

South King County Projects Update

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New HOV lanes open on I-5 through Federal Way

The commute through Federal Way just got a little easier. On Monday, July 16, we officially opened the [new HOV lanes](#) on I-5 between S. 320th Street and the Pierce County line. There are now five lanes in each direction.

It's not only a faster drive; it's also a smoother one. This spring, crews finished grinding off the bumps and recently removed old ghost striping. We also installed traffic cameras and the hardware needed to create [congestion maps](#).

These new lanes are part of WSDOT's comprehensive plan to add carpool lanes on I-5 from Everett through Tacoma. This was the last piece of the system in King County.

New HOV lane on northbound SR 167 in Auburn

The project to add a [carpool lane](#) on northbound SR 167 between 15th Street SW and 15th Street NW is making good progress. Crews are about 95 percent done with permanent striping. Next they'll install raised pavement markers, plastic HOV symbols, and plastic traffic arrows. Up to two lanes in both directions and some ramps will be [closed at night](#) as the work continues.

Lanes on southbound I-5 in downtown Seattle to close

Crews will close [up to three lanes](#) of southbound I-5 between I-90 and Spokane Street Sunday through Wednesday nights this week to repair old expansion joints. This is preparation for the [major project](#) that will close all but two or three lanes of northbound between Spokane Street and I-90 around-the-clock from August 10 to 29. We're asking [drivers to prepare](#) by carpooling, vanpooling, taking transit, or adjusting their work schedules. WSDOT estimates that half of the current drivers must take alternate routes to prevent massive gridlock.

New Tacoma Narrows Bridge opens

On Sunday, July 15, we hosted a public opening celebration for the [new Tacoma Narrows Bridge](#). The bridge represents five years of hard work; fascinating engineering challenges and solutions; an international contribution of expertise, materials and equipment; and for the first time in Washington State, electronic toll collection using the [Good To Go!](#) transponders. Good To Go! will also be used on the [SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project](#) in 2008.

Approximately 60,000 people took the opportunity to walk across the new bridge deck on Sunday. At 4 a.m. Monday, we opened the bridge to traffic. The new bridge carries four lanes eastbound, and the old bridge carries three lanes westbound. Over the next eight to 10 months crews will resurface and replace the rail on the old bridge.

Expanded tow-away zone helps keep drivers safe

Drivers in South King may have noticed new “No Parking” signs on area highways recently. WSDOT and the Washington State Patrol are [expanding the tow-away zone](#) to improve safety for drivers. We recently finished installing new signs on I-5 from Boeing Access Road in south Seattle to the Pierce County line. Troopers will now begin enforcing the restriction.

On routes with the tow-away zone designation, vehicles parked or abandoned on the shoulder of the roadway can be towed immediately. On other routes, abandoned vehicles can be towed after 24 hours. The restriction will help reduce the many collisions that are caused by vehicles parked, entering or leaving the shoulder. Vehicles on the shoulder also block access for emergency vehicles and cause congestion because other drivers instinctively slow as they pass. See where the tow-away zone is already in place and where it's coming next on [our Web page](#) .

Please forward this e-mail to others who might be interested. [Subscribe to other e-mail updates from WSDOT, unsubscribe or send us your questions and comments.](#)