

SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project



Washington State
Department of Transportation

Fact Sheet

Fall 2005

SR 520: Keeping the Regional Economy Moving

The link between transportation investment and economic development is undeniable. A good transportation system is necessary for a strong economy, providing access to businesses and jobs, as well as moving freight and commerce.

SR 520 is an indispensable highway for the Puget Sound region.

The SR 520 corridor is a major link between Seattle and large Eastside cities, such as Bellevue, Kirkland, and Redmond. As one of only two bridges spanning Lake Washington, the SR 520 Evergreen Point Bridge is the SR 520 corridor's vital centerpiece, connecting business and residential centers that help keep the region thriving.

A number of Puget Sound's largest employers, as well as key business centers, are located in or next to the corridor, such as:

- The University of Washington: 23,288 employees +39,294 students
- Microsoft: 24,903 employees
- Downtown Seattle: 240,471 employees
- Downtown Bellevue: 32,000 employees
- Downtown Redmond: 8,579 employees

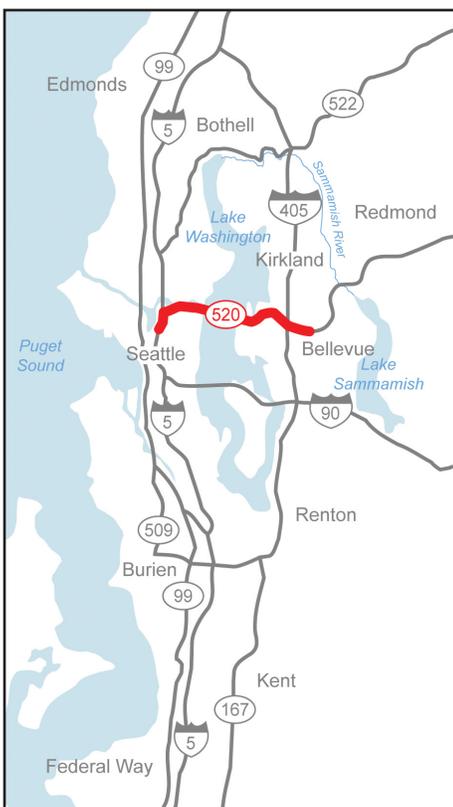
In fact, Seattle and Bellevue are the top two cities for employment in the Puget Sound region, which is why it is so important to maintain this cross-lake connection. In addition, three major regional hospitals are located near the corridor – the University of Washington Medical Center and Children's Hospital in Seattle, and Overlake Hospital in Bellevue.

The challenge we have today is that this crucial bridge is aging beyond repair and faces the risk of failure in windstorms and earthquakes. For the safety of the traveling public and for the good of our regional economy and transportation system, the SR 520 Evergreen Point Bridge must be replaced.

The Puget Sound region continues to grow.

The Puget Sound region's population is approximately 3.5 million. By 2020, this will increase to 4.1 million. By 2030, our population will grow to 4.5 million, a total of 1 million more people moving into the region in the next 25 years. With a steadily rising population comes extra drivers, commuters, businesses and demand for goods, all of which our future transportation system must accommodate.

Currently, 115,000 vehicles use the bridge each day, and this number will increase as the region's

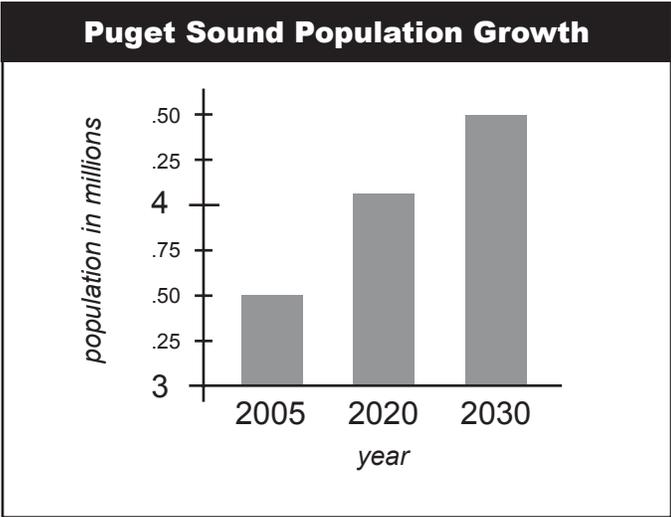


SR 520 is a vital east - west corridor in the Puget Sound region.

population grows. With the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project, WSDOT is planning for the region's growth by designing a bridge that can withstand major storms and earthquakes as well as manage additional traffic volumes expected in the coming years. This includes building the bridge so it can carry the weight of a larger number of vehicles and can handle some form of future high capacity transit (HCT). The project's 6-Lane Alternative would also include extending the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes that are currently in the corridor on the Eastside across the bridge and into Seattle, giving transit and carpools a quicker trip across the lake.

"A safe and efficient transportation system is essential to a healthy local economy. Businesses looking to re-locate or expand operations seek out communities that invest in their own infrastructure."

*-Jeff Marcell,
Vice President, Economic Development
enterpriseSeattle (formerly Economic
Development Council of Seattle/King County)*



travel times for both commuters and freight. Time spent in traffic means time – and money – lost for the region.

A new bridge will keep the corridor moving. The proposed bridge will increase safety and reliability. It will be built to current standards, reducing the risk of damage during earthquakes and storms. It will also have shoulders to provide access for emergency vehicles and allow vehicles to pull off to the side during accidents or breakdowns. These updates will help to ensure that traffic keeps moving through the SR 520 corridor, a vital need for the region.

Replacing the SR 520 bridge is an urgent need.

The replacement of the SR 520 bridge is a critical project for the Puget Sound region. It is reaching the end of its design life and could become a major safety issue in the event of a large earthquake or windstorm.

If this connection across Lake Washington were lost, it would have significant impacts on our region. The 115,000 vehicles that drive across the bridge each day would need to take an alternative route, which would increase congestion on already congested highways, such as I-90 and SR 522. This would also mean increased congestion on connecting highways, such as I-405 and I-5, creating substantially longer

For More Information:

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ADA Information:

Individuals requiring reasonable accommodation of any type may contact Paul Krueger, Environmental Manager, WSDOT at (206) 381-6432. Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may call WA State Telecommunications Relay Service (TTY) at 711.

Title VI:

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