

Section 1: Introduction

What are Corridor Plans?

Corridor Plans provide WSDOT, along with other agencies and jurisdictions, a long-range vision for a state route. Corridor Plans are often the first step in identifying needed improvements for a specific state highway corridor.

With a long-range vision smaller bottleneck or segment improvement projects can be designed to work incrementally toward this vision avoiding unnecessary improvements that would otherwise have to be removed at a later date.

This document provides a summary of key findings about existing and future travel conditions and identifies proposed improvements for SR 167 between S 180th Street in Renton to SR 161 in Puyallup (Mile Post [MP] 6.80 to MP 24.77). There are eight technical memorandums that have been developed for this Corridor Plan that provide details of existing conditions, modeling assumptions, analyses, and recommendations. This document is a summary of the most important factors regarding the SR 167 Corridor derived from those technical memorandums.

The short segment of SR 167 between Interstate I-405 and S 180th Street has been addressed in the I-405 Corridor Plan (2002), since this segment is predominantly affected by the on- and off-ramps of the I-405 / SR 167 interchange.

Where is the SR 167 Corridor and Who Does it Serve?

SR 167, also known as the Green River Valley Freeway, or simply the Valley Freeway, is an important 27-mile route that links south King County and north Pierce County to I-405. In conjunction with I-405 and SR 512, SR 167 is one of two north-south routes in the region and this 60-mile corridor provides one of the only alternatives to the congested I-5 corridor.

The Steps to Creating a Corridor Plan Include:

- Determining existing conditions (Technical Memorandum 3)
- Identifying a full range of options (Technical Memorandum 2)
- Evaluating and screening improvement options (Technical Memorandum 5)
- Advancing the range of improvement options through environmental screening and cost benefits (Technical Memorandum 7)

The combination of I-405, SR 167, SR 512, and the proposed SR 167 extension into the Port of Tacoma create a vital economic corridor for the Puget Sound area.

SR 167 and the Green River Valley play an important role in the movement of freight since one third of the region's warehouses are located near SR 167. As freight-related travel grows between the region's seaports and the warehouses of the Green River Valley, an even greater strain will be placed on the area's transportation network in general and the SR 167 corridor specifically.

What is the Background of the SR 167 Corridor Planning Process?

This Corridor Plan describes the existing and forecasted future conditions of SR 167 and the recommended improvements to address future travel demand by the year 2030. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has worked with the SR 167 Corridor Working Group (CWG), which is comprised of representatives of local governments and agencies seeking a consensus on future improvements that address the growing travel demand on SR 167. WSDOT and the CWG worked closely to define the goals.

Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID)

State legislation allows Snohomish, King, and Pierce counties to identify projects within each of their respective counties and tax themselves to finance the projects. RTID funding must be spent in the county where the funding is raised. The voters within the district must approve the ballot measure which specifies revenue sources and lists the projects to be constructed.

Phase 1

In 2003, elected officials from south King County asked WSDOT to begin a Corridor Plan (Phase 1) to support the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) ballot measure.

The SR 167 Corridor Plan was initiated to develop a long-range vision for SR 167 between S 180th Street in Renton and SR 161 in Puyallup. It also allowed a way for WSDOT to provide the RTID Board with project recommendations and cost estimates. The RTID Board took the recommendations and prepared a package of regional projects and priorities, along with a funding mechanism, which was placed on the ballot before Snohomish, King, and Pierce County voters in November 2007.

Phase 1 was initiated in 2003 to help provide input to the RTID package which, at the time, was expected to be put before voters in the fall of 2004 or spring of 2005. As there was a short time and limited budget, WSDOT staff and consultants completed the modified planning process in four months to identify projects and their cost estimates for the RTID ballot. The projects were located in King County, per the RTID legislation, while conceptual projects were identified in Pierce County to be considered by Pierce County legislators in their concurrent RTID process. In 2005, a series of public opinion polls indicated the draft RTID plan would not be met with a favorable vote. As a result the ballot measure was postponed until fall 2007 and the project list and revenue sources were reduced.

Phase 2

Phase 2, started in 2005 and completed in 2007, is a comprehensive document with identified recommendations for bottlenecks/segments and long-term improvements for the SR 167 Corridor. This final Corridor Plan document includes the long-term improvement options that were considered in Phase 1 and carried forward into Phase 2 of the analyses (see Section 8 of this document).

What Was Analyzed and How is the Information Presented in This Document?

The SR 167 Corridor Plan analyzed existing travel conditions and identified congestion and collision areas. A set of short-term and long-term improvement options were developed and evaluated that will improve the effectiveness of SR 167 as a goods and people mover.

There is a portion of SR 167 that is not a limited-access freeway but rather a surface street from I-5, in Tacoma, to SR 161, in Puyallup (Mile Post 0.0 to Mile Post 6.8). This portion was not directly included in this corridor study because plans are already in place for this portion of the corridor. A WSDOT project to the south known as the SR 167 Extension

Project will extend the limited-access freeway westward from SR 161 across I-5 all the way into the Port of Tacoma.

The existing I-405 Corridor Plan was consulted for coordinated analyses and cohesive design. Similar coordination was also done with the future SR 167 Extension Project.

The in-depth analyses are documented in a series of eight technical memorandums, which this Corridor Plan Report summarizes. Appendix D of this report includes all the Technical Memorandums.

SR 167 Technical Memorandums	
No. 1:	Goals and Objectives
No. 2:	Improvement Options Screening Criteria
No. 3:	Existing Conditions
No. 4:	Existing Traffic Operations
No. 5:	Corridor Improvement Options
No. 6:	Future Travel Demand Operations
No. 7:	Evaluation and Final Screening of SR 167 Corridor Options
No. 8:	Public Involvement Summary

This information was then summarized in this Corridor Plan document in the following sections:

- Section 1: Introduction
- Section 2: Transportation Policy Goals
- Section 3: Highway Classification and Characteristics
- Section 4: Existing Travel Conditions
- Section 5: Public Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Facilities
- Section 6: Natural and Built Environment
- Section 7: 2030 Travel Conditions
- Section 8: Long-Term Improvement Options
- Section 9: Bottleneck/Segment Improvement Options
- Section 10: Cost Estimates
- Section 11: Evaluation and Screening of Alternatives
- Section 12: SR 167 Corridor Recommendations and Phasing

What Were the Main Tools Used for the Analysis?

Several computer traffic models were used to forecast travel conditions in the year 2030. The models were also used to evaluate various improvement options. More information about the models is discussed in *Section 7: Year 2030 Traffic Conditions*.

Additionally, a Geographic Information System (GIS) screening process was used to identify the worst case scenarios for potential impacts on natural resources and the built environment adjacent to the freeway. This information was used in the Cost Estimate Validation Process (CEVP®) to refine the planning level cost estimates for the improvements.

WSDOT also conducted a cost-effectiveness analysis that examined the travel time savings associated with each long-term improvement option. This information then was used in an overall screening of the most effective long-term option and the potential combination of bottleneck/segment improvements that could be elements of future projects.

Finally, public input and guidance from the cities, counties, tribe, and other related agencies that make up the Corridor Working Group (CWG) for SR 167 were factored into the WSDOT-recommended options.

How Has the Public Been Involved?

WSDOT employed a number of strategies to involve as many interested parties as possible. The following public involvement and communication activities were completed during the planning process and will be drawn from as projects move into the design and environmental permitting phases:

- Fourteen Corridor Working Group (CWG) meetings
- Four open houses

What is the Cost Estimate Validation Process (CEVP®)?

WSDOT has implemented a process, CEVP®, to better estimate the probable cost and schedule (as well as cash flow) of their planned mega-projects. This estimate includes risk, opportunity, and other uncertainties. This process was designed to provide:

- More realistic projections of probable cost and schedule, including the effects of inflation.
- Better decision-making and risk management for individual projects, and for the entire program of projects.

Number of Participants for Outreach Activities:

- Two Fall Open Houses on October 4, 2005 and October 13, 2005 totaled approximately 75 people.
- Two Winter Open Houses on February 15, 2006 and February 16, 2006 totaled approximately 13 people.
- Thirteen informal events including the Kent Farmers Market, Auburn Good Ol' Days and the South Hill Mall totaled approximately 700 people.

- Informal outreach activities, including mall patrols and informational booths at 11 fairs and festivals
- A traveling informational display at four locations along the corridor
- A survey of trucking companies and associations
- An SR 167 Corridor Plan project folio
- A WSDOT project web site

The Corridor Working Group (CWG) members represented the following jurisdictions or agencies:

- City of Algona
- City of Auburn
- City of Edgewood
- City of Kent
- City of Pacific
- City of Puyallup
- City of Renton
- City of Sumner
- King County
- Pierce County
- Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)
- Metro Transit
- Sound Transit
- Port of Seattle

- Port of Tacoma
- Muckleshoot Tribe
- Washington State Patrol
- WSDOT Freight Office
- WSDOT NW Region
- WSDOT Olympic Region
- WSDOT Urban Planning Office

The CWG helped form the Goals and Objectives which this Corridor Plan should strive for in terms of long-range planning recommendations. These goals can be found in *Section 2: Goals, Policies & Recommendations*. These Goals and Objectives are the basis of screening and selection criteria for the long-term improvement options.

The CWG met approximately once per month throughout this process. They were apprised of the previous month's progress and analyses, and were asked for their input throughout the process.

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