

# SR 169 Corridor Study

## Corridor Working Group Session

### Meeting Summary

---

**Meeting date:** December 14, 2004

**Location:** Renton City Hall – Conferencing Center (1055 S Grady Way – Renton, WA 98055)

**Attendees:**

***Partners in attendance:***

Nick Afzali – City of Renton  
Dave Zielinski – City of Maple Valley  
Jason Paulsen – City of Black Diamond  
Chris Searcy – City of Enumclaw  
Ann Martin, Mark Melroy – King County  
Allison Dobbins – Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)  
Barbara Briggs – Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT),  
Northwest Region  
Seth Stark – WSDOT, Urban Planning Office

***Partners not in attendance:***

None

***Others in attendance:***

Joan Burlingame – Friends of Rock Creek Valley  
Kamuron Guroi, Renee Zimmerman – WSDOT, Urban Planning Office  
Ron Paananen – WSDOT, Northwest Region  
Jim Eastman – WSDOT, Northwest Region  
Keith Sabol – Parsons Transportation Group  
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. Attendees introduced themselves and shared the name of the organization or jurisdiction they were representing.

Seth reviewed the session agenda and contents of the packet passed out to the group. Keith Sabol, Parsons, would review the project progress to date. Seth would give a status report on the immediate-, short- and long-term project list. A brief information-sharing session about partner's jurisdictional and organizational legislative plans would be held. Partners would review and approve the Goals and Objectives document. Keith would then review the revised Evaluation Criteria with the partners and solicit further feedback on the criteria and metrics outlined in the document.

**Report on  
Study Progress  
To Date**

Keith Sabol reviewed the study progress to date. The existing conditions technical memo developed by the Transpo Group distributed at the last CWG meeting has been updated and will be posted to the website. This memo is a work in progress and as more data is available regarding the existing conditions along the corridor, this document will be updated.

Comments regarding the Goals and Objectives were received and incorporated into the document for final review and approval.

A draft existing conditions report for the environment is being prepared, which will include existing information collected from sources such as local comprehensive plans, farmland databases, and the national wetlands inventory, as well as data collected from a one-day “windshield” survey of the corridor to verify and collect additional data. All of this information will be combined with base maps provided by WSDOT to develop an initial constraints map of the corridor to then measure the impacts of different alternatives. Renton requested that any data that is compatible with the ArcView 9.0 GIS software be sent on to them for their own data library.

Finalizing the Evaluation Criteria is the next major step in the critical path of the project and will be the focus of this and the next CWG meeting.

The immediate-, short- and long-term project list was also updated based on comments received at the last CWG meeting and a map of project locations is being developed.

A meeting with partners from both the SR 164 and SR 169 Corridor Studies was held last week in order to coordinate the land use and growth assumptions to be used in the modeling efforts. Initial modeling of the corridor should be done by the first week of January.

**Status of SR  
169 Immediate-,  
Short-, and  
Long-Term  
Project List**

Seth Stark gave an update on the status of the SR 169 immediate-, short- and long-term project list. All of the comments submitted by partners during and after the last CWG meeting were incorporated into the project list. Other staff at WSDOT reviewed the revised list in order to check the accuracy of project specifications and costs. Some WSDOT staff believe that a handful of the projects on the list were priced incorrectly, as some construction or materials costs may have increased. WSDOT staff also recommended associating a price range for each project cost, rather than an absolute cost.

Partners asked whether or not they would be able to review the updated project cost ranges on the revised list. WSDOT staff committed to being in touch with individual jurisdictions regarding questions on projects in their areas. The project list will then be updated within the next few weeks and be sent to the partners for their review.

Partners expressed that they would like to begin discussion about priorities along the corridor or generating recommendations to address the long-term vision and potential problems along the corridor. The project team stated that the modeling would inform such discussion and the evaluation criteria that the team will develop together will help address the priorities question.

It is important to note that this project list should only be considered a “snapshot” of projects currently on record in the partners’ jurisdictions to be implemented along the corridor. Through the current SR 169 Corridor Study, some projects may be added that are not currently listed and some projects may be taken off of the list, if they are found to be inappropriate by the partners to the current goals for and needs along the corridor. A vision for the corridor is a product of the Corridor Study process. WSDOT committed to developing and distributing a Route Development Plan (RDP) Table of Contents, which may help the partners understand the components of the RDP and what the group is working towards.

**Jurisdictional and Organizational Legislative Plans**

Seth Stark began a discussion regarding individual jurisdictional or organizational plans for the upcoming 2005 legislative session, in order for all partners to be aware of each other's efforts.

Dave Zielinski, Maple Valley, mentioned again that they have developed a brochure that includes projects in Enumclaw, Maple Valley and Renton, to lobby legislators for funding during the 2005 legislative session. The package of projects included is priced at about \$6.5 million and all projects listed are on the SR 169 project list as immediate-term projects.

Joan Burlingame, Friends of Rock Creek Valley, mentioned that her organization is planning a meeting with the National Park Service, the Cascade Land Conservancy and other NGOs, as well as the general public, to move forward with planning for two pedestrian underpasses along SR 169.

**Review and Approve Goals and Objectives**

Keith Sabol reviewed the revised version of the Goals and Objectives. Comments received at the last CWG meeting and comments received shortly after had been incorporated.

Other comments about the document were solicited from the partners.

PSRC suggested that the study not only look at peak traffic movements during the weekday but also incorporate recreational peak traffic on the weekends in the model. Enumclaw notices some of their highest traffic volumes on the weekends in both the winter and summer.

Partners agreed that the "defining alternatives" section should be removed from the Goals and Objectives and incorporated into another section of the RDP. The project team also agreed to clarify the definition of corridor alternatives.

Enumclaw suggested that something in relation to human impacts due to truck traffic along the corridor be added to the environmental impacts section. Partners agreed that most of the impacts outlined in that section were related to natural conditions. A phrase to address the quality of life of those who live, work and do business along the corridor will be added.

Maple Valley suggested that the corridor study also look at accidents along the corridor that have occurred outside of the high accident location (HAL) and high accident corridor (HAC) time frame of three years, as people who live along the corridor who have experienced those accidents tend to remember them for a lot longer than three years.

Partners also suggested that the Goals and Objectives be revised to coordinate with the Evaluation Criteria, so it is clear how each criterion contributes to achieving the project goals and objectives.

The project team will make the edits to the Goals and Objectives and send the revised version to the partners for final approval.

**Review Evaluation Criteria for**

Keith Sabol began a discussion regarding the Evaluation Criteria to be used to develop and screen short- and long-term alternatives for the corridor. Keith also gave a brief overview of the Corridor Study process and the points of CWG partner input

## **Developing Short- and Long-term Alternatives**

throughout the course of the project. Partners suggested that a graphic showing this process would also be helpful in order to explain the process to elected officials.

First, the project team will develop the constraints mapping and existing conditions report and then develop solutions, including projects on the immediate-, short- and long-term project list, to address issues identified along the corridor. These alternatives will be screened at two points in the process – once for the fatal flaw analysis and a second time through a more detailed analysis.

The short-list of projects resulting from the fatal flaw analysis will be carried forward through the second analysis and data collection phases. From this process, the most effective and appropriate alternatives will be identified to address the issues and anticipated problems along the corridor in order to accomplish the corridor Goals and Objectives.

There are different ways of packaging “alternatives” for the corridor, as well. For example, alternatives may be packaged in terms of scale, with a package that includes a spectrum from a modest level of improvements to a higher level of improvements.

Corridor Working Group partners already have been involved in developing the Goals and Objectives and Evaluation Criteria for the corridor. Partner feedback will also be solicited regarding the fatal flaw analysis, the resulting short-listed projects, the more detailed level of screening analysis, and the final project list.

The criteria and metrics included in the current version of the Evaluation Criteria were designed to be as objective and measurable as possible, in order for the group to easily defend decisions to remove or move forward with certain alternatives. The project team asked that the partners do a more detailed edit of the document on their own, specifically looking at the metrics identified under each evaluation criterion.

The discussion at the meeting was meant to focus on major points of evaluation that may have been missed completely; however, most of the discussion focused on how to measure each criterion and what kind of grading system to use (i.e. pass/fail, no effect/neutral/positive effect, a scale of 1-5 with 3 being neutral, etc.). Many partners had difficulty with a pass/fail rating system, as it made it unclear whether or not a “failing” project could move forward to implementation.

Under Safety, partners had concerns about liability issues with the phrase “correctible accidents;” it implies that the roadway had been poorly engineered, which resulted in the accidents. The language should be changed to imply that physical situations that are adding to the likelihood of accidents should be corrected, but no promises should be made to prevent future accidents. An inventory of areas along SR 169 that may be hazardous or have been sites of accidents in the past may also be beneficial.

## **Next Steps**

The next CWG meeting will be held the week of January 17<sup>th</sup>. At that meeting, partners will finalize the evaluation criteria.

### **Action Items:**

- Partners are to send their availability for the next CWG meeting to Seth Stark at WSDOT ([starks@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:starks@wsdot.wa.gov)) and Kristine dos Remedios at EnviroIssues ([kdosremedios@enviroissues.com](mailto:kdosremedios@enviroissues.com)) by December 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Partners will also notify Kristine of any conflicts with Open Houses during the first

- two weeks of March along the corridor.
- WSDOT and the project team will be in contact with individual jurisdictions regarding questions in relation to the SR 169 project list.
- WSDOT will send the revised Goals and Objectives for final review and approval.
- WSDOT will send the Evaluation Criteria distributed at the December 15<sup>th</sup> CWG meeting to the partners electronically for their review and comment by December 21<sup>st</sup>.
- WSDOT will develop a RDP Table of Contents for distribution to the partners.
- WSDOT will develop a graphic to explain how the RDP process works, including major steps and points of CWG partner input.
- WSDOT will further clarify the definition of "alternative" for the purposes of the project.
- WSDOT will meet with other WSDOT staff to understand past RDP implementation issues in order to make the SR 169 as successful as possible.
- WSDOT will develop a problem statement for the corridor to clearly explain what is happening along the corridor today and what is anticipated for the future.
- WSDOT will be in touch with CWG partners to get onto City and Agency Council agendas during January and February
- WSDOT will update the Corridor Study schedule.
- 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 February 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Handouts**

- CWG Session Agenda
- November 16<sup>th</sup> SR 169 CWG Meeting Summary
- SR 169 Revised Goals and Objectives
- SR 169 Draft Evaluation Criteria
- SR 169 Project "One-Sheet"
- SR 169 Vicinity Map