

SR 169 Corridor Study

Corridor Working Group Session

Meeting Summary

Meeting date: Wednesday, September 28, 2005

Location: Green River Community College – Enumclaw (1414 Griffin Ave)

Attendees:

Partners in attendance:

Nick Afzali – City of Renton
Dan Hasty – City of Renton
Dave Zielinski – City of Maple Valley
Chris Searcy – City of Enumclaw
Jason Paulsen – City of Black Diamond
Ann Martin – King County
Seth Stark – WSDOT, Urban Planning Office
Ron Paananen – WSDOT, Northwest Region

Partners not in attendance:

None

Others in attendance:

Richard Warren, Barb Briggs, Nancy Boyd– WSDOT
Cathy Higley, Steve Sindiong – Parsons
Kathlyn Kocher – 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 Chris Searcy 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 that provided information from the previous CWG session on August 31, 2005. The group will review the previous meeting summary, discuss the results of the second round of analysis, and discuss the projects recommended for the RDP, for further analysis or for elimination. Last, the group will discuss the upcoming open houses and materials.

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

Previous Meeting Summary

At the last meeting on August 31, 2005, the CWG partners reviewed the Evaluation Criteria in preparation for the second screening analysis.

Cathy Higley, Parsons, reviewed the initial screening analysis that covered natural environment, safety, historical, cultural resources, and cost analysis. The project list was presented to the CWG in two packages, short-term and long-term improvements. The short-term package includes improvements that directly address bottlenecks, high accident locations, and high accident corridors. These are projects which can be implemented within the next 6 to 10 years. The long-term package includes projects that address congestion and safety issues on a broader scale; projects that address future growth related conditions; and projects that can be implemented in the next 25 years. After discussion on the initial screening results, Seth notified the CWG about the finalized Fall open house locations and dates.

Detailed Screening Analysis

Seth distributed a packet of materials that included a revised SR 169 project list and a sample of a display board to be used at 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 enhancement. 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 and are recommended for removal,
- 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, and
- 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.

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

- Chris Searcy, City of Enumclaw, is concerned that most of the mobility criteria were eliminated. He would like to see the analysis cover the entire corridor and not just separate sections of it. For example, when measuring level of service, congestion could start at an intersection in Maple Valley, but traffic could be backed up into other jurisdictions or into other corridors.
- Nick Afzali, City of Renton, clarified that the goal is to look at the corridor as a whole, but also recognize and address the problem spots or segments.
- Chris Searcy noted that all issues concerning mobility seem to be lumped into improving “corridor travel time” and this wording may leave out some of the projects.
- Cathy noted that under the category of “project costs and benefits” a new criterion was added to read, “right-of-way acquisition costs”.

- Dave Zielinski, City of Maple Valley, questioned the public support category and believes support from elected officials and general public/interests groups should be measured separately.
- Ron Paananen, WSDOT, suggested that the team steer away from labeling the different parties involved, and instead word the criterion as “level of controversy”. The partners agreed on revising the text.
- Jason Paulsen, City of Black Diamond noted that some of the impact criteria under environmental effects could also be considered as benefits. Some of these impacts require mitigation, such as building new wetlands to replace those that will be impacted. Cathy will add these to the benefits criteria. Cathy noted that if the project has a lot of benefits, but scores high with the impact criteria, it would be recommended for further study.

After reviewing the detailed screening steps, Cathy Higley, Parsons, went over each project that was recommended for elimination. The project team asked the partners to comment on projects they felt should instead be recommended for the RDP or for further study. The Partners made the following comments:

- Cathy noted that these projects were eliminated mainly because of duplication and were covered by other projects in that location.
- Dave Zielinski, City of Maple Valley and Ann Martin, King County, questioned project 73, located at Lake Wilderness Trail from Cedar River Trail to Flaming Geyser State Park. The project entailed paving the Cedar River Trail. Cathy explained that this project was covered in another project to be carried forward in the RDP. The partners agreed to move project 73 to further study to make sure non-motorized projects are considered.
- Ann Martin asked why project 76, to provide a wildlife crossing or enhanced warnings to drivers was eliminated. This could be a serious safety issue. Jason Paulsen, City of Black Diamond, confirmed that there are many accidents south of the Green River Bridge. The CWG agreed to recommend this project for further study.
- Jason Paulsen noted that project 53, at SR 169 and Jones Lake Road could be a safety issue in the future as traffic increases. Bicyclists have been injured at this intersection by moving vehicles. The partners agreed to move this project to further study as a long-term project.
- Chris Searcy, City of Enumclaw, questioned two projects at SE 385th Street and south of Enumclaw Franklin Rd SE. These are not high accident locations, but it is a dangerous area because of the geometry of the roads and heavy trucks coming into these intersections. The partners agreed that these projects warranted further study. Cathy would check with Ann Martin after the meeting on these specific projects.
- The partners question why the project to extend the sidewalk on SR 169 from Thunder Mountain Middle School to McHugh Avenue was eliminated. Chris Searcy felt that the project should not have scored high in displacing businesses or community facilities. The partners agreed to recommend the project to be carried forward in the RDP.

There were no further comments on projects recommended for elimination, but Cathy would check with Joan Burlingame on the non-motorized projects. Cathy asked the partners to review the projects that made it through the screening process and send her any comments or questions.

Open Houses and Materials

Kathlyn Kocher, EnviroIssues, reviewed the details of the open house. The open houses were advertised in local newspapers, mailings and posters and postcards distributed throughout the corridor.

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 Study and the SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project will also have information and personnel available at the Renton open house and SR 164 will have information at the Enumclaw open house. 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 six 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 and answer questions.

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).
- Cathy will check with Joan Burlingame on non-motorized projects and Ann Martin on projects that were recommended for elimination.
- SR 169 open houses:
 - Enumclaw - Thunder Mountain Middle School (Tuesday, October 11th, 6-8pm)
 - Renton – Renton Community Center (Thursday, October 13th, 6-8pm)
- CWG Meeting: December 15th, 1:00 to 4:00pm
Site: TBD

Upcoming Meetings

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 169 RDP One-Sheet
- Example Open House Project Board
- SR 169 Corridor Final Screening of Potential Transportation Projects