

SR 164 Corridor Study

Corridor Working Group Session

Meeting Summary

Meeting date: Tuesday, September 27, 2005
Location: City of Auburn Council Chambers – Auburn (25 W Main Street)

Attendees: ***Partners in attendance:***
Dennis Dowdy – City of Auburn
Steve Taylor – Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
Chris Searcy – City of Enumclaw
Mike Cummings – Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)
Ann Martin – King County
Seth Stark – WSDOT, Urban Planning Office
Ron Paananen – WSDOT, Northwest Region

Partners not in attendance:
None

Others in attendance:
Councilmember Rich Wagner – City of Auburn
Chris Picard, Richard Warren, Nancy Boyd – WSDOT
Cathy Higley, Steve Sindiong – Parsons
Kristine dos Remedios – EnviroIssues

Welcome and Goals for the Day Seth Stark, WSDOT, welcomed the partners and thanked them for taking the time to attend the Corridor Working Group (CWG) session. Seth also thanked Dennis Dowdy for hosting the meeting. Attendees introduced themselves and shared the name of the organization or jurisdiction they were representing.

Seth reviewed the session agenda. An email was sent to the partners the week prior to this meeting that provided information from the previous CWG session on August 9, 2005 and information for today's meeting. The group will review the previous meeting summary, review the evaluation criteria that were finalized in February 2005, discuss the initial screening analysis results and talk about how the projects have been packaged for the second round of analysis.

Seth introduced Richard Warren, who was recently hired as WSDOT's Corridor Planning Manager.

Previous Meeting Summary At the meeting on August 30, 2005, the CWG partners reviewed the Evaluation Criteria that was finalized in February 2005. The results of the initial project screening were discussed. The majority of the projects remained on the list and was carried forward into the detailed screening that will be reviewed today. The method for the detailed screening was also discussed, as well as how the projects were packaged into short-term and long-term packages. The short-term package includes projects that directly address bottlenecks, high accident

locations, and high accident corridors. These are project improvements, which can be implemented within the next 6-10 years. The long-term package of improvements includes projects that address congestion and safety issues on a broader scale, address future growth related conditions, and can be implemented in the next 25 years.

Dennis Dowdy also presented copies of a City of Auburn White Paper on Auburn's analysis conducted in relation to the feasibility and cost of reopening Academy Drive in Auburn.

Rich Wagner, a Councilmember from the City of Auburn, said that the request for additional modeling of the R street half-diamond interchange was discussed at the meeting earlier in August, but he was hoping to have more discussion on the methodology or assumptions that went into the model. Seth said that additional modeling had been done and the results should be ready within the next couple of weeks. A separate meeting to discuss the modeling methodology and assumptions would be held with Councilmember Wagner and the project Modeler – Craig Helmann of WSDOT. Ann Martin expressed an interest in attending this meeting as well. Seth said such a meeting would be open to anyone interested in attending.

Detailed Screening Analysis

Seth distributed a packet of materials that included a revised SR 164 project list, a sample of a display board for the upcoming open houses; and assorted handouts that will also be available at the open houses.

First, Seth reviewed the detailed screening steps. Each project was evaluated based on the potential benefits it provides in terms of safety, mobility, transit and non-motorized travel. The potential impacts and costs were also assessed in terms of environmental effects, land use and policy consistency, project costs, and public support. The following methodology was applied to evaluate the projects:

Step 1: The project team reviewed the evaluation criteria and either clarified, combined, or eliminated measures. Those that were eliminated were determined not to be applicable to this level of project development or analysis. New measures were also added to assess benefits or impacts not defined during the initial evaluation.

Step 2: Each project was given a score based on each of the benefit and impact/costs measures.

Step 3: The Project Team weighted each of the measures on a scale from 1 to 5 to reflect their relative importance to implementing such a project. The weighted scores were applied to the projects.

Step 4: Each project was scored, weighted, and then the total benefits, the total impact/costs and the total sum were compiled.

Step 5: Based on their scores, each project was sorted into the following categories:

- Projects recommended for removal!: Projects which have impacts, or costs, that considerably out number the project benefits.
- Projects recommended for moving forward: Projects which have impacts, or costs, that are considerably lower than the project benefits and are recommended for inclusion in the final RDP.
- Projects recommended for further study: Projects that need further detailed analysis where the project benefits may be very high, but project costs create a statistical anomaly. This type of project needs further definition or analysis.

It was acknowledged that a number of larger projects, such as the Auburn bypass alternatives, would have major impacts but also a lot of benefits. Therefore, the project team recommended a number of these larger projects for further study, in order to do some planning level cost estimation and better define the extent of the impacts.

After reviewing the methodology, the partners were invited to comment on the screening criteria applied. The partners made the following comments:

- Nancy Boyd, WSDOT, noted that the “remediates an existing geological hazard” criterion should really be a measure of benefit, not cost, and should be moved. Cathy said the team was aware of that, but noted that on the scoring sheets, the projects affected by this “cost” measure received a positive score. This will be reconciled before the analysis is finalized.
- Rich Wagner, Auburn, noted that there used to be a benefit measure related to economic development. It was important to the group to emphasize projects that helped or supported economic growth along SR 164. This measure will be incorporated or considered into the land use policy consistency criterion.
- One partner asked if the additional right of way and land use impacts criterion were redundant. Cathy explained that both were kept to measure the land use impacts that occur as a result of acquiring additional right of way. She mentioned that one was meant more as a flag for potential impacts, rather than a cost in and of itself.
- Mike Cummings, PSRC, noted that the benefit measure “improves operating levels of service” is more about travel time than levels of service. We need to say what this means. He liked the mobility measure #15 (improve travel time) instead of #12 (improve level of service). Travel time is an easier measure for the public in general to see how a project benefits the corridor.

After reviewing the detailed screening steps, Seth Stark led the discussion on the project list and categories. The partners made the following comments:

- The partners asked the team to redefine project T-1 not as a transit project but as an interchange improvement project, which should be included for further study. Partners thought that a new reconstructed interchange at the present location of SR 18 and SR 164 should be weighed against the bypass alternatives. A study is needed to compare the positive impacts from a reconstructed SR 164/SR 18 interchange versus a combination of an interchange improvement and bypass to decide which alternative should be recommended in the RDP.
- The partners noted that project 13, a short-term project, was eliminated, but could be something that is a first phase of project 12. The group needs to rethink eliminating projects that address a high accident area in the short term, if a long-term solution is the only thing proposed to address the same area.
- Project 51 should be recommended to move forward, if it is a part of project 50, which is also recommended to move forward.
- Chris Searcy asked about the projects that had all zeros for their costs and benefits, and a final score of zero. Cathy said that the team would go back and look at all of the projects that received a score of zero.
- Dennis Dowdy asked that project 10b be redefined into a pedestrian crossing near the QFC grocery store just east of Dogwood Street. Auburn is currently going after a grant for this project. The center left turn/reversible lane from Poplar Street to Academy Drive should be redefined into a separate project (10c) that is a center left turn/reversible lane from Poplar Street to SE 400th Street.
- Ann Martin asked if the projects recommended in the Phase I SR 164 study were all on the list of projects to move forward. Seth said yes.
- Steve Taylor noted that project 30 should call for a signalized intersection at SE 400th Street. This may be the site of a new King County library. The intersection will be four-legged soon, and may warrant a signal in the future. With improvements at this intersection, access to 398th may be removed.

There were no further comments on projects recommended for elimination. Cathy asked the partners to send her any further comments or questions about the project list.

New Open House Sites and Times

Seth went over the SR 164 open house dates and times, which were as follows:

- Auburn - Chinook Elementary School (Tuesday, October 4th, 6-8pm)
- Muckleshoot Reservation - Philip Starr Center (Thursday, October 6th, 6-8pm)
- Enumclaw - Thunder Mountain Middle School (Tuesday, October 11th, 6-8pm)

Kristine dos Remedios, Envirolssues, then went over the details of the open house events and the examples handouts that were distributed earlier in the

meeting.

Open house attendees will be greeted at the door and asked to sign-in. Members of the public will receive a handout entitled "Attendee Instructions" with a comment form on the back. Attendees will also be given a room layout that identifies where each project is placed within the room. This will be important because the SR 167 Corridor Plan and the SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project will also have information and personnel available at the Auburn event. Attendees will also receive a handout that lists and illustrates the types of projects, such as intersection improvements.

There will be two introduction boards to explain the process and schedule of the Route Development Plan and how the projects were divided into short-term and long-term packages. The corridor will be presented in five segments. Each segment will have a problem statement board and a board outlining the projects and their location on a map. Partners will be asked to tend to different stations, answer questions, and note any comments they receive from the public.

Next Steps

Action Items:

The partners will review the SR 169 project list and send any comments to Cathy Higley, Parsons (Catherine.Higley@parsons.com).

Set up a meeting with partners interested in discussing the assumptions going into the model used for the Auburn bypass alternatives.

Revise the project list and analysis numbers to reflect the partner's discussion.

Send the partners the files for the open house displays as soon as they are available.

Seth will continue to meet with partner's city councils or commissions by request before the upcoming open houses. Seth will be attending the Muckleshoot Tribal Planning Committee on Wednesday, October 5th. He will also be presenting to the Enumclaw City Council on the night of Monday, October 10th.

Upcoming Meetings

SR 164 open houses:

Auburn - Chinook Elementary School (October 4th, 6-8pm)

Muckleshoot Reservation - Philip Starr Center (October 6th, 6-8pm)

Enumclaw - Thunder Mountain Middle School (October 11th, 6-8pm)

CWG Meeting: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 from 1:00pm – 4:00pm
(Muckleshoot Reservation – Philip Starr Center, Cougar Room)

This meeting will be held to discuss the results of the cost estimating analysis.

Handouts

- CWG Session Agenda
- Open House Attendee Instructions/Comment Form

- Example Open House Room Layout
- Open House Introduction Boards:
- Route Development Plan Process and Schedule
- Project Package Definition
- Project Example “Illustration” Handout
- SR 164 RDP One-Sheet
- Example Open House Project Board
- SR 164 Corridor Final Screening of Potential Transportation Projects