

Washington State Department of Transportation - News

I-405 Project – 600 108th Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98004-5101 – (425) 456-8500

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 17, 2006

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WSDOT Takes Big Steps to Improve Kirkland Crawl on I-405

WSDOT to Open New Lanes on I-405 One Year Ahead of Schedule and Gather Public Input on Next Round of I-405 Improvements

Kirkland, WA - The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is planning a flurry of activity along Interstate 405 this fall, reaching major construction milestones and beginning new projects on I-405 between Bellevue and Lynnwood. One year ahead of schedule, WSDOT will open one new general purpose lane northbound and southbound on I-405 from NE 85th Street to NE 116th Street in Kirkland. WSDOT will also begin preparing for the next round of projects in the area.

When the new lanes open in early October, I-405 commuters through Kirkland will notice an immediate reduction in travel time during the southbound morning commute. WSDOT and Sound Transit also plan to open new HOV ramps at NE 128th Street this fall, as part of the Totem Lake Freeway Station Project.

“All of these projects – from the new freeway lanes to the Totem Lake Freeway Station ramps to the next round of improvements between Bellevue and Lynnwood– will make trips on I-405 in the North End faster and safer,” says Denise Cieri, WSDOT Project Manager.

This next round of improvements, which WSDOT is currently evaluating as part of its Environmental Assessment process, will complement the construction on I-405 currently underway in Kirkland. The SR 520 to I-5 Widening Project will further reduce congestion and travel times, as well as improve safety. Members of the community will have the opportunity to provide input on this project as part of WSDOT’s Environmental Assessment process at an upcoming open house:

Date: September 14

Time: 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Location: University of Washington Bothell Campus (North Creek Café, 18325 Campus Way NE)

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As part of the Environmental Assessment of these improvements, WSDOT will evaluate:

- Adding an additional northbound lane from NE 124th Street in Kirkland to SR 522 in Bothell;
- Adding an additional northbound lane from NE 195th Street to SR 527 in Bothell;
- Plans to eliminate weave congestion at the SR 522 interchange in Bothell, by raising the northbound I-405 off-ramp to SR 522 up and over the on ramp from NE 160th Street to northbound I-405; and
- Plans for implementation of a High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes system between SR 520 in Bellevue and I-5 in Lynnwood.

A HOT Lanes system would allow single-occupant drivers to pay a toll and use additional capacity in the carpool lane. Carpools and buses would continue to use the HOT lanes without paying a toll. To keep the carpool lanes from getting congested, tolls for single-occupant drivers to enter the HOT lanes would be adjusted in “real-time” by a computer, depending on how crowded the HOT lanes get. Drivers would not have to slow down for toll booths; tolls would be collected electronically. Drivers still have the option of using the free general purpose lanes.

All written comments received or postmarked by September 27, 2006, will be included in WSDOT’s formal environmental document. Project comments should be submitted in writing to the I-405 Project Environmental Manager, Allison Ray:

Allison Ray, I-405 Environmental Manager

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OR

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For more information on I-405 projects, please visit www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/i405.

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The SR 520 to I-5 Widening Project will help reduce afternoon congestion heading northbound on I-405 between NE 195th Street and SR 527 in Bothell.