

SR 164 Corridor Study

Corridor Working Group Session

Meeting Summary

Meeting date: November 16, 2004

Location: Enumclaw City Hall – Council Chambers (1339 Griffin, Enumclaw, WA 98022)

Attendees: *Partners in attendance:*

Dennis Dowdy, Laura Philpot, Rich Wagner – City of Auburn

Steve Taylor, Woody Ward – Muckleshoot Tribe

Les Johnson – City of Enumclaw

Mark Melroy – King County (on behalf of Ann Martin)

Allison Dobbins – Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)

Barbara Briggs – Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Northwest Region (on behalf of Don Sims)

Seth Stark – WSDOT, Urban Planning Office

Partners not in attendance:

Ann Martin – King County

Don Sims – WSDOT, Northwest Region

Others in attendance:

Caroline Green, Dennis Swanson – Citizens for Safety and the Environment (CSE)

Kamuron Gurol – WSDOT

Keith Sabol, Pamela Arora – Parsons Transportation Group

Jon Pascal – The Transpo Group

Kristine dos Remedios – Envirolssues

Welcome and Sign SR 164 Charter

Kamuron Gurol, WSDOT, welcomed the partners and thanked them for taking the time to attend the Corridor Working Group (CWG) session. The SR 164 Charter document was passed around for the partners to sign. Attendees then introduced themselves and shared the name of the organization or jurisdiction they were representing.

Goals for the Day / Ground Rules

Kamuron reviewed the session agenda and contents of the packet passed out to the group. Keith Sabol, Parsons, and Jon Pascal, Transpo, would review the progress to date. Seth Stark, WSDOT, and Pamela Arora, Parsons, would review the corridor immediate, short, and long-term project list with the group. Keith Sabol would then review the Goals and Objectives developed from the SR 164 Corridor Working Group Charter and facilitate a brainstorming session to develop evaluation criteria and measures.

Report on Study Progress To Date

Keith Sabol reviewed the study progress to date. All consultants are now under contract and moving forward with their scopes of work. Comprehensive plans have been collected from each agency and jurisdiction to compile each partner's proposed transportation improvements and land use changes. The "R" Street bypass alternative New Alignment Final Environmental Impact Statement was located and will be used as a resource to establish Auburn link road alternatives. Most of the traffic data has been collected. Background research, including environmental constraints (i.e. hazmat, historical, archeological, and geotechnical), has commenced and will be used in the

analysis of study alternatives. WSDOT's geographic information system (GIS) database will be the primary source for mapping aerial photographs and environmental constraints within the project area. The fatal flaw analysis of the Auburn link road options has already begun. The fatal flaw analysis for the rest of the corridor will begin shortly.

The City of Auburn hired an independent consultant to evaluate the geotechnical issues around Academy Drive. The City of Auburn will provide the results of this study to the SR 164 project team as supporting documentation

Seth Stark, WSDOT, informed the group that the SR 164 Project website would be up and running by the end of the day. The project team will use the website to post project materials and project status updates as they become finalized. Partners suggested that the identified stakeholders list be added to the website and updated as meetings with stakeholders are scheduled and completed. In addition, the website will have a summary of the interviews in an effort to help other stakeholders prepare for their interviews.

WSDOT also reported that they are in the process of driving the corridor with partners to gather background and historical information on the corridor. WSDOT will continue to meet with partners to discuss issues specific to their jurisdictions and organizations.

Jon Pascal, from the Transpo Group, gave a summary of SR 164 growth in traffic volumes observed since Phase I of the corridor study was completed in 1999. Data from Phase I was compared to 2003 and 2004 traffic volumes collected for this study. In addition, traffic data was collected for a large event at the White River Amphitheatre at the beginning of October 2004 to determine how traffic patterns and volumes change during event days.

Analysis of the traffic data from 1999 to 2004 showed that daily traffic volumes along the entire corridor have increased by 17%, AM peak hour traffic has increased by 4.9%, and PM peak hour traffic increased by 6.2%. In urban segments of the corridor (within Auburn and portions of the Muckleshoot Indian Tribal Land), daily traffic volumes have increased by 19.3%, AM peak hour traffic has increased by 8.0%, and PM peak hour traffic has increased by 13.9%. In rural segments (within unincorporated King County and portions of the Muckleshoot Indian Tribal Land), daily traffic volumes have grown by 11.0%, AM peak hour traffic has decreased by 2.1%, and PM peak hour traffic has decreased by 3.1%. Within the City of Enumclaw, daily traffic volumes have increased by 20.3%, AM peak hour traffic has increased by 5.2% and PM peak hour traffic has increased by 2.2%.

Large events at the White River Amphitheatre typically increase daily volumes by 7.4% along the entire corridor and 13.3% in the urban segments of the corridor. During event days the AM and PM peak hour traffic volumes have remained consistent with days when there were no events. However, peak hour traffic times have been extended.

A copy the technical memorandum prepared by the Transpo Group was distributed to the partners. Partners have until December 1st to comment on the results. The project team will use the results of this study to address current needs along the corridor. Further traffic data analysis will develop a greater level of detail regarding bottlenecks or chokepoints within corridor. Traffic counts were not taken near the Muckleshoot Casino since improvements were made to the casino within the last five years. However, it is not necessary to specifically evaluate the change in traffic patterns near the Casino, as the five-year span of data reviewed should take into account any expansion by the Casino within the last five (5) years. It was noted that Casino traffic peak hours do not

correspond with the typical commute peak hour traffic.

**Review
Immediate,
Short, and
Long-Term
Project List**

Seth Stark began the SR 164 Draft Immediate, Short, and Long-Term Project list discussion, which was sent out to the partners via email prior to the meeting. The list is a “snapshot” compilation of each partner’s jurisdictional or organizational list for improvements along the SR 169 corridor.

Clarification was given regarding the immediate-, short- and long-term project status designations. Immediate term projects are defined as projects that will be initiated or completed within six to eighteen (6-18) months, have all necessary approvals and funding in place. Short term projects are projects that will be initiated or completed in up to six (6) years, may still need funding and/or other approvals. Long-term projects are defined as projects that are typically larger in scope and may take longer than six (6) years, but not more than twenty-five (25) years to implement. Along with the project status, the project team specified the importance of each project in terms of improved safety, mobility and funding status.

WSDOT then asked the group for feedback to make sure the project designations (immediate-, short- and long-term) and descriptions were accurate. Partners requested that a purpose statement and the project status designation definitions be added at the top of the list. The list would be considered a working document, and would be updated as more project information was identified. Partners also requested that a map be developed to show the locations for all of the projects.

Other partners offered specific comments regarding projects on the list.

Project 19 (SR 164 at SE 388th Street) was identified as a project that had funding, currently does not include a traffic signal, and recently obtained the right of way required to move forward with the project improvements.

Projects 35 and 38 (SR 164 within the City of Enumclaw and SR 164 at Semanski and Clovercrest Streets) are the same project.

The City of Auburn believed that traffic signals at the SR 18 on- and off-ramps to SR 164 might be out of coordination. Barbara Briggs, WSDOT, agreed to talk to the signal office to confirm the status of the signals in order to determine if this is an operational issue.

Speed limit changes were also discussed. Cities need concurrence from WSDOT regarding speed limit changes. Street illumination was also identified as an issue that may need to be added to improvement projects, specifically Project 9. Partners also agreed that Project 9 should be divided into two or three smaller segments to help identify and address specific safety and traffic concerns along portions of the corridor.

WSDOT and the project team agreed to make corrections and additions to the immediate, short, and long-term project list per comments offered by the partners. Further research into projects from the Phase I list would also be conducted regarding projects designated as needing more information. Partners also have until December 1st to offer additional comments on this list.

**Review Draft
Goals and
Objectives**

Keith Sabol then reviewed the Draft Goals and Objectives established for the corridor based on the SR 164 Corridor Working Group Charter. A specific objective in relation to the Auburn link road was included in the document in order to highlight the importance

of this issue for the SR 164 corridor study.

Comments on the Goals and Objectives were solicited from the partners. There was a question regarding whether or not the study would increase capacity along the corridor (e.g. would the corridor remain a two-lane route, or could it potentially be expanded) in an effort to reduce person and vehicle delay throughout the corridor. It was noted that this issue would be addressed in the travel demand and mobility goal. All options are on the table at this point, including increasing capacity. Partners also requested that a goal to address access management along the corridor be added to the Goals and Objectives, as it is stated in the Charter.

WSDOT and the project team agreed to make corrections and additions to the Goals and Objectives per comments offered by the partners. Partners also have until December 1st to offer additional comments on the document.

A brief discussion regarding the current WSDOT Washington Transportation Plan Update (WTP) followed. Partners wanted to make sure that the SR 164 Route Development Plan (RDP) would be folded into the update. WSDOT told the partners that the update addresses a much higher level of planning and will rely on the detail provided in the SR 164 RDP. The Transportation Commission will approve the updated WTP at the end of 2005. WSDOT also agreed that it would be helpful to develop a document that outlines how plans such as the WTP or the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) relate to the SR 164 RDP, and took responsibility for developing this piece. Partners requested that WSDOT staff consider assisting in briefing councils and electeds on how the WTP update relates to or affects current planning efforts along the SR 164 corridor.

**Review Draft
Evaluation
Criteria**

The next step in the alternatives development process is to identify the evaluation criteria that will be used to 'grade' corridor improvement projects. Establishing the criteria will assist the CWG partners in objectively evaluating project alternatives and reaching consensus-based decisions regarding what corridor projects to advance.

Keith Sabol reviewed the Draft Evaluation Criteria with the group. Keith then facilitated a brainstorming session with the partners to identify other criteria or evaluation measures they would add to the draft.

Environmental: Partners agreed it was important to ensure that all natural environmental impacts, impacts to salmon, environmental justice impacts, and business and community impacts, particularly in regards to the farming sector, be included in the evaluation measures. Partners also identified historical, architectural and cultural impacts, topographical constraints, and right-of-way availability as additional measures under the Environmental criterion.

Mobility: Partners identified access management, access to surrounding residential communities, specifically the plateau, freight mobility, vehicle and person delay and transit as important measures to include and use to evaluate corridor alternatives.

Safety: Partners agreed to add the measures of emergency access, reduction in correctible accidents and school safety.

Cost: Partners agreed that Cost was an important criterion as well, particularly regarding capital costs, operations and management costs, and overall cost in comparison to the return on the investment to the user.

Land Use Consistency: Partners identified the measures of consistency with local comprehensive plans, consistency with local development regulations, economic development benefits, impacts to agricultural lands, consistency with development rights, and impacts to existing open space.

Bike/Pedestrian: This would be more of a yes/no criterion, identifying whether or not the alternative facilitated bike and pedestrian activity along the corridor. Partners also felt that the project team should rely on the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) guidelines for bike and pedestrian requirements to evaluate the corridor alternatives.

Partners then agreed that some work should be done as a group to prioritize or weight the evaluation criteria, as a next step.

The project team agreed to make corrections and additions to the Evaluation Criteria per comments offered by the partners. Partners also have until December 1st to offer additional comments on the document.

Closing and Next Steps

The next CWG meeting will be held the week of December 13th. At that meeting, partners will finalize the immediate term project list, goals and objectives, and evaluation criteria.

Action Items:

- Partners are to send their availability for the next CWG meeting to Seth Stark at WSDOT (starks@wsdot.wa.gov) and Kristine dos Remedios at EnviroIssues (kdosremedios@enviroissues.com) by November 19th. WSDOT will send all documents distributed at the November 16th CWG to the partners electronically for their review and comment.
- Partners are to send their comments regarding the Technical Memo from The Transpo Group, SR 164 Improvement Strategies list, SR 164 Goals and Objectives, and SR 164 Evaluation Criteria to Seth Stark at WSDOT (starks@wsdot.wa.gov 206-464-1288) by December 1st
- WSDOT and the project team will revise the above documents per partner comments and send out another draft to the partners one week before the next CWG meeting for review and comment.
- WSDOT will post a PDF of the signed SR 164 Charter on the SR 164 Project Website
- WSDOT will post a list of identified stakeholders on the SR 164 Project Website along with the status of stakeholder interviews
- WSDOT will develop a framework piece regarding how the RDP process informs other regional and state planning documents.
- EnviroIssues will write a meeting summary for the Chartering Session and send it to the partners for review.

Upcoming Meetings

- CWG Meeting: The week of December 13th

Handouts

- CWG Session Agenda
- Final SR 164 Charter
- Final SR 164 Chartering Session Summary
- Draft SR 164 Traffic Volume Analysis Technical Memorandum
- SR 164 Draft Improvement Strategies

- SR 164 Draft Goals and Objectives
- SR 164 Draft Evaluation Criteria
- Draft CWG Participation Schedule