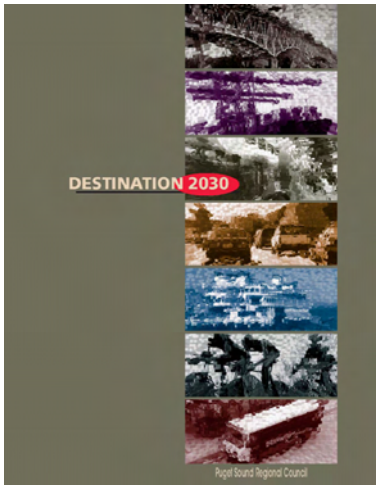
The final Chapter of the RDP includes a discussion about what happens next, including integration with other plans (including the Washington Transportation Plan and PSRC Destination 2030), funding and implementation.

Chapter 5: Next Steps

1 What are the next steps?

The US 2 Route Development Plan was created based upon the ideas from local residents and representatives of the Corridor Working Group (CWG), with technical assistance from WSDOT. However, very few if any of the projects in the RDP are within existing funding programs and specific actions should be taken to encourage implementation, including:

- Incorporate the US 2 Route Development Plan in the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP);
- Incorporate the US 2 RDP project recommendations within the regional comprehensive plan, PSRC's Destination 2030;
- Encourage local agencies through which US 2 passes to adopt the US 2 RDP as part of their comprehensive plans; and
- Adopt a cooperative funding strategy with WSDOT and all members of the CWG.



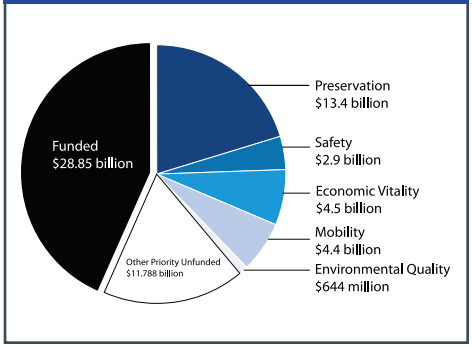
2 Why is the WTP important?

Washington's Transportation Plan is a 20-year blueprint for transportation programs and investment. It covers all modes in the transportation system and is required by state and federal law. The current plan covers the period from 2007 – 2026; essentially the same period as the US 2 Route Development Plan. Because the current plan projects nearly $38 billion

in unfunded needs, the Transportation Commission has established guiding principles for investments in current and future facilities, including preservation, safety, economic vitality, mobility and environmental quality.

In order for projects from the US 2 RDP to be funded, they should be consistent with the WTP. According to the 2007-2026 Washington Transportation Plan, current funding for the 20-year WTP period provides for approximately $29 billion, including the 2003 Nickel package and the 2005 Transportation Partnership Act. Unfortunately, the WTP projects nearly $38 billion in unfunded needs (2005 dollars). Figure 5-1 shows unfunded high priorities by the five investment guidelines adopted by the Washington Transportation Commission.

Exhibit 5-1. **20 - Year Investment Needs & Unfunded High Priorities**



Source: WSDOT

The Highway System Plan (HSP) is the element of the WTP that addresses current and forecasted needs for highways in the State of Washington and is constrained to current revenue projections. As a “living” document, the HSP is updated with each biennium with results from ongoing analyses, such as the US 2 RDP.

3 Why is Destination 2030 important?

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) has specific responsibilities under both federal and state law, relating to transportation and growth management planning. Destination 2030 is the transportation plan adopted under the authority provided PSRC by those laws.

Destination 2030 focuses on the transportation system investments that will help provide an integrated, multi-modal transportation system in the Central Puget Sound. For Central Puget Sound construction projects to receive federal funding, they should be consistent with and included in Destination 2030, Appendix 9 and/or a “Supplemental Project List”.

4 Why are local agency plans important?

There are a number of reasons why it is important for the US 2 RDP to be incorporated in local agency planning documents, but the two most critical are:

- It demonstrates to funding agencies that the plan has support at a state, regional and local level; and
- It addresses a critical question under the Growth Management Act which requires plans to be consistent between and among jurisdictions.

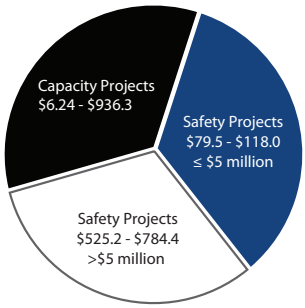
5 How will we pay for the many projects identified in the US 2 RDP?

The US 2 Route Development Plan identified 56 projects[1] ranging in total cost between $1.23 and $1.84 billion dollars.[2] Very few of these projects have been identified for funding under current state budgets for highway improvements.

However, there are several things that can and should be done to improve the likelihood that projects identified in the US 2 RDP will be funded. They include:

- Adopt the plan as discussed above;
- Develop and maintain a united coalition of communities that supports funding applications in the priority array identified in Chapter 4;
- Recognize that support for a project in one community may mean that a similar or important project in another community may not be funded in the same year, but lend support to one another in a "united funding coalition"; and
- Work cooperatively with local agencies taking the project lead when they are better able than WSDOT to compete for the variety of funding sources.

Exhibit 5-2. **US 2 Transportation Needs by Funding Category (in millions)**



Source: WSDOT

[1] This number increases substantially if the project in Segment 4 that includes widening or replacing 26 bridges is divided into individual bridge projects.

[2] The preliminary project costs contained in the RDP are for planning purposes only and should be viewed as a starting point when determining a final cost estimate for a proposed project. The preliminary project costs were created to help the US 2 Corridor Working Group prioritize projects for the US 2 Route Development Plan study. The preliminary project costs are in 2006 dollars, are planning level and not based on engineering analysis. They do not account for potential environmental mitigation (including right of way), rising material costs or other unforeseen expenditures that may occur during design or construction. These factors may increase the final costs of individual projects.

6 What funding sources are available for these projects?

There are a variety of funding sources that can be utilized to fund individual projects along the US 2 Corridor. As a result of total corridor needs, in all likelihood, all funding sources will be needed to implement the US 2 RDP.

Federal Funds

One of the most common sources of funding for major highway projects is the federal SAFETEA-LU program or the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. "With guaranteed funding for highways, highway safety, and public transportation totaling $244.1 billion, SAFETEA-LU represents the largest surface transportation investment in our Nation's history. The two landmark bills that brought surface transportation into the 21st century—the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21)—shaped the highway program to meet the Nation's changing transportation needs. SAFETEA-LU builds on this firm foundation, supplying the funds and refining the programmatic framework for investments needed to maintain and grow our vital transportation infrastructure."[3]

Within SAFETEA-LU, the Surface Transportation Program (STP) provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects on any Federal-aid highway. In addition, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) provides a flexible funding source to State and local governments for transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act.

While there are many sources of federal grants, including direct legislative "earmarks," these two (STP and CMAQ) are the most commonly used for projects similar to those on the US 2 Corridor.

[3] Federal Highway Administration, Office of Legislation and Intergovernmental Affairs, Program Analysis Team, August 25, 2005

State Funding

The State of Washington also administers a number of funding programs that can be used for transportation projects. Probably the most common source of state grant funds for projects along the US 2 Corridor is the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). "The Washington State Legislature created the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) to foster state investment in quality local transportation projects. The TIB distributes grant funding, which comes from the revenue generated by three cents of the statewide gas tax, to cities and counties for funding transportation projects."[4]

Regional Funding

In addition, the Regional Transportation Improvement District (RTID)[5] has presented a package of proposed projects that voters in Pierce, Snohomish and King Counties can vote on in November, 2007. This is based on RTID's *Blueprint for Progress* which outlines future investments to be made in the abovementioned counties, and is coordinated with Sound Transit's plans for their second phase, *Sound Transit 2*. In Snohomish County, the proposed RTID investments will build from the investments currently funded by the State of Washington, which includes transportation projects slated for US 2. Along with these infrastructure improvements, RTID investments are also planned for the purchase of additional buses and vans, which would facilitate additional transit service along US 2. This will be done in conjuction with Community Transit.

Three projects from the US 2 RDP have been included within the RTID package:

- The Monroe Bypass Phase 1;
- The Monroe Bypass Phase 2 (on the contingency list); and
- The Bickford Avenue interchange.

[4] See the TIB web site at www.tib.wa.gov.

[5] See the RTID web site at www.rtid.org.

Local Agency Funding

In order to be eligible for and competitive in most grant programs, local matching dollars are required – in fact the more local participants involved in and supporting a project, often times the more competitive a grant application can become. Snohomish County has already indicated a willingness to help corridor communities with matching funds. Private funding through developer mitigation payments for impacts to the highway could also be a source of matching funds.[6]

7 What other steps should be taken to implement the US 2 RDP?

While the projects identified through the RDP process will address many of the problems along the US 2 Corridor, they do not necessarily address some of the "root" problems causing the increase in congestion and collisions. In particular, two items that have not been addressed that impact this corridor include:

- Driver behavioural issues; and
- Local agency land use decisions.

Driver behavioural issues

Two driver behavioral issues have a significant impact on collision rates on the US 2 Corridor - driver impairment and impatience. For whatever reason, over seven percent of the collisions on the US 2 Corridor included impaired drivers (e.g., under the influence of alcohol). Additionally, a number of the head-on collisions appeared to be the result of impatient drivers, in a highly congested location, attempting to pass when there is insufficient time and spacing relative to on-coming traffic. These two circumstances suggest a need for greater driver education and increased traffic enforcement.

[6] For more information on local government revenue sources consult the Municipal Research Services Center for Washington, A Revenue Guide for Washington Cities and Towns. Report No. 46, August 1999, and A Revenue Guide for Washington Counties. Report No. 53, July 2001.

Land use decisions

As discussed in previous chapters of the RDP, much of the weekday congestion along US 2 is the result of local land use decisions. While there may be any of a number of underlying reasons why the land use decision-making process has not accounted for impacts to the state route, including the fact that US 2 is exempt from level-of-service standards, a better linkage should be made between local land use decisions and congestion on the highway. All jurisdictions along US 2 could, and probably should, enter into effective inter-local agreements with WSDOT to better assign the costs of traffic mitigation to local development projects.