

Save These Dates...

SR 509 Corridor Completion/I-5/
South Access Road

Revised Draft EIS

Public Open House: February 12, 2002
4:00pm - 8:00pm

(educational/informational/public comment)

Public Hearing: February 27, 2002

Open House: 4:00pm - 6:30pm,

Hearing: 6:30pm onward (to record public comment)

Both events: at Highline Community College,
Building #2 (at S. 240th St., just west of SR 99)

The open house site is accessible to persons with disabilities.

Individuals requiring information prepared in alternative formats should call collect (360) 664-9009 or 1-800-486-8392 (TTY or relay service).

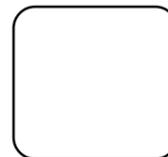


**SR 509 Corridor Completion/
I-5/South Access Road**

Steering Committee

c/o Geoffrey Baillie
Baillie & Associates

7700 Pioneer Way, Suite 101
Gig Harbor, WA 98335



For More Information

For more information on project location, design details, or to schedule a presentation for your community group, contact:

John White, P.E.
Project Engineer
Urban Corridors Office
Washington State
Department of Transportation
6431 Corson Avenue South, MS 61
Seattle, WA 98108

Phone: (206) 768-5680

e-mail: whitejh@wsdot.wa.gov

Visit website at:
www.wsdot.wa.gov/regions/northwest/projects/SR509

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Washington State
Dept. of Transportation
Regional Administrator

City of Des Moines
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Council Member

Port of Seattle
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Port of Seattle

City of Normandy Park

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Administration

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Public Citizen



Project Newsletter

SR 509 Corridor Completion / I-5 / South Access Road Project

WSDOT SEEKS COMMENT ON REVISED DRAFT EIS

Background of Project

Increased traffic congestion on I-5 and SR 99, and in southwest King County, has led to a search for a regional solution. These key roads carry significant volumes of vehicles, serve regional freight distribution areas, and provide access to the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Port of Seattle, and Port of Tacoma. The extension of State Route 509 (SR 509), improvements to I-5 and development of a direct southern access to the airport would reduce congestion and balance travel on these routes.

The preliminary preferred alternative meets all the project goals, including reduction of traffic congestion on I-5 and local streets. The Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement (RDEIS) identifies the preliminary preferred alternative. The ongoing work on the project currently includes fieldwork and surveying.

RDEIS Issued for Public Review & Comment

The project Steering Committee recently issued for public review and comment the RDEIS for the SR 509 Corridor Completion/I-5/South Access Road Project. This newsletter is intended to:

- Notify you that the RDEIS is available
- Explain why the preliminary preferred alternative was selected and what its benefits will be, and
- Invite you to comment on this significant study.

The Revised Draft EIS provides information to citizens, local communities, federal and state resource agencies and decision-makers about the proposed project and its potential impacts to the environment and community resources.

RDEIS Comment Period

The official comment period for the RDEIS begins on February 8, 2002 and closes on March 25, 2002. During this period you are encouraged to review the RDEIS and offer your comments on its adequacy and completeness, for inclusion in the Final EIS.

Open House Scheduled: February 12, 2002

An informational open house will be held to update the public about the project and let you talk informally with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) staff and the Steering Committee members. You can submit formal written comments on the RDEIS at this event, or a court reporter will record your formal oral comments for the record.

Public Hearing Scheduled: February 27, 2002

A formal public hearing to record public comment will be held on February 27. The purpose of the hearing is to accept and document comments on the adequacy and completeness of the RDEIS. Comments may be submitted anytime to the project website (see address below) or mailed to the Project Engineer, John White, P.E., at the address on the back of this newsletter

Availability of Revised Draft EIS

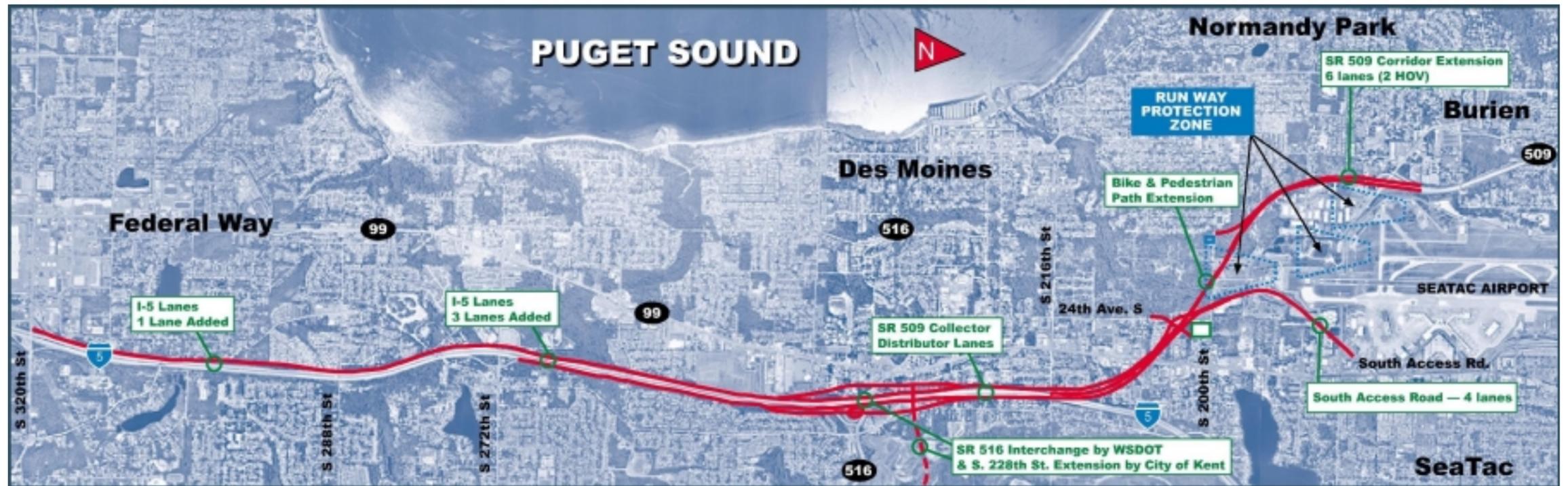
- Copies of the Revised Draft EIS are available for your review at the following locations:
- City halls in Burien, Des Moines, Federal Way, Kent, Normandy Park, and SeaTac
 - Public libraries in Boulevard Park, Burien, Des Moines, Federal Way (S. 320th St.), Kent, Tukwila, Valley View (SeaTac), White Center, and downtown Seattle
 - Highline Community College Library (S. 240th St. and SR 99)
 - University of Washington Government Documents
 - Western Washington University's Wilson Library in Bellingham
 - WSDOT: Regional office in Shoreline (15700 Dayton Ave N.) or Design office in Seattle (6431 Corson Ave S.)
 - On the internet at www.wsdot.wa.gov/regions/northwest/SouthKing/Projects/SR509

Un traductor certificado en español estará disponible en las reuniones públicas que aparecen listadas arriba.

Thông dịch viên Việt Nam sẽ hiện diện tại các phiên họp tối để giúp đỡ quý vị.

Description of Preliminary Preferred Alternative

The preliminary preferred alternative, Alternative C2 (9.9 miles long), would provide a direct freeway connection between the current SR 509 freeway endpoint and I-5 in the vicinity of South 210th Street. The proposed six-lane, divided SR 509 would extend south from S. 188th St./12th Pl. S., divert from its existing right-of-way north of S. 200th Street, run south of Sea-Tac Airport, cross the northeast corner of Des Moines Creek Park, continue under SR 99, and join the I-5 corridor in the vicinity of S. 210th Street. From that point, new I-5 southbound lanes would extend south to approximately S. 310th Street and a new I-5 northbound lane would extend from S. 272nd Street to the new SR 509 interchange. A spur providing a new southerly access to Sea-Tac Airport (called the South Access Road) would run north from the SR 509 extension and connect into the airport drive system. (See map at right.)



Measures taken to avoid or minimize impacts include:

- Modifying the proposed alignment and use of retaining walls to minimize impacts to residential communities
- Avoiding or bridging high-quality wetlands and streams
- Modifying the proposed alignment and use of retaining walls to avoid impacts to high-cost commercial and industrial properties

In addition, the existing Des Moines Creek Park bike and pedestrian trail would be extended almost two miles, from its current endpoint at S. 200th Street to S. 188th Street. This would provide a key segment in the future regional trail system.

Benefits of the Project

The proposed project benefits local communities by improving local highway facilities. For example, the re-design of the SR 516 interchange provides a direct connection to Kent's South 228th Extension project. SR 509 coordinates with SeaTac's planned improvements for 28th/24th Avenue South by constructing a new interchange providing access to SR 509. The project would also contribute major elements to the Des Moines Creek Basin Plan, such as participating in the City of Des Moines project that removes a fish barrier and replaces it with a bridge at Marine View Drive, and restores riparian habitat along portions of Des Moines Creek.

The proposed project provides these other benefits:

- As an alternate route to I-5, the SR 509 extension alleviates congestion and air pollution on Southcenter Hill and on arterial streets in SeaTac, Burien, Des Moines, and

Normandy Park.

- The extension improves freight mobility by reducing travel distances and times and improving schedule reliability.
- The South Access Road provides a direct southern connection to Sea-Tac Airport from I-5.
- Additional lanes on I-5 provide additional traffic capacity and reduce trip times.

Other Alternatives Considered in Revised Draft EIS

Two other alternatives are being considered: Alternatives B and C3. Unlike the other alternatives, Alternative B passes to the west of Des Moines Creek Park before it crosses through the park, heading east towards I-5. Approximately 10.5 miles in length, Alternative B affects the most high-quality wetlands and sensitive noise receptors (primarily residences). Alternative C3, similar to Alternative C2, crosses north of Des Moines Creek Park. At 10.2 miles long, Alternative C3 displaces more single-family residential units than Alternative C2 and requires acquisition of the greatest amount of wetlands.

Process for Identifying Preliminary Preferred Alternative

On November 10, 1999, the Steering Committee reviewed the merits of the alternatives considered and recommended Alternative C2 (see map) as the preliminary preferred alternative. The Executive Committee subsequently adopted the recommendation, and federal and state environmental regulatory agencies that must give their consent to the final decision agreed with the selection of the preliminary preferred alternative in September 2001.

Alternative C2, Preliminary Preferred Alternative

Why It is Preferred

Alternative C2 was selected as the preliminary preferred alternative based on numerous discussions with affected citizens, local jurisdictions, concerned federal and state natural resource agencies, and transportation specialists. These discussions and subsequent designs have produced an alternative that benefits local communities while minimizing or avoiding potential impacts to residents, businesses, wetlands, and water quality.

Integration and Coordination of SR 509 Work with Other Projects

The SR 509 extension project is being planned with an awareness of and the intention to complement the following local and regional projects:

- City of Kent's S. 228th Street extension
- Port of Seattle SeaTac airport improvements
- City of SeaTac's 28th/24th Avenue South arterial
- Des Moines Creek Basin Plan
- Improvement of SR 516 interchange
- Port of Seattle airport related improvements
- City of Des Moines Pacific Ridge development
- WSDOT I-5 HOV projects
- Sound Transit HOV access projects
- Cities of Kent and Federal Way S. 272nd Street Improvements

Project Timeline

During the spring, WSDOT will review and respond to comments

on the RDEIS. The response to comments, presented in a draft Final EIS, will be reviewed by federal and state resource agencies, who will be asked to concur with the identified least environmentally damaging and practicable alternative. Once agreement is reached, a Final EIS will be issued. Then later this year, the lead agencies (Federal Highway Administration, WSDOT, Port of Seattle, King County, City of SeaTac, and City of Des Moines) will act on the Record of Decision (ROD).

Schedule: EIS Process, 2002

January 30: RDEIS available
 February 12: Open house
 February 27: Public Hearing
 March 25: Public comments due
 Spring: Responses to comments prepared
 Summer: Resource agencies review draft Final EIS
 Winter: Lead Agencies act on Record of Decision

Future Funding

Currently, the EIS phase of the project is fully funded. Additional funding is necessary to complete the design phase, to acquire the necessary right-of-way property, and to construct the project.

Future Project Milestones

- Access hearings: early 2003
- Begin purchase of right-of-way: 2003
- Begin first phase of construction: late 2004
- Complete construction: late 2009