coordination Point	Goal	FHWA Feedback
Coordination Point No. 1: October 12, 2021	Introduce the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study and ask for feedback on the scope. Confirm rationale for the study.	FHWA agreed with the scope for the study. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project team should include information on floodplains, wetlands, and stormwater – <i>Refer to Chapter 5.</i> FHWA should be included throughout the PEL process – <i>Refer to the FHWA section in Chapter 2.</i> Resource agencies should be engaged early in the process – <i>Refer to the Resource Agency section in Chapter 2.</i> NEPA language in PEL studies can be beneficial – <i>Refer to the NEPA Process Principles section of Chapter 1 and Attachment A.</i>
Coordination Point No. 2: January 10, 2022	Provide an overview of the draft project Purpose and Need and ask for feedback.	FHWA concurred with the project Purpose and Need. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They agreed with the approach of a corridor-wide purpose and need for this study and then explained how the project Purpose and Need would be used to inform future project-level NEPA purpose and need statements – <i>Refer to Chapter 1.</i>
Coordination Point No. 3: July 27, 2022	Provide an overview of project and scenario development and ask for feedback on the scenario evaluation process.	FHWA concurred with the project team’s approach for the scenario analysis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They requested access to information or tools used in the evaluation – <i>Refer to Chapter 3.</i> They asked if the project team can anticipate potential environmental documentation needs – <i>Refer to Chapter 5.</i>
Coordination Point No 4: June 5, 2023	Provide a summary of updates made since FHWA’s review of the PEL Study, and request concurrence on the study.	FHWA agreed with the revisions made to the study. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They requested a template for drafting a support letter and signing an agency concurrence/support page.

c. Did you use NEPA-like language? Why or why not?

Yes, NEPA-like language was used to facilitate implementation of the Final Study Recommendations and to be a resource for future NEPA documentation and review. Table 4 lists planning terms used in this study with equivalent NEPA-like terms.

d. If NEPA language was not used, what were the actual terms used and how did you define them? (Provide examples or table to compare with standard NEPA language)

The following terms were used that are equivalent in meaning to NEPA terminology.

- Project Purpose and Need
- Mitigation Strategies

Terms from the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study that differ from NEPA-like language are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Crosswalk of Terminology for NEPA and the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study

NEPA Term	SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study Term Description
Project Area/ Study Area	The study area was created from StreetLight travelshed data for users of the SR 167 facility. The area within 1 mile on either side of the SR 167 corridor between I-405 in Renton and SR 509 in Fife was identified as the focus area for the more detailed environmental, safety, active mode, and system performance evaluations. This 1 mile focus area allowed the project team to concentrate their analysis of the more fine-grained transportation data in the area that has the most influence on SR 167 travel. This area also was used to determine the baseline environmental conditions (affected environment) surrounding the SR 167 facility.
Reasonable Range of Alternatives	Scenarios is used to describe the Draft and Refined Scenarios (groupings of projects and strategies) that include a range of transportation solutions that were evaluated in the Level 1 and Level 2 screenings.
No Action Alternative	Baseline Scenario is used to describe the No Action Alternative. It includes the existing transportation system and funded projects that would likely be implemented by 2050 and built regardless of other improvements identified in this study.
Alternatives Analysis	Evaluation and screening of scenarios is used to describe the analytical comparison of Draft and Refined Scenarios with the Baseline (No Action) Scenario.
Alternatives Considered but Eliminated	Eliminated is used when a project or strategy was removed from further consideration for not meeting the project Purpose and Need. Eliminated as a Standalone is used when a project was eliminated from further evaluation as an individual project and was packaged as part of a larger project for further consideration.
Preferred Alternative	Final Study Recommendations is used to describe the preferred set of projects and strategies.
Environmental Consequences	Environmental effects was used to describe potential impacts or benefits associated with the analysis of scenarios. In this study, these are analyzed at a high level using publicly available data to identify sensitive areas and potential resource issues.

- e. *What were the key steps and coordination points in the PEL decision-making process? Who were the decision makers and who else participated in those key steps? For example, for the corridor vision, the decision was made by state DOT and the local agency, with buy-in from FHWA, the USACE, and USFWS.*

WSDOT and FHWA served as the primary decision makers throughout the PEL process. Consulting staff members and committee members provided technical support and expertise to aid in decision making. Refer to *Chapter 2, Attachment E*, and Questions 3 and 4 of this questionnaire for additional information related to meetings and feedback collected for this study. Table 5 summarizes the key documentation and decision-making points (also refer to Figure 3).

Table 5. Key Documentation and Decision-making Steps

Key Documentation or Decision-making Step	Date
Study Initiation	July 2021
FHWA Coordination Point No. 1	October 12, 2021
TAC Meeting No. 1	November 10, 2021
PAC Meeting No. 1	November 17, 2021
Review and feedback for project Purpose and Need	January/February 2022
FHWA Coordination Point No. 2	January 10, 2022

Key Documentation or Decision-making Step	Date
TAC Meeting No. 2	January 19, 2022
PAC Meeting No. 2	February 2, 2022
EAC Meeting No. 1	February 25, 2022
Resource agency input solicited for input on environmental resources present (<i>Attachment B, Chapter 12</i>)	March/April 2022
TAC Meeting No. 3	March 30, 2022
EAC Meeting No. 2	April 22, 2022
Review of equity priority areas with the EAC	April/May 2022
Development and review of evaluation process and Draft Scenarios and feedback on projects that would meet the transportation needs of equity priority areas (communities)	May/June 2022
PAC Meeting No. 3	May 4, 2022
TAC Meeting No. 4	June 29, 2022
EAC Meeting No. 3	June 10, 2022
PAC Meeting No. 4	July 13, 2022
FHWA Coordination Point No. 3	July 27, 2022
Online Open House No. 1	June 29 to July 29, 2022
Co-creation workshops	August/September 2022
EAC Meeting No. 4	September 23, 2022
Feedback from co-creation workshops and summer outreach events and evaluation results of Draft Scenarios	August/September 2022
Review and feedback on evaluation results for Refined Scenarios	November 2022
TAC Meeting No. 5	November 9, 2022
EAC Meeting No. 5	November 18, 2022
PAC Meeting No. 5	November 30, 2022
Review and feedback on draft Final Study Recommendations	February through April 2023
TAC Meeting No. 6	February 15, 2023
EAC Meeting No. 6	March 3, 2023
PAC Meeting No. 6	March 13, 2023
Resources agencies were invited to participate in the online open house and provide input on the draft Final Study Recommendations	March 2023
Online Open House No. 2	March/April 2023
Committees and resource agencies provided a draft of the Final PEL Study	April 2023
FHWA review of Final PEL Study	April/May 2023
TAC Meeting No. 7	May 3, 2023
EAC Meeting No. 7	May 12, 2023
PAC Meeting No. 7	May 23, 2023
FHWA Coordination Point No. 4	June 5, 2023

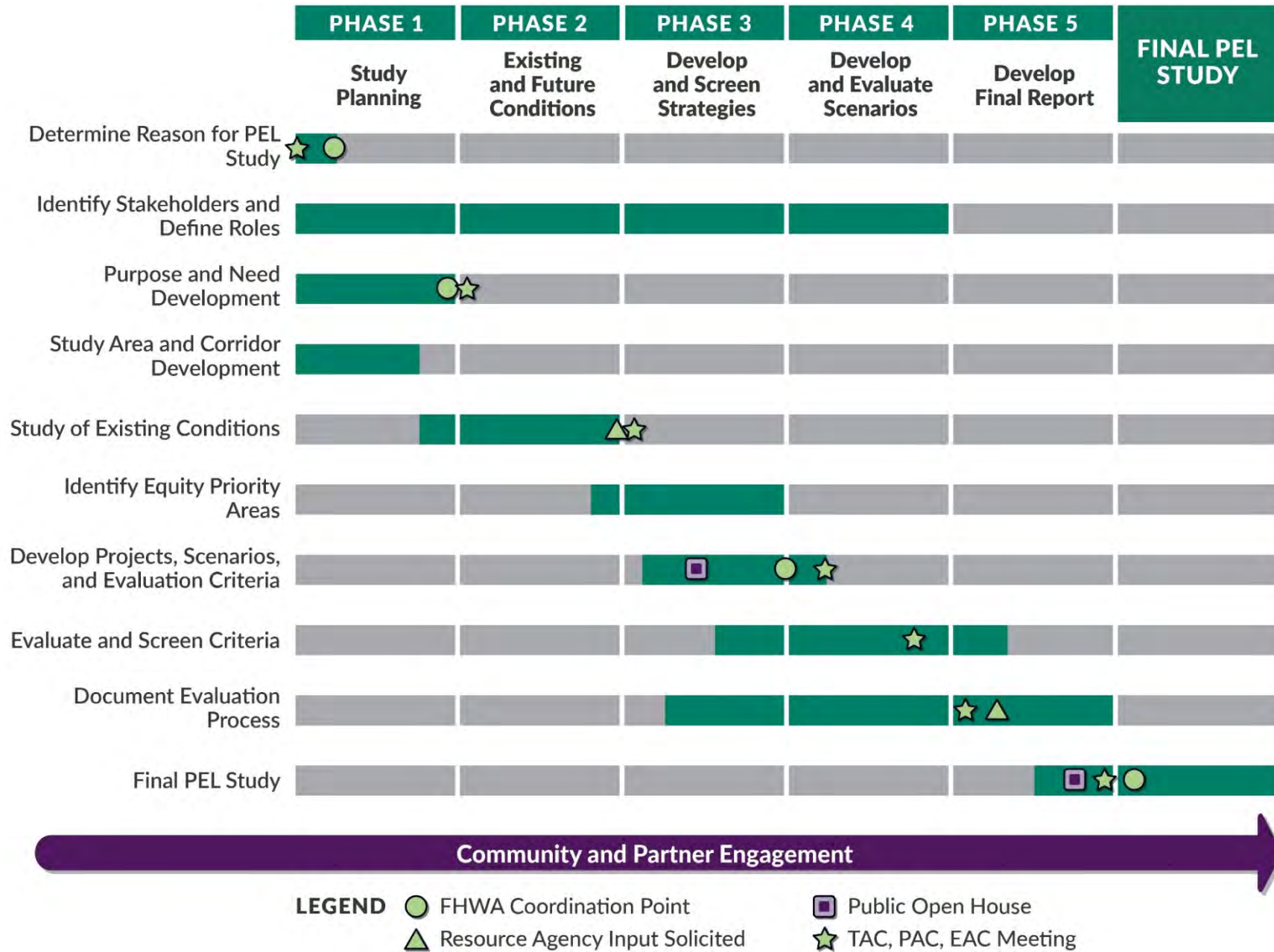


Figure 3. SR 167 Project Schedule

f. How should the PEL information be presented in NEPA?

This study provides a corridor-wide plan that is documented and prepared consistent with FHWA PEL guidance regarding the integration of transportation planning and the NEPA process. This study allows for future NEPA processes to extract important information from the reports.

3. Agency Coordination

a. Provide a synopsis of coordination with Federal, tribal, state and local environmental, regulatory and resource agencies. Describe their level of participation and how you coordinated with them.

The project team distributed information during the study process to resource agencies. Early in the study process, resource agencies were asked to provide feedback on the environmental baseline analysis (*Attachment B, Chapter 12*). This feedback was used to support the analysis of projects and strategies and to identify potential effects of the Final Study Recommendations. Resource agencies were also invited to review the draft Final Study Recommendations and to participate in an online open house. A copy of the Draft SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study also was provided in spring 2023. The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and Puyallup Tribe of Indians were involved in the TAC, EAC, and PAC meetings throughout the project.

The project team solicited input from FHWA and the following resource agencies:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS)
- Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology)
- Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
- Washington Department of Health
- Washington Department of Natural Resources
- Washington State Conservation Commission Washington State Patrol

Refer to *Chapter 2* and *Attachment E* for additional information regarding agency coordination and involvement.

b. What transportation agencies (e.g. for adjacent jurisdictions) did you coordinate with or were involved during the PEL study? This includes all federal agencies if the study is being led by a local agency or transit-oriented study seeking to utilize the FHWA PEL Process.

The transportation agencies that were involved and coordinated with throughout the study include the following:

- FHWA

- WSDOT
- Sound Transit
- Pierce Transit
- King County Metro
- Washington Trucking Associations
- Washington State Transportation Commission

Refer to *Chapter 2* for additional descriptions of the committees and the participating transportation agencies.

c. *What steps will need to be taken with each agency during NEPA scoping?*

The steps to be taken will depend on the type of future NEPA documentation prepared for the Final Study Recommendations. In most cases, the next step for projects identified in the Final Study Recommendations will be to determine if there is a federal nexus, such as funding. If there is a federal nexus, the project(s) would require evaluation under NEPA. The project team would coordinate with FHWA to determine the NEPA class of action and to complete the appropriate analyses and documentation, which varies by resource. If there is none, proposed projects may still require state and local evaluations and permitting. Information from this study should be used in scoping. Additional agency concerns or additional analysis needs will be identified at future scoping meetings.

- *Chapter 5* provides an overview of the existing environmental setting and provides a summary of potential effects with the Final Study Recommendations and potential next steps related to environmental reviews.
- *Appendix A* of this attachment provides detailed next steps tables for each environmental resource studied. These tables should be used to help determine the scope and scale of future analysis for the Final Study Recommendations.
- *Appendix B* of this attachment includes maps that illustrate environmental resources with an overlay of project locations from the Final Study Recommendations.

4. Public Coordination

a. *Provide a synopsis and table of your coordination efforts with the public and stakeholders.*

Along with the agency coordination previously described, refer to *Chapter 2* and *Attachment E* for additional information about coordination for this study.

The communities within the study area are diverse; therefore, to gain as much community input and knowledge as possible, public and community participation was highlighted throughout the PEL study process. The project team used community-based organization (CBO) feedback to inform data analysis, decision making, the planning process, and the recommended investments for the SR 167 corridor. Feedback from the community members and the public informed this PEL study by providing the following:

- Input on transportation challenges, needs, and concerns for the SR 167 corridor
- Confirmation on the methodology and location of equity priority areas (via the EAC)
- Feedback on transportation solutions and ideas for the SR 167 corridor

- Feedback that helped form the evaluation metrics and projects for the Final Study Recommendations

An EAC was created to center equity in the overarching planning process for the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study and to have community representatives advise WSDOT on the priority needs for state funding allocated to improving the SR 167 corridor for people who take transit, drive, or walk and roll. The EAC included representatives from CBOs that advocated on behalf of vulnerable populations and overburdened community members, environmental justice initiatives, and transportation initiatives. The feedback gathered from the EAC was shared with the TAC and PAC and directly with WSDOT executive leadership. Seven EAC meetings were held during the study process. One-on-one listening sessions also took place between October 2021 and January 2022.

The project team partnered with the EAC to identify community members to invite to five co-creation workshops. Participants of the co-creation workshops were invited to help the project team members markup printed and online interactive maps with comments related to transportation stories, needs, ideas, and challenges. This helped the project team to better understand the transportation needs, priorities, and ideas of the community members living and working within the equity priority areas and study area, including shift workers and people with mobility challenges.

Two online open houses were held from June to July 2022 and March to April 2023 to share information about the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study effort and to gather feedback from the communities along SR 167 from Renton to Tacoma. Additionally, the project team staffed and attended several fairs and festivals over the summer of 2022 to provide information to the community about the project, listen to feedback about needs and ideas for improvements, and help drive participation in the first online open house and survey (*Attachment E*).

5. Purpose and Need

a. What was the scope of the study and the reason for completing it?

The scope of the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study is to develop a plan that addresses study goals (project Purpose and Need) and that incorporates public outreach, analyzes existing and future conditions, and applies WSDOT's Practical Solutions approach to identifying transportation solutions. The intent of the study is to identify and evaluate a broad range of transportation solutions along the SR 167 corridor, which is already congested and runs through areas with increased projected growth. The goal of the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study process is to improve information sharing and to support accelerated project delivery by minimizing duplication between planning and the environmental review processes. Early collaboration and appropriate use of information, analysis, and decisions made during planning will help inform future environmental processes, including NEPA.

b. What is the vision for the corridor?

The vision for the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study is included in *Chapter 1*. WSDOT staff, with partner agency partners and CBOs, collaboratively developed the vision and the project Purpose and Need. The specific needs are based on the analysis and findings obtained from the existing conditions analyses documented in *Attachment B* and from data and community input from previous studies.

The Vision for the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study is as follows:

The SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study identifies transportation solutions intended to facilitate the movement of people that travel on and across SR 167 for work, school, and other essential and non-essential trips, and the movement of goods that support economic vitality. Travel along and across the SR 167 corridor will be safe, connected, resilient, and reliable. The SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study strives for practical solutions to: (a) prioritize the needs of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, (b) reduce physical barriers of the current system, (c) support the PSRC Regional Growth Strategy, (d) facilitate transit and active transportation, (e) support projected growth and land use changes, (f) accommodate freight movement, and (g) reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions.

The Vision and project Purpose and Need is the guiding framework for the development of high-level multimodal transportation solutions, and it supported evaluation of multimodal scenarios for the study. During future environmental review processes of individual projects, more specific purpose and need statements should be considered.

c. What were the goals and objectives?

The goals and objectives of the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study are included in *Chapter 1* and are listed in Question 5.d.

d. What is the PEL Purpose & Need statement?

The project Purpose and Need is included in *Chapter 1*. The project Purpose (Goals) of this study is to develop transportation solutions that promote the following:

- **Equity:** Provide a range of transportation options that address the needs of vulnerable populations and overburdened communities.
- **Safety:** Improve existing and future safety conditions.
- **Environment:** Provide improvements that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit environmental impacts.
- **Multimodal:** Transform how people and goods travel in support of the PSRC Regional Growth Strategy, focusing on RGCs, MICs, and Countywide Centers through multimodal and multiagency investments, while reducing single-occupancy-vehicle (SOV) demand and removing barriers for all modes that limit local connectivity across the SR 167 corridor.
- **Mobility and Economic Vitality:** Manage mobility for local, regional, state, and interstate trips, leveraging technology advancements, supporting economic vitality, and considering the unique needs of all travelers and transportation modes, including freight/goods movement, active transportation, and transit.
- **Practical Solutions and State of Good Repair:** Identify strategies that are practical, implementable, and fundable in a realistic timeline considering the importance of maintaining a State of Good Repair throughout the facility's lifecycle.

Projects and strategies were evaluated to determine if they met the project Purpose and Need. Refer to *Chapter 3* for more information on how they were used in evaluating scenarios.

The project Purpose (Goals) statements were developed through an understanding of existing and future conditions. The following is a summary of the specific needs and relevant data that support each project Purpose (Goals):

- The corridor runs through areas with diverse populations. Vulnerable populations and overburdened communities need transportation solutions that reduce environmental risk and serve their transportation needs. **(Equity Goal)**
- Fatal and severe crashes have occurred on the SR 167 corridor. **(Safety Goal)**
- Vehicle emissions are the top source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States and Washington state, and they negatively impact health outcomes. **(Environmental Goal)**
- The SR 167 corridor experiences high travel demand and congestion. **(Mobility and Economic Vitality Goal)**
- The SR 167 corridor is one of the fastest growing areas in the state, and it is changing. **(Multimodal Goal)**
- SR 167 can act as a barrier for local trips. **(Multimodal Goal)**
- The SR 167 corridor has limited capacity to accommodate additional SOV travel demand. **(Multimodal and Mobility and Economic Vitality Goals)**
- SR 167, a key alternate route to Interstate 5 (I-5), has moderate vulnerability to climate change and is subject to non-recurring congestion. **(Mobility and Economic Vitality Goal)**
- SR 167 is the second busiest freight corridor in the state, and it connects key freight hubs, including the Port of Tacoma. **(Mobility and Economic Vitality Goal)**
- Transit is critical to mobility in the corridor. **(Mobility and Economic Vitality Goal)**
- Maintain and preserve the system. **(Practical Solutions and State of Good Repair Goal)**

Refer to *Chapter 3* for more information on how the needs helped identify projects and strategies. Refer to *Attachment B* for detailed information related to existing conditions findings.

e. What steps will need to be taken during the NEPA process to make this a project-level purpose and need statement?

The project Purpose and Need statement for this study is intended to be general enough to cover the entire SR 167 facility and study area and to inform scenario development and the identification of Final Study Recommendations. Individual projects identified in the Final Study Recommendations may develop project-level Purpose and Need statements that should explain the relationship to this more general project Purpose and Need. Depending on the specific project, the Purpose and Need could be refined to address more specific needs at that location. Updated traffic data may be needed, depending on when the NEPA process is initiated.

6. Range of Alternatives

a. What types of alternatives were looked at? (Provide a one or two sentence summary and reference document.)

The scenarios (groups of projects and strategies) focused on addressing the project Purpose and Need and the issues identified during the existing conditions evaluation. They were developed based on input received from partners, committees, agencies, and the public. Draft Scenarios and a Baseline (No Action)

Scenario were evaluated and further refined to the Refined Scenarios and, finally, projects and strategies from the Refined Scenarios were selected for the Final Study Recommendations.

The following summarizes the types of Draft Scenarios that were evaluated:

- The transportation systems operations and management (TSMO) Scenario focused on TSMO projects (refer to *Chapter 3*).
- The Centers Scenario focused on enhancing multimodal access to the study area's regional centers, as designated by the PSRC.
- The ETL and Transit Scenario explored the benefits and impacts of expanding the SR 167 facility with dual ETLs between I-405 and SR 512.
- The Strategic Capacity Scenario explores the benefits and impacts of more general purpose capacity expansion on the SR 167 facility, both on the mainline and at interchanges.

The following summarizes the types of Refined Scenarios that were evaluated:

- Scenario A built off some of the results of the Level 2a screening that described how expanded transit and active mode investments benefit the mobility of equity priority areas, while also reducing SOV mode share and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.
- Scenario B differs from Scenario A by concentrating more investment along the SR 167 facility (e.g., additional interchange improvements) and less to projects and strategies in the surrounding communities (e.g., fewer transit routes and sidewalk projects).
- Scenario C explores the potential benefits to freight access and mobility that could be provided by a truck-only lane on SR 167 between SR 18 and SR 161/Meridian Avenue. Otherwise, Scenario C is similar to Scenario B.

b. How did you select the screening criteria and screening process?

The process for evaluating projects and strategies to identify the Final Study Recommendations is represented in Figure 4. The scenario development and evaluation process included:

- Developing screening criteria based on the project Purpose and Need.
- Studying and evaluating a range of projects and strategies that were grouped into scenarios.
- Documenting projects and strategies that were eliminated or carried forward.

Evaluation criteria were established for the screening process prior to scenario development. These criteria were developed by the project team based on the project Purpose and Need. Scenarios were comparatively evaluated against the evaluation criteria and Baseline (No Action) Scenario. The TAC was consulted during the development of evaluation criteria and ultimately concurred with the evaluation criteria. The EAC provided input on the development of evaluation criteria related to equity. The screening process is described in the following sections. For additional details, refer to *Attachment C* and *Chapter 3*.

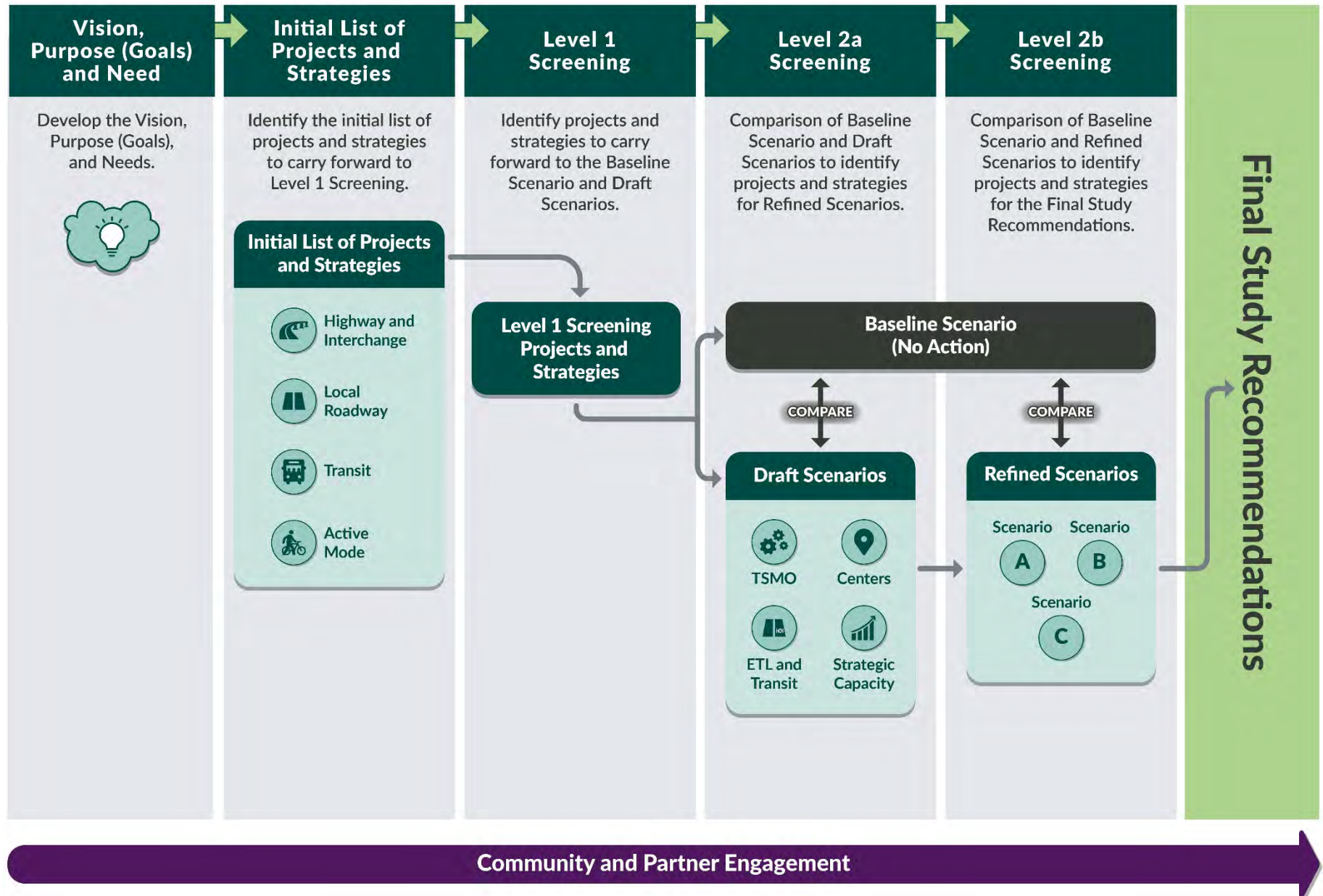


Figure 4. Evaluation Process

Level 1 Screening: Initial List of Projects and Strategies

The Level 1 screening criteria were developed using the project Purpose and Need categories related to equity, safety, environment, multimodal, and mobility and economic vitality, which are presented in *Chapter 1*. The project Purpose and Need category related to practical solutions and State of Good Repair was not included in the Level 1 evaluation criteria, but it was included in the more detailed evaluations for the Level 2a and Level 2b screenings. Through coordination with partners and jurisdictions, some additional projects and strategies that were not on the initial list were proposed for consideration, some projects that had been screened out were retained for Level 2 analysis, and some projects were removed from screening or were shifted to the Baseline (No Action) Scenario because they were either funded or were no longer a community priority. The additional projects and strategies proposed for consideration were then evaluated against the Level 1 screening criteria. The projects and strategies found to meet the project Purpose and Need were grouped into Draft Scenarios and advanced for Level 2a screening.

Level 2a Screening: Comparative Analysis of Draft Scenarios

Level 2 screening compared the Draft Scenarios, as well as the Baseline (No Action) Scenario, to determine how well the groupings of projects and strategies performed in meeting the project Purpose and Need while also being cost effective and minimizing environmental impacts. Level 2a screening was used to evaluate the key benefits and tradeoffs for each Draft Scenario in relation to its ability to meet the project Purpose and Need. The benefits and tradeoffs were identified using the PSRC regional travel model and geographic information systems (GIS) data from the PSRC and local agencies. The results of the Level 2a screening were presented to the TAC, EAC, and PAC for their review and comments on the analysis results. Feedback on the projects and strategies within each of the Draft Scenarios also was sought and received from the committees. Projects and strategies that had widespread concerns or lack of support from committee members were not advanced. The remaining projects and strategies that best met the project Purpose and Need were grouped into Refined Scenarios for Level 2b screening: Scenario A, Scenario B, and Scenario C.

Level 2b Screening: Comparative Analysis of Refined Scenarios

Level 2b screening was used to identify projects and strategies that would be recommended for inclusion in the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study (i.e., Final Study Recommendations). The project team evaluated the projects and strategies in Scenarios A, B, and C and the Baseline Scenario by comparing results of more detailed analyses studying how well the scenarios met the project Purpose and Need (refer to *Attachment C, Chapter 5*). The results of the Level 2b screening also were presented to the TAC, EAC, and PAC for their review and comment. As with Level 2a, the Committees also were able to voice support or concerns around specific projects and strategies within the Refined Scenarios.

The scenario screening, evaluation, and refinement process is discussed in detail in *Chapter 3*.

- c. *For alternative(s) that were screened out, briefly summarize the reasons for eliminating the alternative(s). (During the initial screenings, this generally will focus on fatal flaws.)*

Level 1 Screening: Project Purpose and Need

The Level 1 Screening focused on evaluating projects with the project Purpose and Need by using an additional set of qualitative screening questions (refer to *Attachment C*). The Level 1 Screening also assessed the funding status of projects and strategies carried forward from the initial project list to determine a set of baseline projects (Baseline Scenario) that would likely be implemented even in the absence of any new funding associated with this study. The Level 1 Screening narrowed down the list of projects and strategies into a set of Draft Scenarios and a Baseline Scenario (representing the No Action Alternative) to carry forward to the Level 2a Screening. Projects and strategies were eliminated from further consideration if they could not meet the project Purpose and Need. This screening resulted in 135 projects carried forward to Level 2a Screening. Refer to *Attachment C, Chapter 3* for additional details related to specific projects and strategies in the Level 1 Screening and evaluation criteria.

Level 2a Screening: Comparative Analysis of Draft Scenarios

Projects and scenarios carried forward from the Draft Scenarios were identified to have greater reductions in traffic congestion and increases in truck travel times. The following summarizes the key projects and strategies that were eliminated from further consideration based on the identified benefits and tradeoffs:

- **General Purpose Lanes on SR 167:** Eliminated because it increased VMT per capita compared to the Baseline Scenario.
- **All-lane Congestion Pricing:** Eliminated because of the large increase in arterial congestion levels.
- **Expanded Transportation Demand Management Requirements for Employers:** Eliminated because will have a high level of complexity to implement and to achieve results.
- **I-405 and SR 167 Interchange Reconstruction:** Eliminated because it was inconsistent with the priorities identified in the I-405 Master Plan PEL Study.
- **Regional Trail Projects:** Eliminated trail projects further than 1 mile from SR 167 because there were no identified effects to SR 167 mobility or access to trails that directly serve the SR 167 corridor.
- **Arterial Widening Projects:** Eliminated select arterial widening projects that were not parallel to SR 167, further than 1 mile of SR 167, or modeling indicated the project would not benefit SR 167 mobility or access.
- **Transit Routes/Strategies:** Eliminated one transit route and one transit expansion strategy that would not serve travel patterns on SR 167 and that lacked local support.

Level 2b Screening: Comparative Analysis of Refined Scenarios

Projects and strategies carried forward from the Level 2a Screening were grouped into Refined Scenarios. After reviewing the results from the Level 2a Screening and gathering feedback from the TAC, EAC, and PAC and the public, several projects and strategies were identified as fundamental to meeting the project Purpose and Need.

The following summarizes key projects and strategies that were eliminated from further consideration based on the Level 2b evaluation and feedback received:

- **Truck-only Lane on SR 167:** Eliminated because it provided only a marginal freight travel time reliability benefit, and it did not reduce traffic congestion or improve transit performance as much as the dual ETLs.
- **Full Reconstruction of the SR 167/SR 18 and SR 167/SR 512/SR 410 Interchanges:** Eliminated because of high costs, high environmental impacts, property impacts, and smaller-scale, practical solutions that achieved similar improvements in congestion relief and freight access.
- **Twenty Miles of Sidewalk Gap Closures Outside of RGCs:** Eliminated because of limited alignment with the regional land use strategy, high costs, limited ability to change travel patterns, and potential property and environmental impacts.
- **New General Purpose Capacity on Arterial Streets:** Eliminated because of concerns raised by jurisdictions related to attracting additional traffic to city streets.
- **TSMO on Arterial Streets:** Eliminated to focus more resources on interchange improvements to/from SR 167; however, WSDOT supports TSMO strategies overall as a low-cost way to improve mobility for all modes.
- **Complete Streets Improvements on Portions of East Valley Highway:** Eliminated south of Terrace View Drive due to concerns raised by the city of Sumner about the ability to maintain additional facilities over time given the unstable hillside adjacent to the road.
- **New Active Mode Crossings of SR 167:** Eliminated because WSDOT's Complete Streets policy will add low-stress facilities on the majority of all existing SR 167 crossings as ETLs and interchange projects that require reconstruction. Areas where there are long stretches between existing crossings do not connect to any community-identified destinations and often have environmentally sensitive areas (e.g., wetlands).

d. How did the team develop Alternatives? Was each alternative screened consistently?

The project team developed an initial list of projects and strategies based on a review of current local, regional, and state planning documents. Projects and strategies carried forward from the Level 1 Screening were grouped into Draft Scenarios and a Baseline Scenario (No Action Alternative). Each Draft Scenario had a specific theme. The TSMO Scenario focused on TSMO projects (refer to *Chapter 3*); the Centers Scenario focused on enhancing multimodal access to the study area's regional centers, as designated by the PSRC; the ETL and Transit Scenario explored the benefits and impacts of expanding the SR 167 facility with dual ETLs between I-405 and SR 512; and the Strategic Capacity Scenario explored the benefits and impacts of more general purpose capacity expansion on the SR 167 facility on the mainline and at interchanges.

Projects and strategies that were carried forward from the screening of Draft Scenarios were grouped into Refined Scenarios (Scenario A, B, C). Scenario A builds off some of the results of the Level 2a screening that described how expanded transit and active mode investments benefit the mobility of equity priority areas while also reducing SOV mode share and VMT per capita. Scenario B differs from Scenario A by concentrating more investment along the SR 167 facility (e.g., additional interchange improvements) and less on projects and strategies in the surrounding communities (e.g., fewer transit routes and sidewalk projects). Scenario C explores the potential benefits to freight access and mobility that could be provided by a truck-only lane on SR 167 between SR 18 and SR 161/Meridian Avenue. Otherwise, Scenario C is similar to Scenario B.

Scenarios were screening consistently for how well each addressed the project Purpose and Need. For additional details, refer to *Attachment C* and *Chapter 3*.

e. Which alternatives were recommended? Which should be brought forward into NEPA and why?

The Final Study Recommendations are described in *Chapter 4* and *Attachment D* and should be carried forward into future phases, including NEPA review. Refer to *Chapter 6* for information related to implementation steps. The Final Study Recommendations would meet the project Purpose and Need better than the Refined Scenarios when compared to the Baseline Scenario. These results were anticipated as the best performing projects and strategies that were advanced from the Level 2b Screening along with further refinement by partners, including committee members and represented agencies (refer to *Chapter 2*) and the community.

The Final Study Recommendations constitute a major investment in multimodal travel within the study area through the coordinated efforts of many agencies. The Final Study Recommendations are supported by a broad set of partners, ranging from local jurisdictions to CBOs and leaders in the equity community to freight, bicycle, transit, and pedestrian interest groups, tribal leaders, and transit agencies. This support and the partner feedback that shaped the Final Study Recommendations are equally important to the data-driven results that speak to the project Purpose and Need.

f. Did the public, stakeholders, and agencies have an opportunity to comment during this process? Summarize the amount of public interest in the PEL Study.

Yes, the public, partners, and agencies were engaged throughout the study process and had the opportunity to provide feedback and comments. Input was solicited through the public online open houses, co-creation workshops, the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study website, and email and phone correspondence with WSDOT and the project team. Over the course of the study, feedback and comments were reviewed and considered from the public (*Attachment E*).

Comments and feedback were shared with project staff and the TAC, EAC, and PAC. Feedback was used to help guide scenario development and evaluation. Summaries of committee meetings are posted to the SR 167 project website at: <https://wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-studies/sr-167-master-plan> and are included in *Attachment E, Appendix B*.

Refer to *Chapter 2* and *Attachment E* for additional information about coordination for this study.

g. Were there unresolved issues with the public, stakeholders, and/or agencies?

As described in *Chapter 6*, the following has been identified for continued coordination and conversations and includes issues of concern:

WSDOT will continue to work closely with community and partner agencies to develop and refine project concepts, secure needed funding, and realize the important transportation projects and strategies identified in the Final Study Recommendations to the SR 167 corridor. Specific issues that have been raised by partners and the community and that will need continued coordination and attention include:

- **HOV Policy:** As noted in *Chapter 3*, for modeling and analysis this study assumed that HOV 3+ vehicles would use the ETLs for free during peak commute periods. This modeling assumption is

consistent with all other modeling work performed for the I-405/SR 167 Corridor Program. However, the project team has heard concerns from partners and community members about ETL lane utilization and potential equity impacts from HOV 3+ operations (versus HOV 2+). The final HOV occupancy policies will be set by WSTC through its rate setting process that involves WSDOT, partners, and community members.

- **Low-Income Toll Program:** A statewide low-income toll program is included in the Final Study Recommendations (*Chapter 4*) that could, in part, reduce the cost burden of ETLs on lower income drivers who are not able to carpool. A low-income toll program can only be established by the WSTC, and it would need collaboration from WSDOT, partners, and the community to help ensure the low-income toll program is designed in a way that benefits the SR 167 corridor and the people using it.
- **Implementing Future Transit Service:** The Final Study Recommendations include planned but unfunded transit routes on the SR 167 corridor. While supportive of expanded transit, some partners have expressed concerns about relying on transit services that may have difficulty securing stable operating funding. It is important to note that transit agency partners support the Final Study Recommendations in this plan and WSDOT will partner with them to build projects to improve transit speed and reliability, and it will support additional transit funding for stable operations.
- **Electric Vehicle Mandate:** Senate Bill 5974 directs the state to require that all light-duty passenger vehicles sold in Washington are electric by 2030. While not a detailed element of the master plan, the EAC raised concerns that this mandate would make it more difficult and expensive to travel in the future and urged the state to consider how to implement the benefits of electric vehicles in an equitable manner. Substantial coordination between local and state agencies will be required to ensure access to charging infrastructure is distributed equitably and that the costs of accessing or building charging stations does not disproportionately fall on vulnerable populations or overburdened communities. One potential area for agency partner collaboration is to jointly pursue federal charging and fueling infrastructure grant funds. These funds prioritize low and moderate-income areas with limited private parking or high proportions of multifamily housing.
- **Truck Parking:** The *2016 Washington State Truck Parking Study* identified SR 167 as the fifth highest corridor in the state with a substantial unmet demand for truck parking. The *2022 Washington State Freight System Plan Update* identified undesignated truck parking in the vicinity of the Port of Tacoma. There are numerous land use compatibility issues, equity implications, and land use regulations that need to be coordinated to address and implement truck parking. WSDOT is committed to partnering with other agencies and the private sector on addressing truck parking. Of note, the 2023-2025 Biennium allocated \$12 million to assess, develop, and implement truck parking strategies across the state, including in the Puget Sound region.
- **Land Use Coordination:** Many of the projects and strategies identified in the Final Study Recommendations will be more effective at locations with higher densities and that have a greater mix of land uses, such as in the designated RGCs and Countywide Centers. Community members reiterated the need for a greater amount of affordable housing within the study area, particularly around transit hubs, and measures to address displacement.

Additionally, federal, state, and regional policy and guidance are always evolving and will need to be monitored and incorporated. Refer to the *Planning Context* section in *Chapter 2* for existing policy and guidance.

7. Planning Assumptions and Analytical Methods

a. *What is the forecast year used in the study?*

For most of the metrics analyzed in this study, future conditions were forecast for the year 2050 to understand the long-term changes in growth patterns and travel demand in the study area. However, detailed future traffic operations on SR 167 were forecast using year 2030 conditions. The year 2030 analysis was consistent with all similar traffic operations analyses for the I-405/SR 167 Corridor Program, as the nearer term look at traffic operations better identified bottlenecks and refinements that could be made to potential projects, such as off-ramps or merging areas. Using 2050 forecasts for the detailed traffic operations analysis would obscure these details and make it more difficult to identify practical solutions to reduce traffic congestion. Refer to *Chapter 1* and *Chapter 3* for more information.

b. *What method was used for forecasting traffic volumes?*

For all forecasts, the PSRC regional travel demand model was used. This included a base year of 2019 and future years of 2030 and 2050. Detailed future traffic operations on SR 167 were forecast using year 2030 conditions. The analysis models used for this study required an assumption related to how many people in a carpool would be allowed to use the ETLs for free. Consistent with all other analysis performed for the I-405/SR 167 Corridor Program, the modeling team assumed free access would be limited to HOV 3+ during the weekday peak travel periods. Refer to *Chapter 1* and *Chapter 3* for more information.

c. *Are the planning assumptions and the corridor vision/purpose and need statement consistent with the long-range transportation plan?*

The SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study planning assumptions and travel forecasting model are consistent with the Washington Transportation Plan 2040 & Beyond (the most current state long-range transportation plan), PSRC's *VISION 2050*, and local transportation planning elements. The project Purpose and Need and Final Study Recommendations are consistent with local and regional planning documents. Refer to *Chapter 1* and *Chapter 3* for more information.

d. *What were the future year policy and/or data assumptions used in the transportation planning process related to land use, economic development, transportation costs, and network expansion?*

Travel forecast data were based on the PSRC 2050 Regional Travel Demand model. The PSRC model included both future land use forecasts and planned and likely transportation improvements, including new transit service and route and new or wider roadways. Refer to *Chapter 1* and *Chapter 3* for more information.

8. PEL Study Information for NEPA

What pieces of the PEL can transfer directly to the NEPA phase of a project?

The following describes the key pieces from this study that can be used in future NEPA reviews:

- **Purpose and Need:** The project purpose and need should be used to inform project-level Purpose and Need statements during NEPA.

- **Key Issues and Future Analysis Needs:** Identification of key issues (environmental or other), mitigation measures, avoidance/minimization measures, and future analysis and coordination needs before and during NEPA.
- **Alternatives Analysis:** The process for evaluating and eliminating projects and strategies should be used in future NEPA scoping.
- **Mitigation Strategies:** Mitigation strategies outlined in *Chapter 5* and in *Appendix A* of this attachment should be used to help identify ways to minimize or avoid environmental impacts.
- **Projects and Strategies (Final Study Recommendations):** Identification of transportation solutions.

9. Environmental Resources Reviewed

For each resource or group of resources reviewed, provide the following:

- a. *In the PEL study, at what level of detail was the resource reviewed and what was the method of review?*

The following environmental resources were studied:

- Air Quality
- Climate Change and Climate Vulnerability
- Cultural Resources and Historic Bridges
- Environmental Justice and Equity Priority Areas (includes social resource considerations)
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Fish Passage Barriers
- Flood Hazards
- Geologic Hazards
- Hazardous Materials
- Land Use
- Noise
- Recreational Resources, including Potential Section 4(f) and Section 6(f) Resources
- Visual Resources
- Water Quality and Stormwater
- Wetlands

During FHWA Coordination Point No. 2, FHWA provided feedback on specific environmental resources to include in this study: flood hazards, water systems (including stormwater), and wetlands. They are included throughout the study process. Refer to *Attachment E, Appendix A* for summaries of the FHWA coordination points.

An environmental baseline scan was prepared in 2022 (*Attachment B, Chapter 12*) to help identify key existing environmental resources early in the planning process. The project team relied on readily available data sources, such as literature and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data. Refer to *Attachment B, Appendix C* for detailed methodology and documentation. GIS data was accessed through authoritative data sources, where possible, stored in an online group, and carefully documented for future use and review in environmental processes including NEPA. The project team also solicited feedback from resource agencies to help identify existing environmental constraints throughout the SR 167 corridor.

Potential effects to environmental resources were studied during scenario development and analysis phases of the project, and next steps were documented. The evaluation focused on areas within the SR 167 corridor, which represented the area within 1 mile of the SR 167 facility. The evaluation was primarily qualitative, as potential construction and operational footprints have not been established for the projects. Refer to the following for more information:

- *Chapter 5* includes a summary of the environmental conditions, potential effects related to the Final Study Recommendations, and potential next steps.
- *Attachment B, Chapter 12* contains details on the existing conditions for each environmental resource.
- *Attachment C* has details on the environmental effects related to the screening of the Draft and Refined Scenarios.
- *Appendix A* of this attachment includes detailed next steps tables that are intended for NEPA practitioners.
- *Appendix B* of this attachment includes a detailed map set of the SR 167 corridor with environmental resources that are overlaid with key projects from the Final Study Recommendations.

b. Is this resource present in the area and what is the existing environmental condition for this resource?

The resources selected for this study are present within the study area (*Attachment B*). The resources are consistent with NEPA, FHWA, and WSDOT guidelines. Refer to *Chapter 5* for a summary of the environmental conditions from *Attachment B*, potential effects related to the Final Study Recommendations, and potential next steps. Refer to *Attachment B, Chapter 12* for details on the existing conditions for each environmental resource.

c. What are the issues that need to be considered during NEPA, including potential resource impacts and potential mitigation requirements (if known)?

The potential impacts and next steps are detailed in *Chapter 5. Appendix A* of this attachment includes a table for each resource that details next steps and implementation considerations, including mitigation measures, schedule considerations, and permitting requirements.

d. How will the planning data provided need to be supplemented during NEPA?

Refer to *Chapter 5* and *Appendix A* of this attachment for NEPA and SEPA considerations and potential analysis and data needs for future environmental review. *Chapter 5* summarizes existing conditions, and *Attachment A* provides more detail on next steps, which should be considered when moving projects forward. Depending on the timing of future NEPA efforts, certain resources may require an assessment due to new regulations. Data that is time dependent would need to be updated and additional surveys to obtain more detailed information would need to be conducted during NEPA. Additionally, the planning data would need to be revisited for consistency with local plans and policies during next steps.

10. Environmental Resources Not Reviewed

List resources that were not reviewed in the PEL study and why. Indicate whether or not they will need to be reviewed in NEPA and explain why.

During FHWA Coordination Point No. 2, FHWA provided feedback on specific environmental resources to include in this study: flood hazards, water systems (including stormwater), and wetlands. They are included throughout the study process.

Some environmental resources were not considered because they were not expected to differentiate scenarios or affect recommendations, there was limited information available at the time of this study or the resource was not present within the study area. The following resources were not evaluated: noxious weeds, farmlands, energy, utilities, wild and scenic rivers, and paleontology.

Chapter 70A.02 RCW, Environmental Justice (Healthy Environment for All Act [HEAL Act] 2021) was enacted in July 2021 and directs state agencies to implement recommendations from the Environmental Justice Task Force. New transportation projects equal to or greater than \$15 million starting design on or after July 1, 2023, are required to begin conducting environmental justice assessments. The HEAL Act and project consistency would be analyzed in the future as requirements and guidance become available.

The steps to be taken will depend on the type of future NEPA documentation prepared for the projects that would be implemented for the corridor. Scoping meetings would be conducted during subsequent NEPA processes to inform resource and regulatory agencies of the findings of the Final PEL Study and to discuss the level of analysis and documentation required for each resource based on the proposed action.

11. Cumulative Impacts

Were cumulative impacts considered in the PEL study? If yes, provide the information or reference where the analysis can be found.

Cumulative impacts were not analyzed for this study, but information was included for future reference in *Appendix A* of this attachment.

12. Mitigation Strategies

Describe any mitigation strategies discussed at the planning level that should be analyzed during NEPA.

Mitigation strategies are conceptual and were reviewed at a broad scale in this study, but they are based on best practices and similar project experience. They are described in *Chapter 5* and additional detail was included in *Appendix A*. Mitigation measures for each impacted resource will need further analysis during the NEPA phase. Such mitigation measures may include wetland replacement, hazardous materials remediation, and/or seasonal restrictions due to wildlife nesting activities.

13. Availability of Information During NEPA

What needs to be done during NEPA to make information from the PEL study available to the agencies and the public? Are there PEL study products which can be used or provided to agencies or the public during the NEPA scoping process?

Relevant planning products that are readily available to a subsequent NEPA process include:

- SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study, 2023
- PEL Questionnaire and Appendices, 2023 (*Attachment A*)
- Existing and Future Baseline Conditions Report, 2023 (*Attachment B*)
- Scenarios Development and Evaluation Report, 2023 (*Attachment C*)
- Final Study Recommendations Report, 2023 (*Attachment D*)
- Coordination and Public Participation Summary Report, 2023 (*Attachment E*)

The SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study will be posted on the WSDOT website and information will be readily available upon request.

14. Other Issues

Are there any other issues a future project team should be aware of?

- a. Examples: Utility problems, access or ROW issues, encroachments into ROW, problematic land owners and/or groups, contact information for stakeholders, special or unique resources in the area, etc.*

Refer to response to Question 6.g and Chapter 6 of the Final Study. Achieving the SR 167 Master Plan PEL Study vision will require a coordinated effort by WSDOT and partner agencies. The transportation projects and strategies identified in the Final Study Recommendations provide a strong foundation for improving mobility in the study area. However, to fully capitalize on investments and transform mobility in the study area, there are other policies, investments, and strategies that partner agencies can continue to pursue. WSDOT will continue to work closely with community and partner agencies to develop and refine project concepts, secure needed funding, and implement the important transportation projects and strategies identified in the Final Study Recommendations.

15. Identified Projects

Provide a table of identified projects and/or a proposed phasing plan for corridor build out.

Refer to *Attachment D* for a table of projects and strategies in the Final Study Recommendations. Refer to *Chapter 6* for information on phasing and next steps.

16. Funding

Provide a list of what funding sources have been identified to fund projects from this PEL.

Recognizing that funding is not currently available for the Final Study Recommendations, the next steps will include further analysis to develop a prioritized phasing and funding strategy. *Appendix C* provides maps related to Justice40 and the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant program. Continued collaboration between WSDOT and its partners is key for these next steps to succeed and for the final implementation of needed SR 167 corridor solutions.