

Appendix A
Public Involvement

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This appendix provides a detailed description of the public outreach process employed by WSDOT to involve the public in the development of the *SR 169 Route Development Plan* (RDP). Public outreach was a critical component of the study used to identify the transportation problems along the corridor and to help develop the study's recommendations.

1 What were the goals of the public involvement plan?

The goals of the project's original public involvement plan and efforts were as follows:

- Provide opportunities for stakeholders and the interested public to give input to the project team about community concerns
- Inform the public throughout the project on progress and outreach opportunities
- 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 study effort.
- Identify procedures for encouraging public participation in the study by low income and minority (Title VI) populations along the corridor

The public involvement methods were intended to be diverse in nature in order to offer multiple opportunities and ways for the public to interact with and advise the state and study partners on necessary improvements along SR 169. Target audiences for public involvement included residents, workers and business owners, local jurisdictions along the SR 169 corridor, and direct users of the corridor, including groups such as motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, farmers, equestrians, and businesses that rely on the corridor for the movement of goods and provision of services.

The public outreach methods offered multiple opportunities for residents, employees, and project partners to provide input toward the plan.

2 What public involvement activities were conducted?

The project team employed a number of strategies to involve as many interested parties as possible during the SR 169 RDP process. This included:

- Conducting nine stakeholder interviews
- Hosting a partner Chartering Session for the Corridor Working Group (CWG) and coordinated seven additional CWG meetings
- Soliciting input from several project stakeholders in addition to the CWG. This included hosting a meeting of the Maple Valley Highway Consortium
- Conducting twelve community briefings
- Organizing a total of four open houses that occurred in March 2005 and October 2005

Stakeholder Interviews

Nine initial stakeholder interviews were conducted to further identify concerns related to the SR 169 study effort and to document major public issues. Stakeholders received an overview of the RDP process, schedule, and the project's progress to date. These initial stakeholder interviews took place before the project chartering session on September 27, 2004, with the goal to have an understanding of each participating agency's expectations, interests, and concerns related to the SR 169 corridor study. The project team met with representatives from the following groups:

- Puget Sound Regional Council
- City of Enumclaw
- City of Black Diamond
- City of Maple Valley
- City of Renton
- King County

- Federal Aviation Administration
- Clear Channel Communications
- Citizens for Safety and the Environment

Partner Chartering Session

On September 27, 2004, WSDOT held an initial one-day Chartering Session with the CWG partners. The CWG is comprised of public agencies and jurisdictions along SR 169 responsible for funding and/or implementing corridor improvements. The CWG partners were:

- City of Enumclaw
- City of Black Diamond
- City of Maple Valley
- City of Renton
- King County
- Puget Sound Regional Council
- WSDOT

The Chartering Session brought all partners to the table in an effort to reach general agreement on a vision, goals, outcomes, recommendations, and operating ground rules for developing the study/RDP. The session accomplished the following:

- Identified agency/partner concerns regarding SR 169
- Shared the study's scope and schedule with the Chartering Partners
- Established a basis for agency coordination throughout the SR 169 study
- Outlined how the partners, local officials, stakeholders, and the public will be involved throughout the study
- Ensured that WSDOT would use appropriate decision-making and communication methods with the partners to maximize project progress and build consensus around a list of short-term and long-term projects

Corridor Working Group Meetings

The CWG met seven times during development of the RDP. These meetings were open to the public and were publicized on WSDOT's SR 169 project web page. The project team also notified interested parties about upcoming meeting times and locations via email. At these working sessions, the project team informed the CWG partners of the project's progress to date, presented the latest technical analysis results, and provided the group with information to take back to their respective jurisdictions and organizations. These meetings also provided a forum to make consensus-based decisions regarding initial project development, evaluation criteria, and final project packages.

Stakeholder Outreach

The project team solicited input from other stakeholders throughout the public involvement process. The stakeholders listed below were kept apprised of project information. The project team solicited their input through interviews, telephone calls, and invitations to upcoming outreach events or nearby community briefings.

- Greater Maple Valley Area Council
- Cascade Bicycle Club
- Friends of Rock Creek Valley/Back Country Horsemen
- Glacier Northwest
- Valley Medical Center
- Gary Merlino Construction Company, Inc.
- Port of Seattle Third Runway Project
- Enumclaw Fire Department
- Enumclaw Police Department
- Maple Valley Police Department
- Renton Fire Department
- Renton Police Department

- King County Metro Transit
- King County Fire Department
- King County Sheriff's Office
- Washington State Patrol (District 2)

On February 24, 2005, WSDOT, in partnership with City of Maple Valley staff, hosted the Maple Valley Highway Consortium at the Lake Wilderness Lodge to brief attendees on the status of the study and to solicit feedback on the key issues and potential solutions concerning the corridor. The 18 attendees represented the various school districts and local jurisdictions along the corridor.

Community Briefings

Twelve community briefings were held throughout the study effort to reach community groups, including neighborhood organizations, elected officials and business members, through less formal, more personalized means of communication. WSDOT and its consultants worked with the CWG partners to identify and communicate with community, neighborhood, and interest groups who are potentially impacted by outcomes of the SR 169 RDP. The project team briefed the following elected officials and groups:

- South County Area Transportation Board (SCATBOARD), Technical Advisory Committee
- Renton Transportation Committee
- Enumclaw City Council
- Black Diamond City Council
- Maple Valley City Council
- King County Transportation Committee
- King County Councilmember David Irons
- King County Councilmember Steve Hammond
- Greater Maple Valley Area Council

- King County Agriculture Staff
- Pierce/King County Farm Bureau
- Cedar River Council

At these briefings, members of the project team informed the community groups or leaders of the project's status, upcoming milestones, and future opportunities to provide input. The project team received feedback on specific problem locations and incorporated these comments into their studies.

Open Houses

WSDOT hosted two rounds of open houses in coordination with key project milestones (i.e., initial project screening, final project screening). The open houses informed the public of the project's status and provided an opportunity for public input on the corridor study/RDP process, development of improvement projects, and final corridor recommendations. Media kits, including fact sheets and other informational materials were prepared and distributed at the events. The open houses were advertised in a variety of ways, as listed below, to maximize the number of affected parties in attendance:

- Display advertisements were placed in regional and local newspapers
- Announcements were printed in local publications
- E-mail invitations were sent to the project email list
- Postcards were sent to the project mailing list and distributed throughout the community at public gathering places (e.g., libraries, community centers, and other public buildings)
- Posters were displayed throughout the corridor in storefronts and on public bulletin boards
- Announcements were posted on the WSDOT project Web site: SR 169 RDP: www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/sr169/rdp

- Announcements were made at a series of presentations prior to both open house series (e.g. City Council meetings and Transportation Committee Meetings)
- CWG members were encouraged to notify their constituents about the open houses

Informational materials available at the open houses were also posted on WSDOT's SR 169 project web site, to allow those that were not able to attend the events to view the information and contact the project manager with further comments.

Winter Open Houses, March 2005

The first round of open houses introduced the SR 169 RDP process, provided information on existing conditions, and presented a preliminary list of transportation improvement projects. Participants of the open house reviewed and commented on problem locations along the corridor and the initial improvement projects presented. A total of approximately 71 people attended the March 2005 open houses.

Open Houses were held on:

- March 1, 2005, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Lake Wilderness Lodge in Maple Valley
- March 3, 2005, from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Enumclaw High School

The open house held on March 3, 2005, was held in conjunction with the *SR 164 Route Development Plan*.

Fall Open Houses, October 2005

The purpose of the second round of open houses was to update the public on the project's progress, present the proposed short-term and long-term transportation improvement packages, and receive comments on the priority of these proposed projects. During the meetings, the public had an opportunity to view project information, speak to the project team and offer their comments in various ways. Participants were asked to provide specific feedback on the priority levels of the various problem locations or proposed improvement

projects. A total of approximately 73 people attended the October 2005 open houses.

Open houses were held on:

- October 11, 2005, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Thunder Mountain Middle School in Enumclaw
- October 13, 2005, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Renton Community Center

The open house held on October 11, 2005, was held in conjunction with the *SR 164 Route Development Plan*, and the open house held on October 13, 2005, was held in conjunction with the *SR 167 Corridor Plan* and *SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project*.

3 What public outreach tools were used as part of the study?

The project team used a variety of tools to communicate messages and solicit participation and feedback from the public. These tools included:

- Advertising public outreach events through postcards, posters, emails, and mailings and informing local media sources about the project and opportunities for public participation
- Drafting and preparing a project folio
- Maintaining a project distribution list
- Maintaining a project web site

These tools helped keep a wide range of interested citizens, jurisdictions and groups apprised of project updates and opportunities for public input.

Progress Postcards and Posters

Progress postcards were prepared, mailed, and distributed two weeks in advance of the public open houses to notify the public about upcoming opportunities to participate in the study. The postcards were mailed to the project mailing list and distributed along the corridor to public gathering places, e.g., libraries,

Public outreach tools included project progress mailings, a project Web site, and display boards at open houses.

community centers, and other public buildings. Posters, also announcing the open houses, were hung in storefronts and public bulletin boards. Copies of the postcards and posters were also given to the CWG partners to distribute in their jurisdictions.

Project Folio

A project folio was prepared following the first round of open houses to provide the public with an update on major project milestones, share the results of the open houses, and identify the next steps for the corridor study. The folio presented the corridor in segments and highlighted the problems, potential solutions, and public comments received for each segment.

Distribution List

Through various public outreach tools and events, the project team received a number of requests from citizens to stay updated on the project. Approximately 171 contacts were logged into a distribution list during the public involvement process. Members on this list were updated on the project and notified of public outreach events.

Project Web Site

A project Web site, hosted by WSDOT, was periodically updated to provide the CWG and the public with the most recent information regarding the SR 169 study. The web site provided a forum to post project facts, meeting dates and locations, meeting summaries, and general information about the project's progress.

4 What key concerns were identified by the community?

The public involvement process applied the outreach strategies mentioned above to identify and address key community concerns. Members of the public and stakeholders provided input on safety and traffic issues along the corridor and offered ideas to address these problem locations. Exhibit A.1 summarizes public comments received by segment and is not meant to be all-inclusive.

The public provided input on safety and traffic issues and offered ideas to address the problem locations.

**Exhibit A.1
Summary of Public Comments by Segment**

Public Comments	Suggested Transportation Improvements
Enumclaw Segment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve driver visibility along the corridor. • The intersection of McHugh Avenue and SR 169 needs a traffic signal. • Pedestrian safety is an issue at Kibler Street. • Residents prefer that trucks be routed around town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realign the road to improve driver visibility, provide advance warning signs of pedestrian crossings and repave pedestrian crosswalks at Washington Avenue. • Improve the intersection at McHugh Avenue to enhance safety and traffic flow.
Agricultural/Rural Segment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address pedestrian safety by installing sidewalks near Thunder Mountain Middle School. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the sidewalk along SR 169 from Thunder Mountain Middle School to McHugh Avenue to improve pedestrian safety. • Repave the roadway from the Green River Bridge to 264th Avenue SE.
Black Diamond Segment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the need for transit improvements along SR 169 to help buses move along the corridor and increase ridership. • Manage access throughout the corridor and consolidate driveways as proposed in the various improvement projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the shoulder to enhance safety in the high accident corridor from north of Ravensdale Road to the 1st Avenue vicinity. • Correct awkward intersection alignments, build bus pullouts and install street lighting to improve safety and traffic flow.
Maple Valley Segment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike safety is an issue around Lake Wilderness. Suggestions include creating a separate bike lane or an alternate trail that does not require cyclists to get on SR 169 when riding to Renton. • Pedestrian safety is an issue near SE 264th St, especially for school children. Suggestions include creating a pedestrian underpass or overpass, and adding streetlights. • Traffic flow is a major issue near SE 216th Way. At this intersection, suggestions include restriping, widening the road, creating an express lane, repaving, and synchronizing traffic lights. • The Four Corners area has several safety and traffic congestion issues, such as heavy truck volumes and cars having difficulty making left turns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a southbound travel lane and bike lane from Witte Road SE to SE 240th Street. • Build sidewalks and provide transit improvements, such as bus shelter or bus pull-out at SE 264th Street. • Widen the intersection at Kent-Kangley Road and SR 169 to address bottleneck congestion.
Cedar Segment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize the long-term intersection improvement at 231st Avenue SE and SR 169 as a short-term project because it is difficult to access SR 169 from the housing developments in this area. • During peak hours, traffic flow at the SR 18 and SR 169 intersection is a major issue because of heavy truck and traffic volumes. • Relieve traffic congestion in the SR 164 and SR 18 interchange vicinity. The traffic signal near this interchange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repave the roadway from Jones Road to 231st Avenue SE. • Widen the roadway at Jones Road (196th Avenue SE) and consider managing access points for vehicles entering and exiting the roadway. • Improve the intersection at Cedar Grove Road to accommodate future growth and address safety issues.

**Exhibit A.1
Summary of Public Comments by Segment**

Public Comments	Suggested Transportation Improvements
<p>remains red too long.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic tends to backup between Jones Road and Cedar Grove Road. Suggestions include adding lanes or creating turn lanes. 	
Renton Segment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the I-405/SR 169 interchange, traffic flow improvements are needed, such as wider and longer turn lanes. Increase safety for bicyclists by clearing shoulders or adding bike lanes along the full length of SR 169. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconfigure the Sunset Boulevard/I-405 southbound on-ramp interchange to accommodate current and future heavy traffic volume during the afternoon commuting hours. Lengthen the existing I-405 northbound on-ramp to accommodate current and future heavy traffic volume during the morning commutes hours.