

# SR 167 Corridor Plan

## Technical Memorandum 8: Public Involvement Summary



Washington State  
Department of Transportation

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## Introduction

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the cities and counties between Renton and Puyallup are developing strategies to ease traffic congestion along the State Route (SR) 167 corridor. They are developing the SR 167 Corridor Plan, which will identify a series of traffic improvement projects to increase safety and travel efficiency for all users of the highway.

The SR 167 Corridor Plan will identify a long-term vision for the corridor. It will also identify projects that can be completed in the short-term to improve the route's capacity and safety.

The final projects selected for the corridor will:

- Provide an efficient set of transportation solutions within the SR 167 corridor;
- Make many communities within the corridor more livable;
- Maintain or improve air quality, protect and enhance fish-bearing streams, and continue to protect the integrity of the local natural environment;
- Contribute to a vigorous state and regional economy by satisfying existing and future travel needs; and
- Accommodate planned regional growth.

This technical memorandum summarizes the efforts of WSDOT and its consultants to involve the public in a purposeful and useful way during Phase II of the SR 167 Corridor Plan.

The goals of the project's communications strategy and efforts in reaching the public were as follows:

- Outline opportunities for stakeholders and the interested public to provide input to the project team as it develops recommendations for long-term improvements to SR 167.
- Describe how the public will be continuously informed of the project's progress and how the public will have

### Exhibit 8-1 SR 167 Public Outreach



*WSDOT sought to garner public involvement in the SR 167 project in a number of ways, including informational booths at area malls and open houses.*

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#### The Steps to Creating a Corridor Plan Include:

- Determining Existing Conditions (Technical Memorandum 3)
  - Identifying a full range of options (Technical Memorandum 1)
  - Evaluating and screening improvement options (Technical Memorandum 5)
  - Advancing the range of improvement options through and environmental screening (Technical Memorandum 7)
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opportunities to get information about the SR 167 Corridor Plan and provide feedback to the technical team.

- Document major public issues and concerns related to the study effort.
- Identify and address potential risks or obstacles that could hinder the successful completion of the plan.
- Encouraging participation by low income and minority (Title VI) populations along the corridor in the development of the SR 167 Corridor Plan.

WSDOT employed diverse public involvement tools in order to offer multiple opportunities for the public to interact with and advise the project team. The project team selected public involvement methods that would maximize state resources as well as public participation.

The target public audiences for involvement included:

- Residents, workers, and business owners;
- Local jurisdictions;
- Users of the SR 167 corridor, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, carpool/vanpool users, transit users; and

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**Did you know?**

Title VI ensures that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance.

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- Businesses that rely on the corridor for the movement of goods and provided services.

Public involvement is a critical component of the SR 167 Corridor Plan and meaningful public participation is essential to the success of the project. It is the goal of WSDOT, the project partners, and the consultant team to involve the public early and often throughout the planning processes.

### Project Background

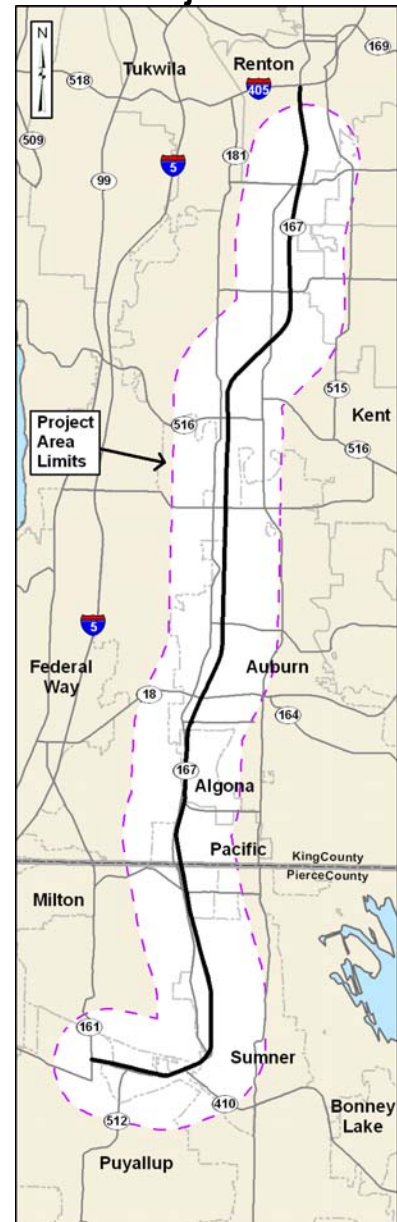
The SR 167 Corridor Plan study area is a 20-mile segment of the 26-mile SR-167. The entire SR 167 extends from I-405 in Renton to I-5 in Tacoma. The SR 167 Corridor Plan study area includes the Green River Valley, from I-405 in Renton to SR 161 in Puyallup and includes a 1-mile buffer on both sides of the freeway. Existing conditions within this area were evaluated in *Technical Memorandum 4: Existing Traffic Operations*.

The often-congested SR 167 has a variety of problems that will require both short-term, or bottleneck, and long-term solutions. This technical memorandum, which is part of the SR 167 Corridor Plan, will consider a variety of potential projects that could help solve safety, traffic mobility, freight mobility, and access issues on SR 167 – both now and in the future.

The SR 167 Corridor Plan is focused on finalizing a long-term vision for the SR 167 corridor that reflects the regional land-use and transportation relationship.

WSDOT will identify mobility and safety needs through the year 2030 and will determine short-term and long-term improvements.

Exhibit 8-2  
SR 167 Project Area



## **Public Involvement and Communication Activities Completed**

WSDOT's SR 167 Corridor Plan project team employed a number of strategies to involve as many interested parties as possible. The following public involvement and communication activities have been completed to date:

- Fourteen Corridor Working Group (CWG) meetings
- Four open houses
- Informal outreach activities, including mall patrols and 11 fairs and festivals
- A traveling informational display at four locations
- An SR 167 Corridor Plan project folio
- A project Web site

### **Corridor Working Group**

The Corridor Working Group includes representatives from public agencies and jurisdictions along the SR 167 corridor. CWG members provide specific local expertise when requested, including identifying emerging local issues. They are responsible for briefing local decision-makers and keeping their own councils, executives, elected officials, and other leaders informed on a regular basis.

Corridor Working Group members represented the following jurisdictions or agencies:

- City of Auburn
- City of Edgewood
- City of Kent
- City of Puyallup
- City of Renton
- City of Sumner

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#### **What is the Corridor Working Group?**

The Corridor Working Group (CWG) is made up of representatives from a number of agencies and jurisdictions along SR 167 who work together to identify the corridor's needs and potential improvements, and to help develop the SR 167 corridor plan.

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- King County
- Pierce County
- Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)
- Sound Transit
- Port of Seattle
- Port of Tacoma
- Puyallup Tribe
- Muckleshoot Tribe
- Nisqually Tribe
- Washington State Patrol
- WSDOT Freight Office
- WSDOT NW Region
- WSDOT Olympic Region
- WSDOT Urban Planning Office

## Open Houses

WSDOT hosted four open houses in coordination with key project milestones. The purpose of the open houses was to inform the public of the status on both the SR 167 Corridor Plan and High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes Pilot projects, and provided an opportunity for public input on the planning process. WSDOT prepared media kits, which included project information, and distributed the kits at the events.

WSDOT used the following advertising methods in an effort to let the public know about the project and to encourage attendance at the open houses:

- Display advertisements in publications (*King County Journal*, *Auburn, Kent and Renton Reporters*, *Seattle Times* and *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, *The Puyallup Herald*, *The News Tribune*, and *The Daily Journal of Commerce*).

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### What are HOT Lanes?

High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes are lanes that are open to carpools, vanpools, transit, and a limited number of solo drivers who will pay a fee. The lanes preserve priority status for transit and HOV vehicles, but allow solo drivers to use extra room in the lane if they pay a toll.

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- Announcements in local newsletters and community calendars (*The Auburn Update*, *The Edgewood News*, the *Algona Town Crier*, and Pierce Transit's *RideOn News*).
- E-mail invitations sent to a project email list comprised of 144 members.
- E-mail invitations sent to King County Metro vanpoolers who may potentially travel SR 167.
- E-mail invitations sent to committee chairs, ranking minority members, senators, and representatives in Districts 5, 11, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 37, 41 and 47.
- Postcards (70) sent to the project mailing list.
- Postcards (700) and posters (100) distributed to public gathering places, such as libraries, community centers, and other public buildings.
- Postcards available at information booths at the South Hill Mall in Puyallup and the Super Mall in Auburn.
- Announcement at the January focus groups.
- Announcement on the WSDOT project Web sites below:
  - [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr167/valleyfreewaycorridorplan](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr167/valleyfreewaycorridorplan)
  - [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr167/hotlanes](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr167/hotlanes)
- Outreach to local news sources.
- Corridor Working Group members were also encouraged to notify their constituents about the open houses. Informational materials that were available at the open houses were posted on the project Web site to allow those unable to attend the events to view the information and contact the project manager with comments.

### **Fall Open Houses (October 2005)**

The purpose of the fall 2005 open house series was to introduce the SR 167 Corridor Plan and HOT Lanes Pilot projects and solicit preliminary comments. During the meetings, the public had an opportunity to view project information and speak to the project team.

Open houses were held on:

- October 4th, 2005 from 6 to 8 pm at the Chinook Elementary School in Auburn.
- October 13th, 2005 from 6 to 8 pm at the Renton Community Center.

These open houses were held in conjunction with public meetings on the SR 167 Corridor Plan and SR 164 and SR 169 Route Development Plans. Approximately 75 people signed in at the open houses: 33 people indicated they were interested in the SR 167 Corridor Plan, 37 people indicated they were interested in the HOT Lanes Pilot Project, and the remainder expressed interest in the SR 164 or SR 169 Route Development Plan projects.

Exhibit 8-3

### **SR 167 Corridor Plan Public Involvement Open Houses**



### **Winter Open Houses (February 2006)**

The purpose of the winter 2006 open houses was to update SR 167 users on WSDOT projects along the corridor and solicit comments on the various improvement projects.

Open houses were held on:

- February 15th, 2006 from 6 to 8 pm at Sumner Middle School
- February 16th, 2006 from 6 to 8 pm at Kent Senior Center

A combined total of 19 people attended the winter open houses.

### **Informal Outreach Activities**

The project team undertook a number of informal outreach activities to present project information at highly visible and frequented public events or locations. Members of the project team staffed informational booths at the fairs, festivals and malls listed below. The informal outreach activities reached a total of approximately 700 people. Activities included:

- Kent Farmers Market – June 11 and 25, 2005  
(approximately 50 visitors)
- Renton Farmers Market – June 14 and 28, 2005  
(approximately 50 visitors)
- Puyallup Farmers Market – August 5, 2005  
(approximately 25 visitors)
- Auburn Good Ol' Days – August 13 and 14, 2005  
(approximately 120 visitors)
- South Hill Mall, Puyallup – December 3, 2005 and  
February 3, 2006  
(approximately 40 visitors)

Exhibit 8-4

### A Public Information Booth at the Kent Farmer's Market



- Super Mall, Auburn – December 3, 2005 and February 3, 2006  
(approximately 23 visitors)
- Puyallup Farmers Market – June 17, 2006  
(approximately 76 visitors)
- Kent Farmers Market – June 24, 2006  
(approximately 40 visitors)
- Kent Cornucopia Days – July 14, 2006  
(approximately 120 visitors)
- Pacific Days – July 15, 2006  
(approximately 50 visitors)
- Renton River Days – July 21-23, 2006  
(approximately 107 visitors)
- Kent Farmers Market – September 16, 2006  
(approximately 49 visitors)
- Puyallup Farmers Market – September 30, 2006  
(approximately 36 visitors)

## **News Media and Advertising**

Members of the project team contacted local news reporters to update them about the project and notify them of public meetings. The project was highlighted in various news articles, on radio shows, and on local television channels. The following news sources were contacted before public meetings:

- *Daily Journal of Commerce*
- *Seattle Times*
- *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*
- *King County Journal*
- *The Mountain*
- KIRO, AM 700
- KOMO, AM 1000
- KUOW, FM 94.9
- KOMO 4
- KING 5
- KIRO 7

The following advertising methods were used in an effort to increase public knowledge about the project and encourage attendance at community fairs and festivals:

- Display advertisements in publications such as *The King County Journal*, the *Auburn, Kent and Renton Reporters*, *The Tacoma News Tribune* and *The Puyallup Herald*.
- Announcements in local newsletters and community calendars such as *The Edgewood News* and *The Algona Town Crier*.
- E-mail invitations sent out to project e-mail list of 160 members.

- Postcards (100) sent to the project mailing list .
- Postcards (750) and posters (100) distributed to public gathering places, such as libraries, community centers, and other public buildings.
- Information posted on the WSDOT project Web sites below:
  - [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr167/valley\\_freewaycorridorplan](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr167/valley_freewaycorridorplan)
  - [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr167/hotlanes](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr167/hotlanes)

### Other outreach methods

#### Traveling Informational Display

The project team provided general project information by placing displays in highly visible and frequented locations, such as community centers and libraries. Comment forms and a comment box were also left with the traveling display and 18 comments were collected. Locations and dates where informational displays have been located include:

- Sumner Library, January 3-24, 2006
- Kent Regional Library, January 24-February 3, 2006
- Renton Community Center, February 3-27, 2006
- Kent Commons, March 6-17, 2006

#### Project Folio

A project folio was developed to inform the public about the planned improvements along SR 167. The project folio was distributed at open houses, informational booths at fairs and festivals, traveling display locations, community briefings and focus groups.

#### Exhibit 8-5 Outreach Poster

Visit our information booth!

**Come learn about what is happening on SR167...**

- Puyallup Farmers Market  
June 17 & September 30
- Kent Farmers Market  
June 24 & September 16
- Kent Cornucopia Days  
July 14
- Pacific Days  
July 15
- Renton River Days  
July 21-23

WSDOT will be in your community this summer to talk about upcoming improvements to SR 167. WSDOT knows that traffic on SR 167 is bad and getting worse. We want to share with you what we plan to do to keep transit, carpools and drivers moving!

Learn about...

- High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes
- Extending High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes
- Extending SR 167 to Tacoma
- Other projects along the corridor

**Questions**

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For more information, visit: [www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR167](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Projects/SR167)

**ADA Information:** Individuals requiring reasonable accommodation of any type may contact Mike Sallis at [sallism@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:sallism@wsdot.wa.gov) or (206) 464-1230. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may call WA State Telecommunications Relay Service (TTY) at 711.

**Title VI:** WSDOT assures full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, national origin and sex in the provision of benefits and services. For language interpretation services, please contact Mike Sallis at (206) 464-1230. For information on WSDOT's Title VI Program, please contact the Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098.

*An example of one of the posters that was distributed to public gathering places, such as libraries, community centers, and other public buildings.*

### **Distribution List**

Through various public outreach tools, the project team received a number of requests from citizens to stay updated on the project. More than 140 contacts have been logged into a distribution list during the public involvement process. Members on this list are updated on the project and notified of upcoming public outreach events.

### **Project Web Site**

WSDOT hosts a project Web site for the SR 167 Corridor Plan, which is periodically updated to provide the public with the most recent information regarding the project. The Web site provides a forum to post project facts, meeting dates and locations, meeting summaries and general information about the project's progress. Members of the public can also comment on the project online and receive a response via e-mail from a member of the project team. The project team has received approximately 33 comments to date, through the Web site.

### **Key Community Concerns**

As a result of the team's public involvement activities, the following concerns were raised by the public:

- **Congestion** – Traffic volume is high on SR 167 and people are anxious to see improvements being made to address bottlenecks, extend the HOV lanes and manage congestion through the HOT Lanes Pilot Project. Many people noted that they avoid using SR 167 as much as possible because of congestion.
- **Local Impacts** – Drivers continue to rely on local roads and arterials when SR 167 is congested.
- **Enforcement** – Drivers are upset with the current level of HOV enforcement on SR 167 and hope to see a fairly enforced HOT lanes system as well as HOV lanes.

- **Coordination with other projects** – The I-405 Corridor Program, SR 167 Extension Project, and HOT Lanes Pilot Project all directly affect conditions on SR 167. Continued coordination with these projects as they progress is a key component of the corridor plan process.