US 2 RDP Timeline

December 2005	January–May 2006	May 2006	June/July 2006	November/December 2006	Spring 2007
Local Agency Interviews and Corridor Working Group (CWG) Kick-Off	Ongoing Public Outreach and Data Collection	Existing Conditions Report Complete	1st Round of Open Houses and CWG Design Charette	CWG Review of Draft RDP and 2nd Round of Open Houses	Draft RDP Available Final RDP Published

Who is involved and how?

Communities along the corridor are involved in the RDP process as a part of the Corridor Working Group (CWG). CWG members include: representatives from the cities of Snohomish, Monroe, Sultan and Gold Bar; the towns of Index and Skykomish; Snohomish and King Counties; Community Transit; the Puget Sound Regional Council; and WSDOT. The CWG is advising the project team in developing the RDP and the list of recommended improvements. More details regarding the CWG, including members and contact information, are available on the project website.

The project team will continue to solicit comments from other sources, including the US 2 Safety Coalition, businesses, chambers of commerce, and community members.

How can I get involved in the study effort?

Your thoughts and opinions are very important to us. Please find additional information about the US 2 RDP study effort as well as an on-line comment form on the project website:

www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/us2/rdp

You may also contact the WSDOT US 2 RDP project manager to provide your comments.

For More Information

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Upcoming Events!

Please attend the first round of open houses:

June 13, 2006
Gold Bar Elementary Gymnasium
419 Lewis Street
5:00–8:00 pm

June 14, 2006
Monroe High School Commons
17001 Tester Road
5:00–8:00 pm

Americans With Disabilities Act Information: Individuals requiring reasonable accommodation of any type, including preparation of this material in alternate formats, sign-language interpretation, and physical accessibility accommodations, may contact Renee Zimmerman at zimmerr@wsdot.wa.gov or (206) 464-1273. Persons with hearing impairments may access Washington State Telecommunications Relay Service (TTY) by dialing 7-1-1 and asking to be connected to (206) 515-3411.

Title VI Information: The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) assures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, national origin and sex in the provision of benefits and services. For language interpretation services please contact Renee Zimmerman at (206) 467-1273. It is necessary to speak limited English so that your request can be appropriately responded to. For information on WSDOT's Title VI Program, please contact the Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098.

Washington State Department of Transportation

Snohomish County · King County · Puget Sound Regional Council PSRC

Washington State Department of Transportation

US 2 Route Development Plan

Background

United States Highway 2 (US 2) is an east-west highway crossing the state of Washington. The route serves as a critical link between Western and Eastern Washington and provides one of three connections across the Cascade Mountains that are open throughout the year. It is also an important connection to the Central Puget Sound urban area for the businesses and residents of the outlying communities along this route. In western Washington, US 2 climbs into the Cascade Mountains passing through the cities of Snohomish, Monroe, Sultan, and Gold Bar; and the towns of Index and Skykomish. It also serves as a main street through some of these communities. In addition to local uses, US 2 is a major route for recreational travel and a significant transportation route for natural resource products carried both to the Puget Sound Region and Eastern Washington.

What are the problems?

The US 2 corridor would benefit from short- and long-term improvements to address safety and throughput issues. Much of the route is characterized by sharp curves, narrow shoulders and bridges, steep terrain, and varying speed limits. Traffic on US 2 can often be worse on the weekends than during the commuting rush hour.

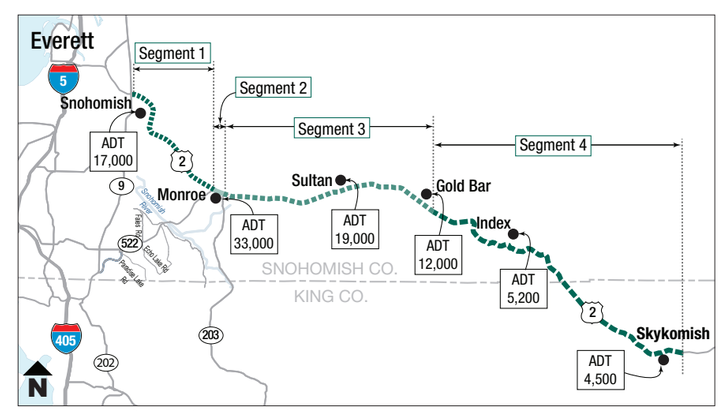
Continued population growth along the US 2 corridor will cause traffic conditions in the corridor to deteriorate. Concerns that should be addressed throughout the corridor include: traffic congestion, local access and intersection turning movements, pedestrian and bike safety, bridge upgrades, and traffic enforcement. The US 2 Route Development Plan (RDP) will consider transportation improvement projects to address these issues.

How is the study corridor defined?

The 47-mile study area begins at Bickford Avenue in Snohomish and ends past the eastern town limits of Skykomish at the Old Cascade Highway. The US 2 study area is large and diverse. Various areas of the corridor are unique in character and have different needs. For the purpose of this analysis, the corridor was divided into four segments, grouping areas of the corridor that have similar characteristics and transportation needs (see inside pages).

US 2 Investments in Study Area 1993-2007

Activity	Type of Work	Cost
Maintenance	Bridge painting, bridge repair, geological study, scour repair, & drainage rehabilitation	$4 million
Preservation	Asphalt overlays, rockfall mitigation, slope stabilization & bridge replacement	$17 million
Safety	Traffic signals, center turn lanes, intersection channelization, rumble strips, & striping	$13.2 million
Other	Park & ride lot, design analysis, Stevens Pass Greenway Corridor Management Plan, & US 2 Route Development Plan	$1.6 million
Total		**$36 million**



ADT = Average Daily Traffic (number of vehicles)

Study Limits: Bickford Ave. in Snohomish to the Old Cascade Highway east of Skykomish.

Segment 1: Snohomish to West Monroe

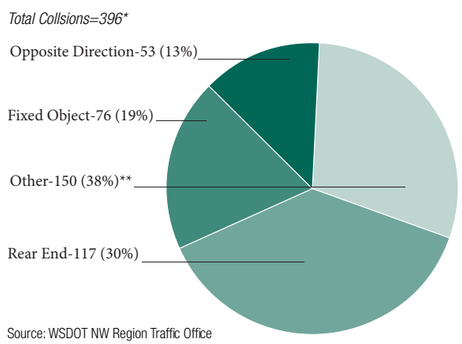
Segment Limits: MP 3.5 - MP 12.70

Description of Segment: This relatively flat segment of the highway begins near Snohomish and continues through primarily undeveloped wetlands and farmlands. The original US 2 passed through Snohomish on what is now 2nd Avenue.

Segment Problem Statement: Drivers often use city streets through Snohomish as alternative routes, mainly due to congestion on US 2. This can create safety and congestion concerns on local roadways. Along the undeveloped section east of Snohomish, there are direct highway entrances and exits where turning movement problems are magnified by limited sight distance.

Collision Types in Segment 1

1999-2005 Collision Types



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office

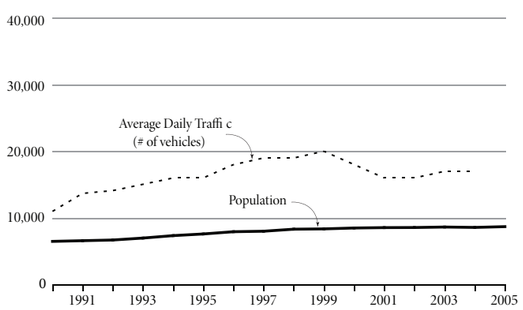
*Includes: 8 fatalities and 36 alcohol-related collisions

** Includes: enter at an angle, overturns, pedestrian, & bike collisions

US 2 through this segment changes from a four-lane separated arterial to a rural two-lane road with no separation between the opposing directions of traffic. The predominant speed limit in this area is 60 mph. A truck-climbing lane is provided on the eastbound and westbound climb up to the State Route (SR) 9 interchange. In the years 1999-2004, there were 396 collisions on this segment. About 30 percent of the collisions were rear-end collisions, which frequently occur because of congestion. However, the collision rate along this segment is lower than the Statewide average for similar highways.

Population and Average Daily Traffic on US 2

City of Snohomish, 1999-2005



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office and Office of Financial Management

In the last 15 years, the population of Snohomish increased by over 34 percent from 6,499 residents in 1990 to over 8,700 in 2005. Snohomish residents rely on US 2, SR 9, and Lowell-Snohomish River Road for commute trips. A portion of this population growth has contributed to increased traffic on US 2.

US 2 through Snohomish has transformed from a largely rural-farm-to-market road to an urban connector highway. In 1990, an average of 11,000 vehicles traveled on US 2 through Snohomish each day.

Today, that number has grown by over 55 percent to over 17,000 vehicles per day. A large portion of this traffic increase comes from the communities to the east, such as Monroe and Sultan, as well as from Snohomish and the surrounding rural communities south of Snohomish. This increase in traffic is contributing to the congestion experienced at the US 2/SR 9 interchange.

Segment 4: East Gold Bar to East Skykomish

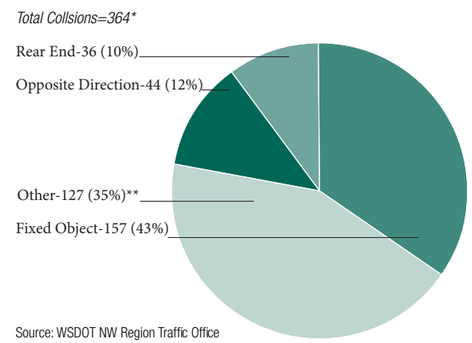
Segment Limits: MP 30.28 - MP 50.00

Description of Segment: This final segment in the study area continues the climb into the Cascades. Unlike other segments, the communities here (Index and Skykomish) are not built directly on the corridor. This segment is primarily rural and is characterized by sharp curves and narrow shoulders.

Segment Problem Statement: Intersections connecting the communities with US 2 create safety concerns. The higher elevation in this segment can also create additional challenges during the winter months due to increased rain, snow and ice.

Collision Types in Segment 4

1999-2005 Collision Types



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office

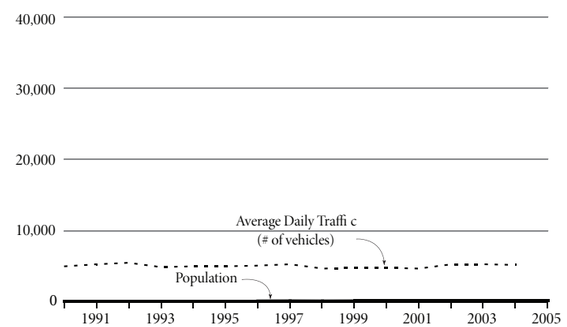
*Includes: 8 fatalities and 28 alcohol-related collisions

** Includes: enter at an angle, overturns, pedestrian, & bike collisions

US 2 east of Gold Bar is mostly a two-lane roadway with numerous curves, narrow shoulders, and some narrow bridges. The speed limit is 60 mph. US 2 provides access to Index and Skykomish. There were 364 collisions between 1999-2004 within this segment. Winter conditions have a significant effect on collisions on this segment as rain, snow and ice can frequently be encountered by travelers. A total of 103 collisions, or 28 percent of the crashes occurred on snow covered or icy roadways during the winter months. There were 110 collisions that occurred during nighttime conditions and 43 percent of all crashes were attributed to drivers running off the highway and hitting fixed objects. Crash rates in this segment are slightly higher than Segment 3 and above the Statewide average.

Population and Average Daily Traffic on US 2

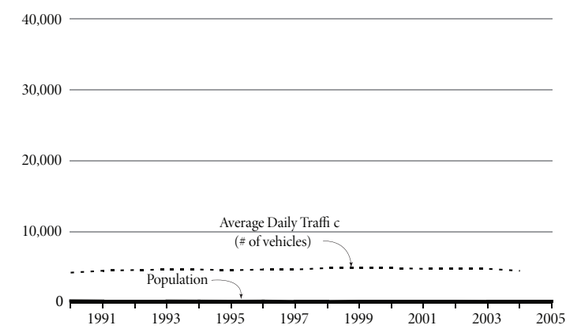
Town of Index, 1999-2005



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office and Office of Financial Management

Population and Average Daily Traffic on US 2

Town of Skykomish, 1999-2005



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office and Office of Financial Management

Through the cities of Index and Skykomish located just west of Steven's Pass, population and average daily traffic have remained flat over the past 15 years. The combined total population for both Index and Skykomish is 365 people. Average daily traffic through both towns has increased by only 4 percent. In 1990, the average daily traffic near Index totaled 5,000 vehicles and decreased to 4,300 vehicles through Skykomish. By 2004, these figures totaled 5,200 and 4,500, respectively.

Segment 2: City of Monroe

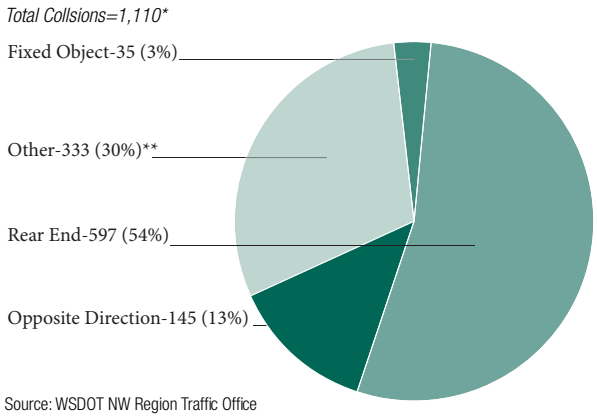
Segment Limits: MP 12.70 - MP 15.64

Description of Segment: Monroe has experienced significant growth in recent years. The segment within the City is lined by urban development with multiple stoplights at city street intersections, impeding traffic flow. Driveways to and from the highway leading to residential housing and businesses also restrict traffic flow. SR 522, a major commuting route to the Seattle urban area, intersects US 2 within this segment.

Segment Problem Statement: Congestion within Monroe is a problem. The City would like to see an analysis of available capacity on existing US 2 through the City and how that relates to a need for a bypass to US 2 around Monroe. The SR 522/US 2 interchange needs to be improved to maintain acceptable traffic flow. Pedestrian and bicycle safety is also a concern along this section of the highway.

Collision Types in Segment 2

1999-2005 Collision Types



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office

*Includes: 5 fatalities and 53 alcohol-related collisions

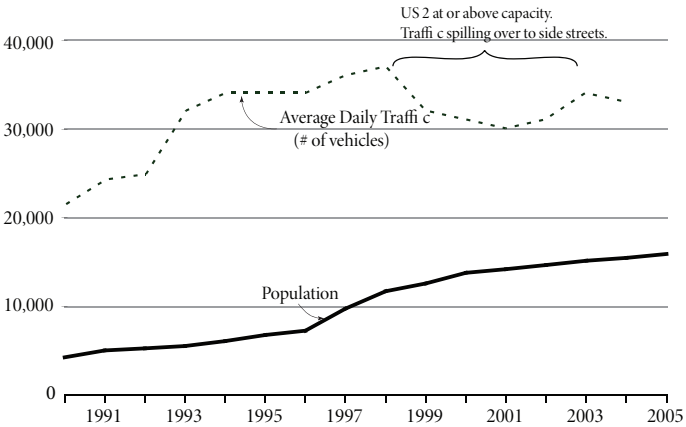
** Includes: enter at an angle, overturns, pedestrian, & bike collisions

As US 2 enters the city of Monroe it changes from a rural roadway to an urban roadway. The two-lane highway turns into a four-lane highway with a center turn-lane through the heart of the city's retail area. The speed limit changes to 45 mph just inside the westerly city limits and then drops to 35 mph through the retail core. As US 2 has experienced increased congestion through this city, many drivers bypass US 2 by using city streets to avoid the congestion. SR 203, Main Street, SR 522, and even parking lots between retail establishments are some of the numerous routes that drivers are using to avoid traffic congestion on US 2 through Monroe.

There were 1,110 collisions between 1999-2004. Of these collisions, 54 percent were rear-end collisions, a possible sign of congestion through the city. Collision rates are significantly higher than the Statewide average.

Population and Average Daily Traffic on US 2

City of Monroe, 1999-2005



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office and Office of Financial Management

The city of Monroe is one of the fastest growing cities along US 2. Over the past 15 years its population almost quadrupled from just over 4,200 people in 1990 to almost 16,000 in 2005. As a result, average daily traffic through the city has increased by over 54 percent. In 1990, 21,400 vehicles traveled on US 2 each day. Today, over 33,000 vehicles use US 2 each day. Many drivers avoiding congestion use Main Street to travel onto SR 522. This is why traffic volumes on US 2 through Monroe have decreased slightly since 1998 even though the population continued to grow. The roadway is not able to handle the current traffic demand and we are witnessing a high number of collisions and traffic diversion onto local roadways as a consequence.

Segment 3: East Monroe to West Gold Bar

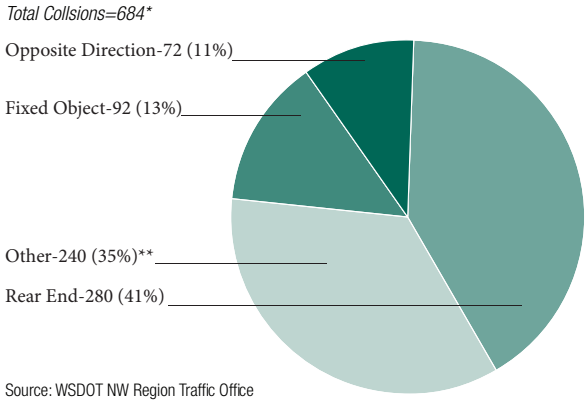
Segment Limits: MP 15.64 - MP 30.28

Description of Segment: This segment is less developed and more forested in many locations, and begins the climb into the Cascades. It includes the smaller cities of Sultan and Gold Bar. Homes and businesses along this segment, including those within Sultan and Gold Bar, are often built directly adjacent to US 2.

Segment Problem Statement: Safety and congestion, along with vehicle and pedestrian access, are major concerns within this segment. Where homes and businesses are built adjacent to US 2, driveways often connect directly to the highway, impacting safety and traffic flow.

Collision Types in Segment 3

1999-2005 Collision Types



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office

*Includes: 8 fatalities and 68 alcohol-related collisions

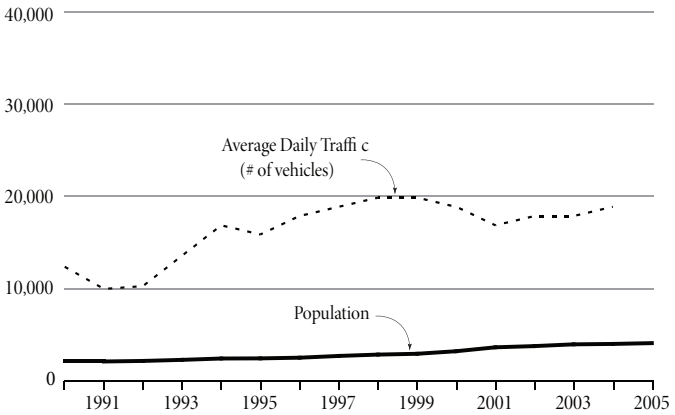
** Includes: enter at an angle, overturns, pedestrian, & bike collisions

US 2 in this segment is a two-lane highway with speed limits that vary from up to 55 mph in the more rural sections of the highway to 35 mph within the city limits of Sultan and 40 mph within the city limits of Gold Bar. As the highway enters the City of Sultan, there is a traffic light at Old Owens Road and a new traffic light at 5th Street. These traffic lights have become choke points for US 2 with weekend and holiday backups extending easterly from the City.

As a consequence of this congestion, rear end collisions account for the majority of the crashes through these communities. The collision rate is slightly above the Statewide average for this segment. Between 1999-2004, there were 684 collisions in this segment. Almost 41 percent of the collisions are attributed to rear-end collisions.

Population and Average Daily Traffic on US 2

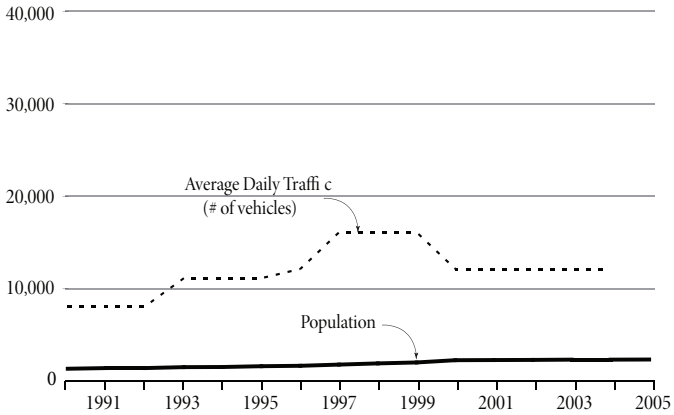
City of Sultan, 1999-2005



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office and Office of Financial Management

Population and Average Daily Traffic

City of Gold Bar, 1999-2005



Source: WSDOT NW Region Traffic Office and Office of Financial Management

The populations of Sultan and Gold Bar have almost doubled in the last 15 years. While the populations of these two cities are still much smaller than those of Snohomish and Monroe, both cites are seeing an increase in average daily traffic volumes.

The population of Sultan increased from 2,236 in 1990 to 4,225 in 2005. During that same time period, average daily traffic volumes increased almost 66 percent, from about 12,500 vehicles per day in 1990 to nearly 19,000 cars per day in 2004.

The city of Gold Bar's population increased from 1,078 in 1990 to 2,085 in 2005. At the same time average daily traffic volumes increased from under 8,000 vehicles per day in 1990 to almost 12,000 vehicles per day in 2004.